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LATEST STATEMENTS

Washington, DC, 11 April 2014 - Secretary-General's remarks at Climate Leaders Summit

Thank you for this opportunity to address you today on a subject that is at the top of the U.N. list.

Climate change is the defining issue of our times.

It has sweeping implications for the entire security and development agenda.

That is why the United Nations is not only sounding the alarm bells but also developing solutions. As the UN and the world are now struggling to address the crises in Ukraine, Syria, the Central African Republic and South Sudan, I think the world should not lose sight of development, and specifically climate change.

The world's Governments have pledged to reach a universal legal climate agreement by 2015.

This agreement must be both ambitious and achievable.

We need to limit global temperature rise within 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

This is what the international community has agreed is the upper limit of safety.

Beyond 2 degrees, the consequences will be unpredictable, highly dangerous and perhaps irreversible.

As well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we must strengthen resilience to what is already occurring and what is likely to happen.

Climate impacts are already affecting agriculture and food security, human health, water supplies, and ecosystems on land and sea.

The world is not prepared yet.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Climate change is the single greatest threat to a sustainable future.

But, at the same time, addressing the climate challenge presents a golden opportunity to promote prosperity, security and a brighter future for all.

It can strengthen our efforts across the development agenda – from renewable energy to climate smart agriculture to sustainable transport.

If we invest what is necessary, we will reap the benefits in terms of reduced poverty, more inclusive societies and greater opportunity and dignity for all.

First, we need political investment.

You are all leaders. You know that leadership means making wise decisions.

For example, we need look at the full cost of our energy use.

As well as warming the planet, pollution from burning fossil fuels and other organic waste kills at least 7 million people a year.

We need to address market distortions, such as fossil fuel subsidies, that promote more energy use and greater emissions and inhibit the adoption of cleaner technologies.

And we need to be clear about the risks of investing in fossil fuels.

None of these areas are politically easy.

Addressing them will demand vision and leadership – in the climate negotiations and at home.

That is why I will host a Climate Summit meeting on September 23rd. and I have invited all the leaders of the countries you are representing.

We must raise the level of ambition, catalyze action on the ground and increase political momentum.

The Summit will welcome not only leaders from Government, but also from the worlds of finance, business and civil society.

It will provide a unique opportunity to showcase transformative collective efforts to promote mitigation and strengthen adaptation and resilience.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As well as political investment, we need financial investment – for sustainable development and climate action on the ground.

Financing is the key to achieving a universal legal climate agreement in 2015. We have to provide \$100 billion by 2020 and thereafter \$100 billion. We have developed a Green Climate Fund but that is not yet capitalized. I am counting on you to provide funds for it.

Developing countries, in particular, need investment as they build their own low-carbon futures.

They need support from all quarters – public finance, traditional development assistance; technology transfer; and private sources.

Investors from all asset classes are prepared to make additional investments.

But these vast private resources cannot be released without a public lever.

Public policy must pave the way – with a financial framework that is conducive for private money to flow at scale into the green space. I have been meeting during the last two or three years many business leaders, including from pension funds and the business community. And all business leaders say they are ready to finance a green economy but they need clear direction and predictable policies from governments.

Finance Ministries have an essential catalytic role to play to shape a new financial eco-system that promotes sustainable development and climate-resilience.

In that regard, to address this challenge, I would like to suggest to you that a meeting of Finance Ministers and private investors take place in the coming months that could pave the way for a common approach. And I would like to have your frank views on this idea.

A successful meeting could also help advance other related issues.

These include capitalizing the Green Climate Fund, as I just said; coordinating efforts by different asset classes to have maximum impact on climate change; and making low-carbon investments more attractive to institutional investors.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Addressing climate change needs the investment of everybody.

The best science. The best policies. And the best leadership.

I count on everyone here today to deliver.

Let us pledge today to invest all our efforts, our political capital and our financial resources in creating a sustainable future.

A future of security, dignity and opportunity for all humankind. I count on your leadership and strong commitment.

Thank you very much.

Statements on 11 April 2014

- [New York, 11 April 2014 - Statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on Guinea-Bissau](http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7595)(<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7595>)
- [New York, 11 April 2014 - Statement Attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on Venezuela \[scroll down for the Spanish version\]](http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7594)(<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7594>)
- [Washington, D.C., 11 April 2014 - Secretary-General's remarks at Sanitation and Water For All High Level Meeting \[as prepared for delivery\]](http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7593)(<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7593>)
- [Washington, DC, 11 April 2014 - Secretary-General's remarks at "Investing in Health: Toward Universal Coverage and Ending Poverty by 2030" \[as prepared for delivery\]](http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7591)(<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7591>)

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