

Remarks

by

Mr. Adnan Z. Amin

Director-General

International Renewable Energy Agency

at the

8th Assembly

Conclusions and Closing

Abu Dhabi, UAE, 14 January 2018

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are coming to the conclusion of our 8th Assembly. It would be challenging to summarize the rich discussions of the past two days, but I wish to share with you some reflections. At the outset, I wish to thank the President of the Assembly and the Vice Chairs for successfully steering our deliberations.

We have once more had an exceptional Assembly. This is the first IRENA Assembly to be chaired by a woman, the distinguished Minister of Industry, Energy and Mining of Uruguay. Madame, congratulations not only on a job well done, but done with elegance and grace. You are the face of a changing energy landscape that is more diverse and inclusive. This is also a message that was delivered by our Legislator's Forum, which pointed out that the energy transformation must be socially-inclusive through the maximisation of its socio-economic benefits in terms of jobs and local value creation. We will be paying greater attention to this dimension given its growing importance for policymakers globally.

For the first time, we held during our Pre-Assembly Day a public-private dialogue that brought together IRENA's Coalition for Action with governments, Parliamentarians and experts to identify solutions to scale-up renewable energy investments, in a frank and open discussion. For the first time, the Coalition for Action delivered a message to the Assembly that reflected its growing momentum and expanding membership. I would like to thank all of its members for their efforts.

On the broader picture, I think that it is clear from the breadth and depth of our discussions that that we are moving beyond energy transition to a global energy transformation, driven by an unprecedented growth of renewables and shaped by mega trends, from the imperative to advance sustainable development, tackle climate change and decarbonise our economies to digitalisation, big data and artificial intelligence. And we continue reach new milestones in this transformation. The UK told us yesterday that last April, Britain, witnessed its first full day without coal power since the Industrial, as a result of growing shares of renewables in its electricity system. What a remarkable development. Emerging economies and

developing countries are now key to this momentum and have represented the majority of renewable power capacity additions in recent years.

We also now have growing consensus on the need to put a greater focus on accelerating this transformation in the end-use sectors. This was identified as a priority for islands in the next stage of their energy transformation at the SIDS high-level meeting at Pre-Assembly Day, and will be central in the next phase of the SIDS Lighthouses Initiative. In this regard, we had this morning a stimulating ministerial roundtable on electric-mobility, which showed that e-mobility is growing rapidly thanks to the strong business case of renewable power, and policymakers at the national and local level can help accelerate the transition to a sustainable transport sector.

One of the key requirements to accelerate this transformation is to scale-up investments. And we had a very rich discussion on this during our ministerial roundtable yesterday, where it was underlined that finance availability is not seen as a key impediment. Rather, the challenge is how to draw a greater share of global capital into renewables at a rapid pace, central to which are accessible and affordable

risk mitigation instruments, as well as standardisation and aggregation of projects. These are areas where we will continue working to reach tangible outcomes.

Of course, enabling this investment requires the delivery of common policy messages with the support of innovative policies. This fact was highlighted earlier today at our programmatic discussion on renewable energy policies, based on a report developed jointly with IEA and REN21, where delegates emphasised the importance of extending enabling policy frameworks beyond electricity to cover end-use sectors.

In this regard, implementation of NDCs in the context of the Paris Agreement can provide further impetus to accelerating the momentum of renewable deployment as it clearly emerged from our strategic plenary discussion on NDC implementation. In this context, I am also very glad that for the first time we had the Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund taking part in our Assembly. I had a very constructive meeting with him in which we agreed to further develop our cooperation to ensure that ministers of energy and renewable energy stakeholders

are actively involved in the projects they are funding for climate mitigation and adaptation.

Beyond just discussions, two new projects from Rwanda and Mauritius were selected for funding by the ADFD through its joint facility with IRENA. I had the pleasure of meeting the Deputy Prime Minister of Mauritius who emphasised the multiple benefits of the project for the low-income households to which they will not only bring energy services but also internet connectivity opening windows to improve livelihoods and economic productivity. This is the spirit of renewable energy and SDG7, contributing to sustainable development and the implementation of all the SDGs.

For IRENA, to play a leading role in driving this acceleration of the global energy transformation, it needs to be empowered by you, its Members. And this is precisely what you have done by approving our new Mid-term Strategy 2018-2022, and our Work Programme and Budget 2018-2019, setting our strategic direction for the next five years and defining our programmatic activities for the next biennium.

And we have noted your satisfaction to see the concurrent adoption of the MTS and Work Programme and Budget ensures the alignment between our strategy and activities, a practice we will strive to follow. In adopting our Work Programme and Budget, you have also found an innovative arrangement that provides a path forward to increase our resource base through core non-assessed contributions. I want to thank in particular all delegations for the flexibility for reaching this outcome.

I am also appreciative of the feedback on our work you have provided during our deliberations. We have noted your call to leverage effective partnerships, and in this context, we will continue to build on our cooperation with an array international fora and initiatives, including the UN, the IEA, the G20 and the Clean Energy Ministerial, to mention a few. I am pleased to note that we will launch our REmade Index at the 9th CEM next June, and we are actively working with the Government of Argentina in their capacity as President of the G20 to advance cooperation on renewables deployment. Furthermore, based on your input, we will continue developing a more robust system of monitoring and evaluation to ensure we better capture the impact of our work in a more action-oriented manner.

During the past two days, we have recognised that the energy transformation brings a new age of energy that has far-reaching implications for relations between countries. For this reason, we launched today the *Global Commission on Energy Transformation*, which will work to develop a knowledge framework on the geopolitics of energy transformation, including better understanding its opportunities and risks.

Beyond all that I have mentioned, the most important of my view is that our assembly is a meeting point, a place for new conversations where we exchange knowledge and ideas, and where we forge new partnerships and friendships to advance the energy transformation. So many of you have come to tell me that they have learned something new or met someone with which they will engage.

I think you would agree that we all leave from here humbled by the immensity of the challenge ahead, but also reinvigorated by our collective determination to take action to transform our societies and economies on the path of a sustainable energy future through international cooperation.

The energy revolution we are witnessing also calls for a cultural revolution. Our outreach must go beyond merely providing data and arguments on the benefits of renewables to greater public awareness and engagement with society. And this is something the Foreign Minister of Japan emphasized in his address this morning. As part of this renewed efforts, it is my pleasure to invite all heads of delegation again to join us for the Visions of Sustainability tonight; an exceptional event in which renewable energy, sustainability and art will be interwoven.

In concluding, I wish to express our gratitude to the UAE, our host country. Its support and commitment has been essential in the success of our agency and the international standing it has achieved. I would also be remiss of me not to acknowledge IRENA's invaluable staff for their dedication and hard work. And I must thank the translators for their patience and support to facilitating our discussions over the last two days.

Thank you.

.