



19 January 2017

Dr. Uwe Petry, Head of the Economic Division

Executive Director Bach (*of UNECE*),
Ambassador Sadiqov (*of Azerbaijan*),
Distinguished partners from Ukraine and from Kazakhstan,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour and a pleasure to speak to you today on the occasion of a joint presentation by Germany, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Kazakhstan on the issue of renewable energy and energy transition.

Let me start by warmly thanking Azerbaijan for hosting this official opening ceremony of the exhibition.

My sincere thanks also go to UNOG and in particular to UNECE for kindly making available this prestigious venue on the very timely occasion of the 25th Session of the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy.

As for the German part of the exhibition we are proud to present it simultaneously in Geneva and New York, and I should thank my colleague, Dr. Thomas Fohgrub, for all his efforts in this regard.

The panels and videos set up here tell you about what Germans call “Energiewende”, to be translated literally as “a turning point for energy”, or, in a more current terminology, as “energy transition”.

Let me briefly walk you through a few questions raised by the exhibition:

How can we make the supply of energy future-proof and sustainable?

The policy of Energiewende is Germany’s answer to this question.

- In a nutshell its targets are the following:
 - **Cut energy consumption** by 50% until 2050.
 - Provide renewable energy for 60% of the energy needs by 2035 and for even 95% by 2050.
 - **And, not to forget: abandon nuclear power** altogether by 2022.
- However, the shift to a more sustainable supply of energy is not an issue of national relevance only. It is a topic that is high on the **international agenda**.

Why do we need energy transition on a global scale?

- Firstly, for environmental reasons. The energy sector today contributes to more than a **third of all greenhouse gas emissions** globally. At the same time, **global energy demand** is expected to rise by 30% until 2040. This is the background for our global commitment to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases and to fight the devastating effects of climate change.
- Secondly, for reasons of security and stability. In our world still divided into exporters and importers of raw materials, the old, fossil system is characterised by **dependencies, vulnerabilities, and risks for conflict.** The latest roller coaster of global oil prices has shown how **unpredictable** this system can be. Furthermore, traditional centralised systems of energy production can easily be **disrupted** by accidents, natural disasters, terrorism or similar acts and causes.

It is more than evident that the policy of energy transition provides viable solutions to these challenges.

How can we bring about energy transition?

There are two approaches of equal importance:

Firstly, the reduction of energy consumption by increasing energy efficiency through constantly improving technologies as well as by increasing the awareness of consumers.

Secondly, the decentralization and transformation of energy supply by means of climate-friendly, quickly-to-build **renewable energy** sources.

How does energy transition pay off?

Green energy is not only good for our climate and for international stability and security, it is also a driver in economic terms.

- Renewable energies can **easily compete** with fossil fuels today. In 2016, **auctions for solar power** yielded production costs of less than 3 US-cents per kilowatt-hour, that is half the average global cost of coal power.
- Last year, **Germany and Denmark** have started cross-border **auctions** of green electricity, with average prices beating the price of nuclear energy.
- Renewable energies created **record investments** of 285 billion US dollars worldwide in 2015, most of them in **developing countries.**
- Globally, until today, an estimated **8.1 million jobs** have been created through the application of renewable energies.

How can international cooperation contribute to energy transition?

- It goes without saying that the framework of the Agenda 2030 of the United Nations **as well as the successful conclusion of the Paris COP21 negotiations** are now cornerstones for global commitment and cooperation in the 21st century, including in the field of energy.

- Against this background, Germany remains a strong believer in the **power of multilateralism**:
 - Just last month we took over the **presidency of the G20**, which will be highly marked by Agenda 2030 commitments.
 - In November this year the city of Bonn in Germany will be the venue of the **UNFCCC COP23** conference on behalf of the Fiji presidency.
 - Germany continues to lend its support to the **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)** – an organization, which during its nine years of existence has gained almost universal membership.
 - We also support the United Nations’ **“Sustainable Energy for All” Initiative**, to mention yet another innovative forum of cooperation.

It is evident that no nation can master the challenges of climate change, scarcity of resources, social and economic development, and security on its own.

The exhibition presented to you, here in Geneva and in New York, is therefore an invitation to all of us to continue to reflect on the need to further **intensify global cooperation for the benefit of a successful management of energy transition worldwide**.

I thank you for your interest and your attention.