



## **Twentieth-Century Model 'A Global Suicide Pact': UN Secretary-General Tells World Economic Forum Session in DAVOS on Redefining Sustainable Development**

Following are UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's remarks to the World Economic Forum session on redefining sustainable development, in Davos, Switzerland, today, 28 January:

For most of the last century, economic growth was fuelled by what seemed to be a certain truth: the abundance of natural resources. We mined our way to growth. We burned our way to prosperity. We believed in consumption without consequences.

Those days are gone. In the twenty-first century, supplies are running short and the global thermostat is running high. Climate change is also showing us that the old model is more than obsolete. It has rendered it extremely dangerous. Over time, that model is a recipe for national disaster. It is a global suicide pact.

So what do we do in this current challenging situation? How do we create growth in a resource-constrained environment? How do we lift people out of poverty while protecting the planet and ecosystems that support economic growth? How do we regain the balance? All of this requires rethinking.

Here at Davos — this meeting of the mighty and the powerful, represented by some key countries — it may sound strange to speak of revolution. But that is what we need at this time. We need a revolution. Revolutionary thinking. Revolutionary action. A free market revolution for global sustainability.

It is easy to mouth the words "sustainable development", but to make it happen, we have to be prepared to make major changes — in our lifestyles, our economic models, our social organization and our political life. We have to connect the dots between climate change and what I might call here WEF — water, energy and food.

I have asked President [Tarja] Halonen of Finland and President [Jacob] Zuma of South Africa to connect those dots as they lead our High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability. I have asked them to take on the tough questions: How we organize ourselves economically? How we manage increasingly scarce resources?

Those same questions guide our discussion here. I have asked them to bring us visionary recommendations by the end of December so they can be fed into intergovernmental processes until Rio 2012.

But as we begin, let me highlight the one resource that is scarcest of all: time. We are running out of time. Time to tackle climate change. Time to ensure sustainable, climate-resilient green growth. Time to generate a clean energy revolution.

The sustainable development agenda is the growth agenda for the twenty-first century. To get there, we need your participation, your initiative. We need you to step up. Spark innovation. Lead by action. Invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy for those who need them most — your future customers. Expand clean energy access in developing countries — your markets of tomorrow.

Join our United Nations Global Compact, the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world. Embed those sustainability principles into your strategies, your operations, your supply chains.

To Government leaders sitting here and elsewhere around the world, send the right signals to build the green economy. Together, let us tear down the walls. The walls between the development agenda and the climate agenda. Between business, Government and civil society. Between global security and global sustainability. It is good business, good politics and good for society.

In an odd way, what we are really talking about is going back to the future. The ancients saw no division between themselves and the natural world. They understood how to live in harmony with the world around them. It is time to recover that sense of living harmoniously for our economies and our societies.

Not to go back to some imagined past, but to leap confidently into the future with cutting-edge technologies — the best science and entrepreneurship has to offer — to build a safer, cleaner, greener and more prosperous world for all.

There is no time to waste.

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sgsm13372.doc.htm>