

# Ban Ki-moon urges clean energy revolution (Update 2)

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UN Secretary Ban Ki-moon addresses the annual World Future Energy summit in the Emirati capital Abu Dhabi on January 17, 2011. Ban called on Monday for a clean energy revolution that would reduce climate risks, cut poverty and improve global health.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called on Monday for a clean energy revolution that would reduce climate risks, cut poverty and improve global health.

"Our challenge is transformation. We need a global clean energy revolution -- a revolution that makes energy available and affordable for all," he told participants in the fourth edition of the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi.

"This is essential for minimising climate risks, for reducing poverty and

improving global health, for empowering women and meeting the Millennium Development Goals, for global economic growth, peace and security, and the health of the planet," he said in his keynote speech.

"You can lead this revolution, and in many ways, many of you are already doing so," he told more than 3,000 delegates gathered at the international summit and exhibition.

Ban's call came as the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) said the oil-producers cartel OPEC should be "alarmed" at the rising price of oil, now nearing 100 dollars per barrel.

"The current price level is alarming; OPEC must continue to be alarmed about the future," Nobuo Tanaka told Dow Jones Newswires during a sideline interview.

Meanwhile, Ban praised last month's international meeting on climate change in Cancun for the progress made on financing the fight against global warming and deforestation, "which accounts for nearly one-fifth of global warming."

"Taken together, these outcomes give us important tools. Yet of course, we have much farther to travel," he said.

He stressed the need to strengthen efforts on national fronts, noting Abu Dhabi's initiative to create a city powered solely by renewable energy as "just one of a growing number of initiatives in developed and developing countries that are bringing life to our vision of green, sustainable societies."

He pointed out that China, which is considered a major polluter, "is now the world's second-biggest user of wind power and the biggest manufacturer of solar photovoltaics."

"In China, a third of the stimulus package adopted in response to the global economic crisis was broadly environmental," he said.

He also hailed environmental efforts in various other countries, including Costa Rica, Nepal and Rwanda, as well as his own country, South Korea.

"National action need not wait for the negotiations to advance. In fact, such steps can actually help negotiators to produce the agreements we need," he said.

Sultan al-Jaber, the chief executive officer of Masdar, a body created by oil-rich Abu Dhabi to champion the cause of promoting clean energy, stressed the need to use a mix of energy resources.

"Energy must come from a mix of sources... Solar energy is clean, efficient and cost-effective. A mix should also include peaceful nuclear energy, and, of course, renewable energy," he said.

He also called for greater competition in the production of renewable energy, which would result in technological gains.

"Competition drives innovation," he said.

Abu Dhabi sits on proven oil reserves totalling 98.2 billion barrels -- 95 percent of the United Arab Emirates' reserves, which are the world's seventh largest.

The emirate in 2009 won the right to be home to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), despite criticism of its high carbon footprint.

Abu Dhabi's planned renewable-energy-powered Masdar City, whose name means "source" in Arabic, is expected to cover six square

kilometres (2.3 square miles) and eventually to house 40,000 residents.

It is to be located about 17 kilometres (around 10.5 miles) from downtown Abu Dhabi. But for now, Masdar Institute's buildings are the only ones to have been completed.

In October, Masdar City got its first residents, some 175 Masdar Institute students. But the development is running behind schedule and is expected to be completed between 2020 and 2025, instead of 2016 as first planned.

The cost to build it is said to have dropped from 22 billion dollars (16.6 billion euros) to between 18.7 and 19.8 billion dollars.

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