

# World leaders make new call for clean energy

January 18 2010, by Ali Khalil

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An enormous iceberg breaks off the Knox Coast in the Australian Antarctic Territory, 2008. Foreign leaders raised a fresh alarm on global warming, urging international action to increase use of clean energy at a four-day forum that opened in the oil-rich emirate of Abu Dhabi.

World leaders raised a fresh alarm on global warming Monday, urging international action to increase use of clean energy at a four-day forum that opened in the oil-rich emirate of Abu Dhabi.

"If we don't act now, our [coral reefs](#) and rainforests will die, desert countries will become unbearably hot and low lying countries like the Maldives, will slip beneath the rising seas," said the president of the Maldives, Mohammed Nasheed.

"Tackling [climate change](#) is not like dealing with other global issues, such as trade or disarmament. We do not have the luxury of time to meet, year after year, in endless negotiations," the leader of the low-lying

Indian Ocean nation told participants at the World Future [Energy Summit](#).

Nasheed was referring to the Copenhagen climate talks last month, which ended with a non-binding agreement to reduce rises in [global temperatures](#), seen as a lukewarm commitment to save the planet.

"The Copenhagen Accord, in its current form, will not prevent catastrophic climate change. Our challenge this year, and next, is therefore to strengthen the accord so it becomes a blueprint for planet-saving action," Nasheed said.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan echoed the warnings of global warming, stressing the gravity of the challenge.

"Mitigating global [carbon emission](#) is one of the important hurdles ahead of us," he said addressing the opening session of the forum.

He highlighted the measures taken by Turkey to reduce dependency on fossil energy, saying that [renewable sources](#) represent 20 percent of the country's generated power, and that Ankara aims to increase this share to 30 percent by 2023.

He also said Turkey wants to contribute to Europe's security of energy resources through transporting gas, which is a cleaner source of energy than coal and oil.

"Our country aims... to contribute to Europe's energy security," he said, pointing to the Nabucco gas pipeline agreement, signed in July between Turkey and four EU states, which is aimed at reducing Europe's gas dependence on Russia.

Meanwhile, Qatar's Energy Minister Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah,

whose country is the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas, protested against the use of the term "alternative" when referring to renewable energy.

"I'm not against renewables. I don't like the word alternative... We need a mix (in energy sources) but we don't need to eliminate each other," he told participants.

Qatar's reserves of natural gas amount to approximately 890 trillion cubic feet (25.2 trillion cubic metres), almost 15 percent of total world reserves and the world's third-largest behind Russia and Iran.

Spain's Prince Felipe said "interdependence amongst nations is no longer of an abstract nature," as he called for nations to work together to combat global warming.

He said Spain was currently generating 20,000 megawatts of electricity through wind power and was hoping to double that figure by 2020.

Denmark's Prince Frederik said the presence of businesses at the forum "proves that green technology is not only good for the environment but also (for) business... There is a significant potential for employment growth" in this industry.

And Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said "energy efficiency is the lowest-hanging fruit... Our planet can no longer withstand man's wastage."

Parallel to the summit runs an exhibition of the latest technologies of renewable energy.

Abu Dhabi was chosen last year to be the host of the newly established International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) in an apparent

acknowledgement of its commitment to harness clean energy.

The emirate sits on more than 95 percent of the proven oil reserves of the United Arab Emirates -- the world's fifth largest.

It has established the Masdar initiative to create a zero carbon-emissions city that would be home to 50,000 people. Masdar will host the headquarters of IRENA, as well as research institutes that would aim to build Abu Dhabi's status as a leading party in renewable energy.

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