

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to be here.

Your presence here today reflects the importance Africa places not only on addressing climate change, but working together and partnering to ensure a sustainable future for generations to come. I commend your efforts and can assure you that in the United Arab Emirates, climate change is one of our leadership's highest priorities.

Climate change knows no boundaries. And so, developing nations **must** have a voice **and a role** in the development of clean, affordable and renewable energy.

We must be able to reap the same benefits of renewable energy as those enjoyed by the developed world,

And we must also be able to leverage those benefits to develop our own economies, increasing the prosperity of our citizens.

The UAE is dedicated to ensuring access to renewable energy by developing countries.

We are fully committing ourselves to becoming a center for the development and the deployment of renewable energy technology.

It is a commitment that has manifested itself in many ways.

First, we have dedicated ourselves to achieving a 7% renewable energy target by 2020.

We believe this is a strong statement and demonstrates that we, as an OPEC nation are planning for a future less dependent on oil and that we recognize the impacts of climate change.

In addition, we are the first nation to invest across the complete value chain of renewable energy in a comprehensive manner through the Masdar Initiative.

Masdar is Abu Dhabi's multi-faceted investment in the development and commercialization of renewable energy and sustainability related technologies.

We are doing this through a number of innovative ways.

For example, we are focusing on capacity building by fostering talent and expertise in renewable energy disciplines through the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology in partnership with MIT. The Institute offers graduate level, research driven programs focused on advanced energy and sustainability to students from all over the world.

I am proud that we have received applications from 9 African countries for the class of 2010 and I hope this number will only increase.

One of the crucial components of the Masdar Initiative is Masdar City, the world's first *carbon neutral, zero-waste city*, completely powered by renewable energy.

Masdar City will become a blueprint for cities around the world striving for sustainability, and a living laboratory to advance clean energy solutions.

The overall goal of the Masdar Initiative is to help solve some of mankind's most pressing issues: climate change, energy security, and sustainable human development.

And through Masdar, the UAE hopes to contribute in a meaningful way to renewable energy's role in mitigating climate change.

As a natural next step in the UAE's progression to becoming a global centre for renewable energy innovation -- and so that all nations are part of this debate, the UAE is now campaigning to secure the headquarters of IRENA, the International Renewable Energy Agency, in Masdar City.

For IRENA to succeed, the agency needs to send a clear message that renewable energy is crucial for the future of all countries, whether developed or developing.

With hardly any international agencies in the developing world, placing IRENA's headquarters in the UAE, at the crossroads of East and West, North and South, will clearly send that message.

The UAE is prepared to commit significant resources to incubate IRENA in its first years and to help the agency reach its goals for decades to come.

This incubation period aims at ensuring that IRENA hits the ground running, and can focus on its primary mandate – the widespread adoption of renewable energy on a global scale to mitigate climate change.

At the helm of our commitment is a pledge from the Abu Dhabi Development Fund to allocate 50 million dollars, annually, to help developing nations build their renewable energy sectors.

Furthermore, the UAE will provide IRENA with state of the art facilities free of charge, and a financial contribution to the agency's budget averaging \$22 million annually.

One of our most tangible contributions to IRENA will be a dedicated effort to ensure the transfer and dissemination of affordable energy technologies to developing countries.

This will allow IRENA to provide practical and tangible benefits for all developing countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, the UAE is a politically neutral, tolerant country, and a model developing economy in the region.

We have the infrastructure, the human capital, the financial means, and the political will to host IRENA and ensure its success.

The decision for IRENA's headquarters will be made in Sharm El Sheikh on June 29th.

I hope that all of the countries represented here today will support our effort by voting for UAE in June.

I thank you all for your dedication to this cause and for giving me the opportunity to speak with you today.

Thank you.