

**Deutsche Welle Global Media Forum 2010  
Bonn, 21 June 2010**

**Address by Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary  
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Thank you for the opportunity to address this year's Global Media Forum.

Climate change is at the front of political leaders' minds, on the agendas of corporate boardrooms, and reflected in the hopes and fears of billions of people around the world. Without the media to report what is happening in the field of climate change, this simply would not have been the case.

Around 3,500 media representatives came to Copenhagen, and some of the journalists who were at that event are here with us now. While Copenhagen did not ring in the green economic revolution that many people had hoped it might, it was nonetheless an important milestone in the fight against climate change, and it was an important milestone on the road to green growth.

There are three main reasons for this:

1. The presence of over 120 heads of state and government, many bringing pledges of emission cuts and money, was a dramatic statement that climate change had made it to the highest level of global policy and that the political will existed to confront the problem, even if the complete answers were not forthcoming.
2. Second – and this is less known - it also advanced negotiations on the essential infrastructure needed for well-functioning, global climate change cooperation. A priority task of the talks this year is to turn that into a working reality at Cancún.
3. Third, COP15 produced the Copenhagen Accord. 39 developing countries have communicated information on their mitigation plans, either in economy-wide terms or in specific actions. Together all these countries represent well over 80 percent of global energy emissions. Another priority of the negotiations is to round up these promises and pledges - this political will - into an international agreement. The pledges to cut emissions are not enough yet to keep us on a course to a world below the two degree temperature rise, let alone a world of 1.5 degrees. But, if we are to get there, nations must both keep the promises they have made and then raise the ambition through international cooperation.

The next UN Climate Change Conference is set to take place in Cancún, Mexico, at the end of this year. Cancún has the potential to complete what remained incomplete in Copenhagen. In doing so, a fully operational set of implementation measures can be put in place, that enables all countries to engage in climate change action.

Journalists, when reporting about climate change, need to communicate clearly what the risks of inaction are - and how the world needs to adapt to its inevitable effects.

*One major aspect of the climate change story that is perhaps under-reported is that of the green growth opportunities*

Many, perhaps all, countries fear in one way or another that climate change action will constrain their economic growth. For policy makers in the industrialised world, the prime concern is whether jobs and a stable society will still be there in the future. For policy makers in the developing world, the primary concerns are economic growth and poverty alleviation.

The lion's share of the growth in global emissions will over the next years come from developing countries, as they seek to expand their economies in order to reduce poverty levels. This growth will require enormous amounts of energy, which in turn requires investments of trillions of dollars in energy infrastructure.

Depending on how energy is produced, both in the North and the South, the world will either follow an energy path that pushes emissions up by 50% by 2050. Or it can use a climate change regime to get to the 50% reduction in emissions by 2050 that science has said is needed.

According to the International Energy Agency, world demand for primary energy will be 40% higher in 2030 than it was in 2007. Fossil fuels will remain the dominant source of energy, accounting for 77% of the increase in demand. Developing countries will account for no less than 93% of the increase in global demand by 2030, driven mainly by China and India. For oil, this would mean adding the equivalent of 4 Saudi Arabias to production, half to meet the decline in existing oil fields and half to meet the increase in demand. Energy imports into developing countries cost millions of dollars annually - money that can be used for healthcare or education.

Last year, the International Energy Agency found that the economic crisis has created a unique window of opportunity to shift the world's energy sector onto a 450 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent scenario, which gives us a 50% chance of keeping the global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius.

Many investments in the energy sector have been postponed as a result of the crisis. In 2008 and 2009, this also hit investments in renewable energies. But to a larger extent, it has affected investments in unsustainable technologies, which would have locked emission-intensive technologies into energy sectors for the next 20 or 30 years to come.

As economic growth picks up again, it is critical to direct new investments into low-emissions infrastructure. This is a chance the world cannot afford to miss. Nations can now seize the opportunity of greening economic growth through an effective UN climate change regime which can help mobilize significant amounts of capital towards green technology.

In the UN climate negotiations, there is a growing common understanding that developing country actions can be credited as nationally appropriate mitigation actions - or

“NAMAs”, as we call them. NAMAs are actions of developing countries supported by finance and technology from industrialised nations.

Industrialised countries are largely responsible for the current levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and have per capita emissions anywhere between four and twenty times higher than those of developing nations - so it is clear they must take the lead. Work on these crediting mechanisms has been set in motion at the most recent negotiating sessions, as the benefits are becoming increasingly clear.

Let me end on a personal note to the media in this room. I ask you, the journalists, to devote the time and energy required to understand and report both the human dimension and the economic aspects of climate change, looking at both the risks and opportunities.

I know how hard it is for journalists to find space in their newspapers to publish reports on climate change. But please keep fighting for what you know is one of the key issues of our time, if not the greatest challenge facing humanity.

These past four years, I have given around 700 media interviews and more than 200 press conferences. Some of the bad headlines that have resulted from this have surprised me – and I’m sure some of them have even surprised you. But that is what it means to have a free and fair press.

Thank you for all the attention you have paid over the years - my job would surely have been a lot less interesting without you.

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