

COP26 Speech

Your royal highnesses, your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

For millennia, technological and economic development moved at a steady pace. That is until the advent of the Industrial Revolution, which set in motion profound changes for mankind, ushering in an era of change made on a previously unimaginable scale.

In the nineteenth century, the vast majority of humanity experienced extreme poverty; today, that figure stands at less than 10 percent. Two hundred years ago, half of children born died before the age of five; now, less than four percent suffer this fate. Since then, our progress led to the rise of a global order characterized by economic interdependence, which, in turn, brought stability to many regions of the world.

Sadly, these feats, however impressive, came at a price for our planet and our collective duty is to ensure that it does not cost us the earth. In doing so, we must harness our productive potential with the same drive that greeted the dawn of the Industrial Age – marshalling the might of innovation and human ingenuity to propel a greener and more prosperous world.

PAUSE

Emissions reductions through investment in renewable energy is certainly a central feature of this approach. But, even as we increase renewable energy's share of global demand, carbon will remain a fixture of the global energy mix for many years to come. Billions of tons of carbon will need to be removed and sequestered each year if we are to arrive at net zero and limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

PAUSE

While the Kingdom of Bahrain is responsible for just 0.07 percent of global emissions, we recognize, not least as an island nation, that climate change is a global challenge that requires global solutions. Developing the kinds of technologies necessary to meaningfully address the climate crisis requires us to both act in concert, but also to lead by example.

Today, I am pleased to announce that Bahrain is committed to reaching net zero by 2060 and has set a range of ambitious interim goals to ensure that we proceed without delay. By 2035, we will reduce emissions by 30 percent through decarbonization and efficiency initiatives and double our deployment of renewables from the targets we set at COP21. Our 2035 targets also include carbon removal solutions by quadrupling mangrove coverage, doubling tree coverage in Bahrain, and directly investing in carbon capture technologies, which we believe is essential.

Forums like COP26 and the recently concluded Middle East Green Initiative serve as vital reminders of our shared interests and common future. We must take advantage of these opportunities to deliver on the promises we make and have made, identifying multilateral solutions that, vitally, are accessible to all.

PAUSE

A future net-zero economy capable of propelling humanity to new heights depends entirely on the ability of all people to participate in it, both as producers and as consumers. We must therefore ensure that our work to curb emissions moves in lockstep with our work to improve livelihoods.

We owe it to posterity to leverage the achievements of the Industrial Age in order to deliver a cleaner, more prosperous future.

Thank you.