

20 September 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the United Nations Private Sector Forum on Sustainable Energy
for All**

Excellencies, Heads of State and Government, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my honour to join you today at the United Nations Private Sector Forum on Sustainable Energy for All. I commend the Secretary-General for his efforts in this area, notably his Strategy on Sustainable Energy for All, and thank him for the invitation to make some brief remarks today.

Access to electricity and modern fuels for cooking and heating are basic necessities in everyday life. Yet, we are all too aware that billions of people lack access to these energy sources.

The result is that - beyond individuals' and communities' significant daily hardship – our common efforts towards sustainable development and poverty eradication are stunted. Securing access for all to energy services is indeed crucial for meeting the MDGs.

The Rio+20 Summit in June will be an important opportunity to address the water plus food plus energy equation. I would encourage participants to work on solutions for the “bottom billion” who currently lack access to these basic services. As President of the General Assembly, I am also committed to supporting the preparations for this conference in an open and transparent manner.

In addition to being an essential element for sustainable development and poverty eradication, universal access to energy goes hand in hand with fighting climate change. By adopting cleaner fossil fuel technologies and ensuring access to new and renewable energy, countries can also make important steps in the battle against climate change.

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Companies have an important role to play in helping to meet sustainable energy goals. They have the potential to have profound impacts on areas such as energy access and efficiency, and emissions reductions. I am convinced that corporate sustainability movement – as advanced by the United Nations Global Compact – can make an important contribution to the UN's work to achieve a sustainable future. As President of the General Assembly I will do my utmost to foster this relationship between the private sector and the UN.

In December 2010, the UN General Assembly declared 2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All. This year-long observance will provide much-needed focus the efforts of the United Nations system towards ensuring energy access for populations worldwide. It will also help to promote the sustainable use of traditional energy resources, cleaner technologies and newer energy sources.

I would encourage Member States to work together to celebrate this International Year. By combining our energies, we can bring energy to the world.

Thank you.