

**The Hon. Arnold Schwarzenegger**  
**UN Private Sector Forum on Sustainable Energy for All**  
**20 September 2011**

**REMARKS AS DELIVERED**

Thank you very much, Director-General Yumkella, for the great introduction. When you say “short” speech or “little”, those kind of words don’t really fit for me, so I don’t know about that.

I also want to say thank you very much to the Deputy Secretary-General for your great efforts and for being here today and for the great work that you are doing.

And Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. I want to thank him also. He is a visionary. He doesn’t just talk about the environment. But every day, he is working to make his vision of a clean, green world a reality.

The world is lucky to have such a hero in the fight against climate change.

Now, providing energy to every single person on Earth by the year 2030 is not going to be easy.

Especially knowing that our population is expected to pass 7 billion next month. And by the year 2030, you will have at least 8 billion people.

Some people, because of that, will tell you that our goal is impossible.

But you know we have heard this all our lives. People always say something is impossible, it can’t be done. And I have heard it in my life.

When I wanted to be a bodybuilding champion, they said it’s impossible. When I wanted to be a leading man in movies, they said it’s impossible. When I ran for governor, they said it’s impossible, it can’t be done.

But I love challenges.

I’m an optimist. I’ve ignored the naysayers my whole life.

Now I want all of you to join me in ignoring the pessimists, the naysayers and the critics, because they will always complain and be negative no matter what. It’s our job now to hit the mute button and get to work.

The Swiss-German novelist Hermann Hesse said, “To achieve the possible, you must first try the impossible.”

Well, Güssing did the impossible.

You may not have heard of Güssing. It’s a tiny, little town in Austria that has a population of just 4,000. I told their story when I spoke to the Vienna Energy Forum not too long ago.

But the bottom line is that 15 years ago, Güssing couldn't pay its enormous power bill. Well today, they are completely energy independent.

They made a commitment to generate all of their own energy, and they succeeded.

That's what I call freedom.

And that's the freedom that we are talking about here today.

When you talk about universal energy access and green energy future, you aren't just talking about flipping on a light switch.

No, it's about giving people the ability to control their power, instead of praying it's a good day for a faulty grid.

It's about stopping the unnecessary deaths that pollution causes.

And it's about saying no to a system where one dictator can have a bad day and decide to cut off our main source of energy and send prices through the roof.

So it's time to get to work, like that little town that I mentioned just earlier, Güssing.

And Güssing is just one example of great work.

There are examples of great action all over the world.

Companies, cities, states and communities are moving forward with spectacular solutions.

Just a few blocks from here, for instance, the Empire State Building cut its energy use by 40 percent by weatherizing.

Abu Dhabi is building an entirely new eco-city for 50,000 people and 1,500 businesses that will be completely sustainable and clean.

Oslo has reduced its energy consumption from its street lights by 70 percent by upgrading to efficient light bulbs.

Hundreds of cities in the United States have switched their buses and their garbage trucks to clean natural gas.

I could literally stand here for hours and hours and talk about all of the great examples of things that are happening all over the world.

That's the power of regional governments and the private sector when they work together.

This is why I'm so excited about this conference here today. Because that partnership is exactly what this forum is all about.

In fact, when I look back at my time as Governor, I'm most proud that California was one of those regional governments that was part of the solution, instead of standing on the sidelines.

It was of course a team effort. I didn't do that by myself.

The public sector and the private sector. Republicans and Democrats. Community organizations and universities. We all worked together.

And that's why we were able to achieve so much.

- Building the Hydrogen Highway
- Adding a million solar roofs
- The Green Building Initiative
- The Renewables – moving them up to 33 percent
- The Low Carbon Fuel Standard
- The Tailpipe Emission Reductions

By the way, after we did it in California, it was adopted by the Obama Administration on a national level. Which is a perfect example of regional governments leading the way and the federal government following.

And of course, we also made a commitment to reduce our greenhouse gases by 25 percent by the year 2020 and 85 percent by the year 2050.

And because of all of these policies, California is today 40 percent more energy efficient than the rest of the United States.

Now, let me just talk a little bit about the economic benefits of our green policies. Because clean technology always gave a big boost to our economy, especially during this last recession.

The green sector has produced 10 times the amount of jobs of any other sector in California, and California has attracted now 60 percent of the green tech venture capital in the United States, even though California only represents 10 percent of the United States.

And because of that great partnership, everywhere you look in California things are coming up green.

Solar panel manufacturers, wind farms, retrofitted office buildings, even hydrogen locomotives and hybrid tugboats.

We're building right now the biggest solar plant in the world.

Electric car companies come to California because they are inspired by our policies.

As a matter of fact, things are going so well that The Wall Street Journal called our green economy "the new California Gold Rush."

So we need now to inspire that kind of action all over the world.

And luckily I've always thought globally, even in fitness and in bodybuilding.

Yes, I like to flex and yes, I like to lift and win one bodybuilding championship after the other.

But what was most important to me was to inspire everyone else around the world to love lifting weights and to get fit and healthy. I wanted to inspire a fitness revolution.

The same was with the movies, promoting them worldwide.

And I want to do the same thing for the environment and our green energy future – promote it around the world.

We have to make sure that the world knows about all the great work that's already being done.

When we share our green solutions and inspire others, our impact is multiplied many times.

When it comes to addressing global climate issues, we don't have to wait for the national capitals to make it happen.

We have seen it with California and so many others.

Let's not forget that some of the most powerful movements in human history did not start at the top.

They did not start in Washington or in Paris or in Moscow or in Beijing.

They started at the grassroots level.

And the battle for clean energy is no different.

To empower our sub-national approach, last year we even launched the R20 with the encouragement of the Secretary-General.

It brings together regional governments, community organizations, corporations, the private sector and educational institutions to create strong green economies around the world.

This way, we can address climate issues in two directions, from the "bottom-up" and from the "top-down."

And one day the two will meet in the middle. And that will mean we will achieve critical mass.

But until that day, I'm going to keep pushing regional governments around the world to come off the sidelines and to realize their unbelievable power and influence.

California didn't wait for Washington, because we knew that Washington was asleep at the wheel. There was no action there. We could have waited and waited for years or decades.

So I want every regional leader around the world to know: you don't have to wait. You can join us. You can be part of the action and part of the solution.

The R20 will teach regional governments about different technologies that are available and connect them with the right companies.

And, we are aware that it isn't just about the know-how, but it's also about the funding.

That's why the R20 has been working on a funding mechanism, and partners like the Asian Development Bank and the Rothschild Foundation, to make sure that regional governments don't have to walk away from a clean energy projects just because they don't have the funds.

Now here's another thing that I just quickly want to mention, something that we learned in California.

If we want to fight climate change, and if we want a green energy future, and if we want to have action that matches our vision, we must do a better job in communicating.

Too many environmentalists and experts think that the only way to fight climate change is to talk about melting ice caps and warming trends and rising sea levels.

Now these are very important arguments, but they don't always work.

Some people can't relate to it. And some people don't believe in it.

We have to talk about things that matter to people.

Remember the other side that wants to keep polluting? They have simple language.

They say that if you go green, then everything will be more expensive and you will lose your job. Well that freaks people out.

We should do exactly the same thing.

We should talk about things that people really care about, that mean something to people.

Like jobs. Or health. Or premature death. Energy independence. National security.

Not just climate change.

I kind of look at it like a four-legged stool.

I feel like right now, we are just using one leg.

The one-legged stool is wobbly, but the four-legged stool is stable.

The first leg could be jobs.

Everyone loves to have a job. No matter where you go in the world, people like to work.

Who could argue against this?

The second leg is national security.

I mean, for decades, industrialized democracies have been in the terrible position of having to purchase oil from foreign countries, and send vast amounts of money outside their borders.

A green and sustainable energy future would end this dependence and give us energy freedom.

The third leg should be health.

We all know that pollution kills. Cornell University concluded that a staggering 40 percent of deaths worldwide are caused by water, air and soil pollution.

In the United States alone, we have 100,000 people die a year because of pollution.

Why is there no uproar? Why is there no one protesting in the streets about that? Because we're failing to communicate.

It's our job to do a greater job on this and to get our message out there.

And the fourth leg, of course, ought to be climate change which we have been talking about all along.

So ladies and gentlemen, what I'm saying is that you can have the best product in the world, but if you don't promote it or market it the right way, no one will buy it.

You have nothing.

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Anyway, this is a great crowd here today. Of Heads of State and investors and policymakers to engineers to environmentalists. We have it all here. There is a great wealth of knowledge assembled here in this room.

I see a lot of faces that will be heroes for moving the world toward a green economy.

At the first United Nations Conference in 1945, President Truman said, "We must prevent, if human mind, heart and hope can prevent it, the repetition of the disaster from which the entire world will suffer for years to come."

Well today, it is our job to prevent the disaster of inaction.

I know that we have the minds to develop the technology.

I know that we have the heart to ignore the doubters.

And I know that we have enough hope, because I know the Secretary-General and other champions like him will continue to inspire the world.

So I promise you that I will carry our message around the world and make sure that people hear our great news. That is my mission.

And I know that we can accomplish our goal of a green energy future by the year 2030, no matter what any one says.

So let's do it. Let's make the impossible possible.

Thank you very much.