Secretary-General, Ministers, Excellencies, Honoured guests, it is a great honour for the International Energy Agency to participate in this session as we have been working for more than a decade now to focus attention on the key strategic challenge of energy poverty.

Our latest World Energy Outlook 2011 includes some alarming facts. Today 1.3 billion people do not have electricity and 2.7 billion people still rely on the traditional use of biomass for cooking. And, worse, without a major policy effort this situation is set to change very little over the next 20 years, actually deteriorating in some respects.

This is shameful and unacceptable and will need to be addressed if the global community is to achieve its goals of eradicating poverty and accelerating social and economic development.

Fortunately, as we have just heard from the Secretary General, concern about the issue is growing and a goal has been set to achieve sustainable energy for all by the year 2030.

For anyone that believes bringing electricity to 1.3 billion people, and clean cooking facilities to 2.7 billion people, would have a significant negative impact on domestic energy security or global climate change, let me disavow you of this. Universal access by 2030 would increase global demand for fossil fuels and carbon dioxide emissions by less than 1%, a trivial amount in relation to the contribution made to human development and welfare.

Our analysis provides the further encouraging news that reaching universal modern
energy access by 2030 will not cost the earth. We estimate it can be achieved with
total investment of $1 trillion – an average of $48 billion per year. That is, however,
more than five-times the level of investment that is currently going towards
extending access to modern energy services, so a major ramp up in investment is
definitely needed.

• The upcoming Rio+20 Summit represents an invaluable opportunity for the
international community to recognise that the current situation is intolerable,
commit itself to effect the necessary change and set targets and indicators to
monitor progress. To contribute to what will hopefully be an extremely successful
meeting in Rio, the IEA is currently working on a number of major reports that will
provide input to the High-level Group to Rio+20.

  o The first examines the objective of universal energy access by 2030, the scale
    of the challenge and the ways in which the UN Sustainable Energy for All
    initiative can help to facilitate its achievement.

  o The second looks at the targets that have been put forward of doubling the
    rate of improvement in energy efficiency and doubling the share of
    renewable energy in the global energy mix. Based on our World Energy
    Outlook analysis, it is clear that these are both ambitious targets, and
    meeting them will require strong commitment from governments, the
    private sector and civil society. But as the world’s demand for energy services
    will inevitably continue its strong growth with rising population and
    prosperity in the emerging economies, it is imperative that we consume
    energy more efficiently and that the energy comes from lower-carbon
    sources.

• Let me close by stressing that there are three global energy challenges that are
equally important: (i) energy security; (ii) achieving a sustainable energy future, and
(iii) energy access for all. These three challenges are clearly interlinked, and they
must all be tackled if any one of them is to be achieved. As energy security is at the
core of the IEA’s remit, so we recognise that energy security cannot genuinely be achieved until it is achieved for all.