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**Statement by President Barroso at the
press point with UN Secretary General
Ban Ki-moon following the opening
ceremony of the EU Sustainable
Energy For all Summit**

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Press point

Brussels, 16th April 2012

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to welcome the Secretary General Mr Ban Ki-moon to the European Commission today. We just opened the "EU Sustainable Energy for All Summit," and I am sure that throughout the day all participants will engage in a productive and substantial debate.

The "Sustainable Energy for all Summit" focused on an initiative of the Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon, and I really congratulate him for this initiative and his leadership. This "Sustainable Energy for All" focused on energy access, which is key for global development: today, while one part of the planet lives in the digital era and in the times of digital communication, the other part has still no access to basic electricity, power or energy.

Being in the dark every day is the tragic reality of 1.3 bn people in the world today. That is why I really applaud Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his most relevant "Sustainable Energy for All" initiative, in which the European Commission is strongly involved also through the very active participation of Commissioner Piebalgs.

We fully support the ambitious goals set forth by the Secretary General.

They dovetail with the EU's own "20-20-20" commitments. In fact, the EU is leading what we call the third industrial revolution and we are committed to pursue on this path.

But we are also committed to promote access to energy, renewables and energy efficiency in developing countries. Today, I announced a new Commission initiative called "Energising Development." Its ambitious goal is clear: we want to help provide access to sustainable energy services to 500 million people by 2030. This is a huge objective, but if we work together it can be done.

With 1bn Euros invested in global energy projects over the last five years, the EU is already the first global donor in this area.

But we should not rest on our laurels. Therefore, in the framework of "Energising Development" initiative, we will create an EU Technical Assistance Facility, initially in excess of €50 million over the next two years. This will help those developing countries that "opt in" to the UN Sustainable Energy for All initiative and commit to the necessary reforms to catalyse and leverage investment. Because it is clear that aid alone is not enough, we need the private sector on board and a strong commitment of our partner countries.

Secondly, in the next months, the EU and Member States will also look to providing a significant level of support – in the order of a further several hundred million Euros - to boost concrete new investments and projects in sustainable energy for developing countries. We will flesh out the details of this initiative in the weeks and months to come, and it will also be part of our European contribution to the Rio+20 Summit in June.

Investing in access to clean energy will help developing countries to create jobs, markets, and ensure sustainable growth and this is our most important goal there, sustainable growth. I am confident that, by acting shoulder to shoulder with the UN the EU can create and help create an "energy revolution" that helps and will give a great contribution to the eradication of poverty in Africa and also in other developing worlds.

The commitment that we are making today is in line with our strong engagement with the UN. In fact, we have a very good cooperation with the UN and I want to thank once again Secretary General Mr Ban Ki-moon for this. In fact, the European Union together with its Member States is today the biggest financial contributor to UN and to UN Agencies. I believe that our cooperation is central to a stable, peaceful and multilateral international order.

Indeed, the United Nations and the European Union are two central pillars of effective multilateralism and global governance and we are working hand in hand to address the most pressing challenges of the world and of the global community.

In a short while, I will continue my discussions with Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on topics of common interest and concern.

If sustainable development, environment and climate action are truly global issues, so are peace, stability and democracy. While there are positive signs and developments coming from some of the "Arab Spring" countries, or Myanmar, there are equally issues that greatly concern us. In this respect, we will have the opportunity to exchange views on the situation in Syria and Iran.

On Syria let me express the European support to the work of the United Nations and its special Envoy, Kofi Annan. We call on the Syrian government to fully respect and apply the six point plan it has committed to and accept as a matter of urgency the deployment of humanitarian assistance in the country. This is our number one priority.

On Iran, I sincerely expect that the dialogue which has just resumed will deliver progress. This is ever more important if we want to preserve peace and stability in the region and in the world.

Let me also use this occasion to reiterate our strong condemnation of the most recent military coup in Guinea-Bissau as done already by the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the Security Council of the United Nations, the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries) and the ECOWAS (Community of West African States).

The EU calls on all those involved, in particular the leadership of the armed forces to immediately restore the constitutional order and the rule of law. We also urge the immediate release of Guinea's political leaders. The international community will hold the captors responsible if the detainees' safety is put at risk.

Let me say some words in Portuguese, because I want them to be heard in Bissau.

O povo guineense já sofreu demasiado e não merece que alguns continuem a comprometer a sua estabilidade, o seu desenvolvimento e a consolidação da sua democracia. A União Europeia está ao lado dos líderes democraticamente eleitos e não tolerará golpes contrários à Constituição guineense e ao Estado de direito. A estabilidade e a democracia são essenciais para a prosperidade e para o bem-estar do povo da Guiné-Bissau.

In all these issues we are working hand in hand with the United Nations. Our cooperation is indispensable to bring peace and stability where it is most needed.

Finally, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and I will witness, after our working lunch, the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women between the EU and UN Women, establishing a strategic partnership between both organizations.

Without a doubt, The MoU is a clear example of the breath and scope of our cooperation and is a further step in promoting fairer societies. And that is crucially important for developed and developing countries alike!

I am, therefore, looking forward to the continuation our talks this afternoon and I would like, once more, to welcome the Secretary General to the European Commission and to congratulate him very sincerely on his "Sustainable Energy for All" initiative, as well as on the great work that he and the United Nations and its agencies are doing to deliver a better world for us all.

I thank you for your attention.