

**Message of Senator Loren Legarda  
Launching of Energy Policy Review  
16 June 2016 | Kalayaan Hall, Malacañang Palace**

Last April 22, the Philippines signed the Paris Agreement, a commitment for a better future for our children and grandchildren.

Today, even as we have yet to ratify the Agreement, we are taking an important step towards keeping our commitment to mitigate climate change by doing a review on our energy policies. We are obliged to do so.

We must take urgent climate action because it is our responsibility – our intergenerational responsibility to ensure that succeeding generations will continue to enjoy a balanced and healthful ecology.

Our extractive and consumptive lifestyle, and misplaced notion of development have brought our world in a state of utter disrepair. We have been so focused on development without realizing that development without conscience destroys the world.

It has been said many times that as a developing nation, we need energy to build the foundations of our growth. I subscribe to a healthy energy mix, but not on the misguided axiom that our country should develop and acquire the energy and power it needs at all costs, regardless of whether it sustains or kills life.

Today's issue is not just about security of energy supply. It is not just about reliability or affordability. It is about increasing clean energy supply, and using it wisely and efficiently. Energy security that assails the safety of our people and the environment can never guarantee inclusive development.

I acknowledge the fact that we cannot totally get rid of coal today. Since we have not developed enough baseload renewable energy, we need to see coal as a transition energy source. But we seek the rapid development of more renewable energy capacities so that in time, we can achieve greater self-sufficiency, sustainability and security in the energy sector.

Our country is rich in renewable energy. Estimates from past studies by the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory indicate that the Philippines has 246,000 megawatts of untapped renewable energy capacity. This is thirteen times more than our current installed capacity. Failure to develop these capacities would be unforgivable.

Renewable energy currently accounts for 33% of the country's energy mix. I can say we have reached considerable progress; but we cannot stop just yet. We should have a good energy mix where there is a bias for renewables.

We have a Renewable Energy Law that provides for the full development and use of RE in the country. It is said that we have one of the best RE laws in the world, and we adopted it long before other countries adopted their own.

The National Renewable Energy Program has set out aggressive targets on renewable energy development from 2011-2030, aiming to increase RE capacity to 15,304 megawatts by the year 2030.

There have been challenges, however, in our efforts to fast track the development of our renewable energy resources more aggressively. This is why the review of our energy policies is most welcome.

Growth is difficult to imagine without energy; and energy that does not take into consideration the needs of future generations can only destroy and not build. Development, progress, and quality of life cannot be the exclusive domain of a few.

Quality of life comes with a price tag—not necessarily beyond our reach. Building livable cities and communities requires good planning. More importantly, it requires a genuine commitment to the ultimate goal of putting the Earth's and our people's survival foremost over all other concerns.

The Philippines has committed to reduce GHG emissions by 70% by year 2030 from the business as usual scenario from energy, transport, waste, industry and forestry. We may not be a major emitter of carbon dioxide,

but that does not mean we have no obligation to promote environmental sustainability. We need to deliver on our commitment. We can only meet this if there is radical shift in the way our country develops our indigenous clean energy resources.

The world is not just about us. The future is not twenty years from now. It begins today, dedicated to those who will be born beyond our time. It is clear injustice to let future generations suffer the irreversible consequences of our irresponsible actions.

Thank you.