

## Setanarrøða hjá Sirið Stenberg, landsstýrskvinnu, til 100by2030

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to Sev for arranging this very relevant event.

Secondly I would like to say thank you for the opportunity to give this opening remarks.

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The theme for this event is energy. But we can put it into a bit broader context, I believe. For several years – at least a couple of decades – we have seen a trend towards a more sustainable way of living. That being both on the personal level and also with regard to nature and environment.

To a certain extent we have obtained a level of material standard where our needs have been met. I think that on the personal level we in the so-called developed part of the world have realized that in order to have a balanced life and a sustainable life, we need to pay more attention to how to obtain “the good life”.

Here most of us have the belief that good physical and mental health is very essential. And a prerequisite for the physical health is a clean environment.

Here is where energy is an essential element. Clean energy.

For many, many years emission of greenhouse gasses have been on the global agenda. However, unfortunately we still realize that the emission of greenhouse gasses is on a much too high level. The transition towards cleaner energy and less pollution seems to be very hard.

Energy demand will increase with 30% until 2040. I have noticed that the demand for electricity is expected to increase with 70%. And still 550 million people will not have access to electricity.

But according to scenarios from IEA, an increased share of the electricity generation will be based on renewables.

So we shall not give up striving forward.

As I mentioned, the transition towards a cleaner energy sector has been a bit slow. There may be various reasons for this, but in my opinion, economy is very essential – in addition to other factors.

To a large extent the transition has been and still is relying on idealists'. But the economical incentives have not been attractive enough.

This, the industry is fully aware of and we have seen the cost of technical solutions being decreasing very fast. Take for instance wind turbines and solar panels. Electric cars is maybe a bit behind yet, but they will catch up.

Currently the decrease in the oil price may have given the transition a small setback, but I am convinced that though the train may slow down a bit, it will definitely not stop. We, the politicians, have an important role to play here. We must ensure first of all the right direction, but also the pace of implementing solutions which enable us to reach the goals for a greener future.

It is interesting to learn that China and USA have ratified the Paris climate change agreement. Also it is interesting to learn that in China this year the sale of electric cars have increased by 130% as a result of

political initiatives. This can be seen as a sign of a more demand-driven energy sector in the future. Such development would definitely motivate a cost reduction of the technology.

From this broad perspective to our local situation.

Faroese governments have agreed to follow the international goal on decreasing emissions. So will we do as to the 2015 Paris climate change agreement.

Our motivation is related to the environment, as well as to the economy. We are extremely depending on import of oil products. Some years the import of oil amounts to 25% of our total export. That is way too high - And in addition the rapid changes in the oil price by themselves makes the situation even more challenging seen from an economical planning point of view.

This government has decided that by 2025, heating of 50% of all buildings and living houses shall be electrified rather than heated by oil as it mainly is now and that by 2030 the electricity generation shall be 100% based on renewables. We are aware that these goals are ambitious and will take hard work to achieve.

Occasionally the argument against these goals is that our emission of greenhouse gases is so insignificant that we should not bother. What is significant and what is not can be calculated in many ways – when measured on a population share basis, our CO<sub>2</sub> emission is a factor 3,5. Calculated on an area basis our “share” could be 30 times the actual emission.

The point of departure towards a more sustainable energy sector onshore is not bad: we have renewable energy far in excess of our needs. We have plenty of wind and rain, strong tidal currents and though we are not Sahara, we do have long, light days during the summer period when there is a bit less of wind and rain. The solar energy might be harvestable when the cost of the technology reaches a competitive level.

And we must not forget the potential in improving the energy efficiency of our buildings.

The challenge is to combine the energy with the use of it. The rain and wind can, as you know, be very extreme and generate huge amount of power. So we need storage capacity. To some extent pumped-to-storage can be part of the solutions, but we also look forward to getting the cost of batteries and capacity more competitive.

We have capable and motivated people to carry this huge task forward, but also we are open for cooperation with experts from abroad in order to get the best solutions for us, and maybe to develop solutions, which can be implemented in other geographical areas as well, so we can contribute with a fair share to a sustainable energy sector.

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Ladies and gentlemen.

I look very much forward to learn what these two days will bring and wish you all an interesting and inspiring event.

Thank you.