Following up on my earlier email with the embargo, please see the press release here.

Thanks,

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PRESS RELEASE

COP28 President-Designate to UN Climate Ambition Summit: “We are not powerless” to overcome the climate crisis and urges world to “Get after Gigatons”

- COP28 President-Designate Dr. Sultan Al Jaber addressed world leaders at the UN Climate Ambition Summit as part of the UN General Assembly, issuing a rallying cry to the international community to move from agreements to action on global climate change.
- His intervention follows the latest data from the Global Stocktake which confirmed “the world is falling short, and we are running out of time.”
- Speaking at the UN Secretary General’s climate summit he emphasised that “Climate change is our common enemy, and we must unite to fight it”.
- Dr. Al Jaber set out a comprehensive COP28 Action Agenda focusing on fast tracking a just and orderly energy transition, fixing climate finance, lives and livelihoods, and underpinning everything with full inclusivity.
- He encouraged the world to “rediscover humanity’s greatest strength: our capacity to collaborate, to overcome differences, and to harness the power of collective action.”

New York, 20 September 2023: Today, COP28 President-Designate Dr. Sultan Al Jaber addressed the UN Climate Ambition Summit in New York where he reminded the international community that “we are not powerless” to overcome the climate crisis and urged the world to “get after gigatons”.

The summit, which is the landmark climate engagement during United Nations General Assembly and was convened by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, was attended by world leaders, the private sector and civil society.

During his speech, the President-Designate called on the world to be “brave” and “bold” and get “back on track” to meet its climate ambitions, reaffirming the founding principles of the UN and to think “beyond borders, beyond politics, and beyond our own lifetimes.” He emphasised that “climate change is our common enemy, and we must unite to fight it”.

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Dr. Al Jaber pointed to recent data from the first Global Stocktake, which confirmed that “the world is falling short, and we are running out of time” but was emphatic in stating that it is not too late to change course. Indeed, he challenged the world to respond to the Global Stocktake with the highest levels of ambition, noting that “We know the size of the problem. The numbers are straightforward: 22 gigatons. That’s the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we need to cut in the next seven years to keep 1.5 within reach.”

Dr. Al Jaber went on to speak of the need for the international community to “remember that we are not powerless. As we have seen throughout history, when we act with optimism, urgency and solidarity, we can overcome even the most daunting challenges.”

He continued to share his belief that “in the face of the climate crisis, we can – and we will – rediscover humanity’s greatest strength: our capacity to collaborate, to overcome differences, and to harness the power of collective action.”

Dr. Al Jaber’s speech at the UN Climate Ambition Summit comes just 71 days before COP28, the global climate summit in the UAE. Dr Al Jaber noted, “We are working tirelessly to advance an ambitious climate agreement between all 198 Parties. However, climate change won’t be solved through agreement alone. It can only truly be addressed through Action. That’s precisely what we aim to achieve through the COP28 Action Agenda.”

Dr. Al Jaber went on to detail the COP28 Presidency’s ‘Action Agenda’ to get the world “back on track” to meet the ambitions set out in the 2015 Paris Agreement. He called on those present and listening across the world to make actionable commitments across its key pillars: to fast tracking a just and orderly energy transition, fix climate finance, focus on lives and livelihoods, and underpin everything with full inclusivity.

**Fast Tracking Energy Transition**

Speaking of the COP28 Presidency’s plan to fast track a just, orderly, and well-managed energy transition, Dr. Al Jaber told the audience that the “phase down of fossil fuels is essential. It is in fact inevitable. And it must go hand-in-hand with a rapid phase up of zero carbon alternatives.”

Dr. Al Jaber called on Parties to do their part towards a “massive expansion of renewable energy” and triple global capacity to 11TW by 2030. He also emphasised the power of energy efficiency improvements as “the simplest cheapest and fastest way to dial down emissions.”

He then called for all to be “brutally honest about what it will take to transition heavy emitting sectors” which cannot run on renewables alone, while noting the need to develop the entire hydrogen value chain.

Dr. Al Jaber also stressed the need to “rapidly and comprehensively decarbonize the energies we use today,” before reiterating his previous calls on the oil and gas industry to eliminate methane emissions by 2030 and align with net zero by or before 2050.

**Fixing Climate Finance**
Addressing the COP28 plan to fix climate finance, Dr. Al Jaber spoke of the need to restore trust between Parties and for contributing countries to deliver the $100 billion pledge this year. He then stressed the need to go “much further” and noted that “if we are to unlock trillions, we need to unleash the full potential of private capital.”

Dr. Al Jaber called for reform of “outdated international financial institutions”, and for “smart innovation across the financial system and better-functioning carbon markets.” In summary, Dr. Al Jaber noted that the objective was to “create an ecosystem where finance is more available, more accessible and more affordable, so that the money flows to where it needs to go — to the people who need it most.”

Focusing on People, Lives and Livelihoods
Dr. Al Jaber spoke of the urgent need to put “people, lives and livelihoods” at the centre of climate discussions. He noted that “people everywhere want the same things: clean water, clean air, economic opportunity, safety in the storm.” He then called for countries to “embed nature-positive investments in national climate strategies” and for “a smarter approach to how we grow and consumer food.” He also noted that COP28 would be the first COP to put global health on the COP agenda.

He acknowledged that “the key to all these measures will be finance.” He therefore called on countries to “double adaptation finance by 2025, replenish the Green Climate Fund, and operationalize the fund for Loss and Damage with early pledges.”

Full Inclusivity
Discussing the COP28 priority to underpin all climate action with full inclusivity, Dr. Al Jaber called on everyone to “put our differences aside and start partnering for progress.” He asked that “everyone who comes to COP28 to come with results in mind” and particularly key stakeholders, such as negotiators, the private sector and world leaders.

He stressed this would be the most inclusive COP yet, with plans to facilitate the participation of all groups, including subnational leaders, youth, businesses, philanthropists, Indigenous Peoples, and others.

Dr. Al Jaber concluded by his speech by calling on leaders to “turn pledges into projects and ambition into action”.

He continued “Action builds hope and hope builds action. Let us create that positive feedback loop. Let us be brave. Let us be bold. Let us do what is right and let us do what is necessary. Let’s activate a truly global response to the Global Stocktake, and let’s get back on track.”

- ENDS-

Notes to Editors COP28 UAE:

- COP28 UAE will take place at Expo City Dubai from November 30-December 12, 2023. The Conference is expected to convene over 70,000 participants, including heads of state, government officials, international industry leaders, private sector representatives, academics, experts, youth, and non-state actors.

COP28.com
As mandated by the Paris Climate Agreement, COP28 UAE will deliver the first ever Global Stocktake – a comprehensive evaluation of progress against climate goals.

The UAE will lead a process for all parties to agree upon a clear roadmap to accelerate progress through a pragmatic global energy transition and a “leave no one behind” approach to inclusive climate action.

The four pillars of the COP28 Presidency’s Action Agenda are fast tracking the energy transition, fixing climate finance, focusing on people, lives, and livelihoods, and underpinning everything with full inclusivity.