

“Amidst these multiple crises, this is a very pressing issue. And you are the leaders who have the tools in your hands. I urge you to use your wisdom and your policy priorities to bring ICT tools to help mitigate climate change,” Mr Ban told the meeting. “I know that the ICT industry itself is part of the problem, causing 2 to 3 per cent of greenhouse-gas emissions. But at the same time, by using ICT as tools, you can reduce at least 15 per cent of greenhouse-gas emissions in other sectors,” Mr Ban observed. He called on the leaders to provide answers and solutions rather than problems. “This is the main purpose of our meeting,” he said.

Mr Ban then recalled the one-day summit on climate change that he had convened in New York on 22 September 2009, and which was attended by 101 Heads of State and Government. “I have been working, directly or indirectly, with the United Nations for more than 30 years. And now, as Secretary-General, I have seen only one case when more than 100 Heads of State have gathered at one time, at one place,” said Mr Ban. He added that the richest nations had sat down together with the most vulnerable countries, not only sharing views and experience, but also demonstrating their political leadership and commitment.

Mr Ban went on to stress that even though the world is going through an economic crisis, it has resources to tackle climate change. “We were able to mobilize between USD 5 trillion to 6 trillion at the London meeting of the G20 countries in stimulus packages, coordinated internationally. The United States alone has mobilized more than USD 1.5 trillion, China, USD 600 billion, and most European countries, more than USD 1 trillion. So we have financial resources and technological capacity. What is largely lacking is the political will,” Mr Ban noted.

He called on political leaders and industry CEOs to demonstrate their leadership on the issue of climate change. Science has provided irrefutable evidence that climate change is happening much faster than we expected, he said. “Now, it is in the hands of business and political leaders to address these facts,” Mr Ban said. “You have the choice,” he told participants, as he urged all