

## **Prime Minister Helle Thorning Schmidt's opening remarks at 3GF side event "Sustainable Inclusive Growth: The way Forward from Rio+20 and G20"**

21 June 2012, Rio de Janeiro

President Lee Myung-Bak. Minister Elvira Quesada. Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to welcome you to this debate on how to engage the private sector in our endeavors to push for sustainable economic growth. Our debate is organized jointly by the Global Green Growth Forum and the Global Green Growth Institute.

Global Green Growth – with its many Gs – is not only difficult to say, it is also not easy to achieve. In fact, the concept of green, inclusive economic growth divides politicians and business people around the world. As we have seen here at the Rio+20 Conference.

In 10 days, Denmark will end its term as the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Our focus has been on "Europe at work". On how to create jobs and growth in Europe. On how to ensure that the growth path we set out is green and inclusive.

I understand why quick fixes and short sighted solutions are tempting in this situation. Why should we look to green growth, instead of the growth paradigms we know well and have tested over centuries? First of all, we have no real choice. There is no choice between increasing prosperity for a growing population and preserving our planet. We must reconcile economic growth and sustainable use of our natural resources.

But it is also sound economics. Recently, we have seen the release of a number of economic studies on green growth opportunities from the OECD, UNEP and latest from the World Bank. They conclude that the economic opportunity in going green is worth several trillion dollars between now and 2030. The World Bank report states that 1.700 billion USD of investments in land, water and energy could yield economic returns of around 3 trillion USD per year.

Sustainable growth for all of us can be achieved and it is a triple win: for the economy, for the planet and for the populations.

However, vision, courage and hard work are needed if we are to seize this opportunity. First of all we need coordinated action between public and private stakeholders.

That is why the Danish Government, together with Korea and Mexico, launched the Global Green Growth Forum (3GF) in 2011. The Forum will again this autumn convene governments and business leaders from across the globe. The very idea of the Forum is to follow up on formal international meetings, this time the Rio conference. Turn words into action. Decisions into deeds.

Public-private initiatives can push for a green transition. By stimulating private investments in the transition. By creating new growth engines and business opportunities in the green sector.

However, in a time where public-private partnerships seem to emerge as a new buzzword on the international agenda, I would like to stress two points:

Firstly, public-private partnerships are not in themselves a panacea for green growth – and they will not replace the need for intergovernmental action.

The call by the UN High Level Panel on Global Sustainability to use government spending on goods and services to boost green industries is an example of such action with great potential. An end to fossil fuel subsidies is another obvious one.

Secondly, public-private partnerships are complicated for many reasons. Underestimating this means that many of the good-intentioned initiatives we see emerging today, risk failing tomorrow.

In order not to waste scarce political and financial capital, we need to do our homework when calling for public-private partnerships. That is why the 3GF is assessing the linkages between resource productivity, green growth and public-private partnerships. At the next Forum, we will discuss a number of opportunities for resource efficiency with an estimated potential of 860 billion USD in resource savings in 2030.

If we can unlock this potential, we can help realize the visions from Rio+20. I look forward to taking this challenge forward with 200 committed green growth leaders in Copenhagen, including not least, the governments of Korea and Mexico.