

# The low-carbon challenge

By **HE DAVID REDDAWAY CMG MBE**

BRISITH AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY



**DAVID REDDAWAY** studied history at Cambridge University, and joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1975. His career has included assignments to Iran (during the Iranian revolution), India, Spain, Argentina and Afghanistan. He served as British High Commissioner to Canada between 2003 and 2006 and was Britain's Ambassador to Ireland prior to his appointment to Turkey in 2009.

**F**oreign policy, at its heart, is about ensuring the security and prosperity of our citizens in the global community. In today's world it is impossible to achieve this security and prosperity unless we develop an effective strategy for dealing with climate change.

Climate security is inseparably connected to energy security, food security and water security; and failure to tackle it undermines trust between nations and intensifies competition for resources. Without an effective response to climate change, our security will always be under threat and our economies will be weakened. Everyone, everywhere, will be affected; but the poorest will suffer most. The international community has a shared vision of how to improve the lives of the world's poorest and the most vulnerable people through the Millennium Development Goals. But in a world without action on climate change, that vision will remain a dream and the effort of the last 10 years will have been wasted. So we have to act on climate change.

The United Kingdom is already responding to this challenge. The UK is about to establish a Green Investment Bank, to leverage faster flows of private capital into low carbon infrastructure and reduce our dependence on oil and gas. We are also radically transforming our electricity network and pushing the EU to cut emissions by 30 per cent by 2020. We believe

it is not just right to do this, but also in our interests. The global low carbon economy is already estimated to be worth up to £3.2 trillion a year (TL 7.5 trillion). Britain's share of that is £112 billion (TL 263 billion), with nearly 1 million British people employed in the low carbon sector.

But we know that an effective response cannot be developed alone. That is why we are calling for a global climate deal under the UN, and why we are calling on all EU member states to join us in modernising our infrastructures and in addressing the low carbon challenge. And it is why we are calling on all countries – both developed and developing – to take action.

Turkey has an important role to play in the UN as an emerging economic power and as a G20 member. The new UK-Turkey Strategic Partnership signed by British Prime Minister Cameron and Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan in July commits both countries to strengthening our relationships across a wide range of policy areas, including in pursuing progress to achieve low carbon economies. The UK worked with Turkish partners to help establish Turkey's first Climate Platform for Business in 2009 (UK companies have a great deal of expertise to offer in areas such as low carbon, waste and waste water management, and renewables).

We are currently working to help develop Turkey's first national Climate Change Action Plan, which is on track to be announced by the end of the year. The UK and Turkish governments have established a joint task force to support implementation of the EU environment chapter and improve commercial relationships in environment-related business – activity which we hope will also contribute towards progress in Turkish accession to membership of the EU, which the UK strongly supports. On 23rd October, the UK's Europe Minister David Lidington and Turkish State Minister and EU Chief Negotiator Egemen Bagis signed an agreement on the terms of reference for a UK/Turkey EU Environment Chapter Task Force to help us work together on environment issues in the EU accession process.

We know it will be difficult to get global opinion to commit to the action we all need to take. We refuse to be deterred by the scale of the challenge. It is still not too late for action, but we must take robust and timely steps. I know that the UK and Turkey can and will continue to work together to create a more sustainable environment for the benefit of future generations. **F**



Hagia Sophia, Istanbul, universally acknowledged as one of the great buildings of the world