

Speech at the  
Russian Academy of Sciences Award Ceremony  
25 April 2002, Moscow

Dear Academician Favorsky, dear colleagues,

It is a great honour and a privilege for the International Energy Agency and myself that the Russian Academy of Sciences has selected the *World Energy Outlook–2001* for a prestigious special award. On behalf of the IEA and all my colleagues who contributed to this publication I would like to thank the Academy for acknowledging our work.

Before starting to work on energy issues, I had more time than I do now to read novels. Russian literature was one of my favourites, especially the works of the Nineteenth Century. As you are aware, many authors of this period —Gogol, Pushkin, Lermontov and my favourite Dostoevsky— were fascinated by the theme of “the double”. Put another way, the appreciation and attraction of ‘good’ and “evil”. The theme of “the double” was applied to issues of class, gender and identity, both personal and national. *The Double*, one of Dostoevsky’s earlier works, demonstrates his passion for this theme. Later, in *Crime and Punishment*, there is a much deeper development and use of the double.

The more I become involved in energy issues, the fewer novels I read. But I have gradually come to realise that the “double” theme can also be applied to energy. You see, energy also plays a double role — both good and bad — in our lives.

Let me begin with the bad. Recent history demonstrates that energy resources have been the root cause of many wars. Contention over the ownership of hydropower, oil, gas, coal and wood has led to countless tragedies. And as the scientists have informed us during the last few decades, energy use may harm nature, livestock, and human life at local and global levels.

But there is much to say about energy’s beneficent role – which is of course why we are here today. Energy is one of the indispensable pillars of human life, economic development and social well-being. Energy can dramatically expand the choices and opportunities available to individuals. Simply harnessing the “horsepower” of the ox, for example, multiplied the productivity of a human being ten times over. The invention of the waterwheel meant another six-fold increase in productivity, and the steam engine multiplied human strength once again. Today, energy is the single most important element in our well-being, mobility and productivity. More energy is desperately needed in less developed countries where it is a means to alleviate poverty.

At the International Energy Agency, we try to develop the policy environment in which energy can make the fullest possible contribution to the sustainable economic development and well-being of our Member countries. We know that energy and energy-related questions can be effectively addressed if, and only if, we approach them from a global perspective. Dialogue and co-operation with all participants in the global energy markets is one of our principal tasks. Russia is of course a key country in our work programme.

The *World Energy Outlook* is one of the core publications of the IEA. The 2001 Edition, which received your recognition today, is a product of the collective efforts of several experts from different offices across the Agency. We also received valuable contributions from energy specialists worldwide. In shaping this material, we paid utmost attention to the neutrality of our analysis. We tried especially hard to take the same objective approach to all energy sources and not favour one over another. We also did our best to provide an objective analysis across countries without pushing the interest of one rather than another. I personally believe that only through such an approach can we create an atmosphere of global co-operation and understanding in which each country in the world can decide on its own future.

Dear Academician Favorsky, dear colleagues,

Perhaps no one has expressed this idea more beautifully into words than the great Turkish poet, Nazim Hikmet, who is buried here in Moscow. I should like to close with his words:

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To live like a tree, alone and free  
To live as brothers like trees in a forest,  
That dream is ours.

Once again, thank you very much for the high honour you have paid to our work.

*YESHO raz bolshoye spaciba..... za vwysokouyou otsenkou Nashey raboti*

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Fatih Birol, 25 April 2002, Moscow