



international energy negotiator.

Tinker’s lecture focused on the energy “trilemma” (affordability, sustainability, and reliability) and the need to balance energy security, economic security and climate security. However, as he indicated in his talk, priorities can change rapidly depending on a country’s economic and geopolitical issues.

“Energy security underpins economic security, which in turns lets you invest in the environment and obtain climate security. If you start by focusing on low emissions, you will not get energy that affordable or reliable. You need to focus on the ‘radical middle’ of this particular triangle.



“Before the Paris accords, the middle ground was leaning towards the economy. The Paris Agreement made the focus a lot firmer on climate. Then the pandemic hit, and we went straight back to the economy. After COP26, the focus shifted again to climate, but the war in Ukraine put squarely on security. There is always a factor to make the focus on one rather than all three.

“Energy and economy are intertwined. Sixty percent of the world’s population live with some sort energy poverty. The emerging economies are desperate for affordable energy. Energy won’t end poverty. But we can’t end poverty without energy.

“For developing nations, the focus is much more on reliable energy, whereas the developed world wants clean energy. Our focus is very different.

“When we think of countries’ ESG commitments, again it means a very different thing depending on where you are in the world. ‘Environment’—does this mean clean air, or clean water? ‘Social’—this could be a new church or a school. ‘Governance’—being released from an autocrat so that you have a voice.”

With regards to the energy transition, Dr. Tinker was unequivocal. “I don’t think it’s happening! No form of energy is truly renewable as we have to either mine for it or dump the waste [such as use batteries and wind turbines] back into the ground. We’re just adding energy to meet demand and trying to lower emissions. That’s it – we aren’t suddenly going to switch from ‘today’s’ energy to ‘tomorrow’s’ energy. We can’t just make that jump – what if we don’t stick the landing...?”

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AUGUST 2023



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