



World Water Forum Bulletin

A Daily Report of the 5th World Water Forum

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5TH WORLD WATER FORUM HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY, 20 MARCH 2009

On Friday, the 5th World Water Forum's political process continued with a High Level Dialogue among ministers, parliamentarians and local authorities in the morning and the opening of the Ministerial Conference in the afternoon. The regional process concluded with the Asia Pacific regional session. Participants continued to attend thematic sessions on "managing and protecting water resources" and "education, knowledge and capacity development." Youth delegates attended the Youth Forum closing ceremony.



L-R: **Oktay Tabasaran**, Secretary General, 5th World Water Forum, and **Ahmet Met Saatçy**, Deputy Secretary General, 5th World Water Forum



L-R: **Ahmet Met Saatçy**, Deputy Secretary General, 5th World Water Forum; **Sumru Noyan**, Chair, Ministerial Process of the 5th World Water Forum; **Veysel Eroğlu**, Minister for Environment and Forestry, Turkey; **Jacques Diouf**, Director General, UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO); and **Loïc Fauchon**, WWC President

POLITICAL PROCESS

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OPENING:

Sumru Noyan, chair of the ministerial process, opened the Ministerial Conference by stating that the Istanbul Ministerial Declaration (IMD) and the Istanbul Water Consensus will be the Forum's key outputs. **Ahmet Mete Saatçy**, Deputy Secretary General, 5th World Water Forum, **Loïc Fauchon**, WWC President, **Jacques Diouf**, FAO Director General, and **Veysel Eroğlu**, Minister of Environment and Forestry, Turkey, welcomed ministers to the Forum and reminded them of their collective duty to resolve global water challenges.

In the area of transboundary water cooperation, the representative from Syria called for negotiation between Turkey, Iraq and Syria on sharing transboundary watercourses in a reasonable manner, while Kazakhstan noted the progress made on transboundary cooperation in the Aral Sea basin. The Danube basin was cited as an example of regional water cooperation by the representatives from Hungary and the Czech Republic.

A minister from Hungary highlighted the extreme importance of finance, and called for the launching of a "new green deal" to simultaneously resolve the financial crisis and provide water and sanitation for all. Others noted the importance of investment

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L-R: **Muammer Güler**, Governor of Istanbul, and **Veysel Eroğlu**, Minister for Environment and Forestry, Turkey



L-R: **Şirin Payzin**, CNN Türk; **Michael Vauzelle**, President of the PACA Region, France; **Kasségné Adjonou**, Mayor of Atakpamé, Togo; **M. Hani Abdul Massih**, Mayor of Beit Sahour, occupied Palestinian territories; **Ines Ayala Sender**, Parliamentarian, European Parliament; **Rashad Ahmed**, Minister of Environment and Water, United Arab Emirates; **Mustafa Öztürk**, Parliamentarian, Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA); **Oscar Castillo**, Parliament of MERCOSUR, Argentina, and **Ruth Zavaleta Salgado**, Minority Deputy, Chamber of Deputies, Mexico

in technology and technical cooperation, while a representative from the Democratic Republic of Congo stressed the need for actual investment in the infrastructure of developing countries.

Many ministers emphasized the critical need to address climate change given the severe impacts on climate variability and hydrological extremes that will occur, as well as the need to manage water within the context of sustainable development and environmental protection. Brazil in particular recognized the challenges these present for Latin America and noted that countries have common but differentiated responsibilities to take action. The minister from Ecuador emphasized the special heritage of water and the critical need to protect and preserve aquatic ecosystems and the environment. Other ministers expressed support for sustainable management and conservation of resources to avoid “water bankruptcy.”

The Minister from Bolivia, supported by several other delegates, stated that several issues are not sufficiently recognized in the draft Ministerial Declaration, including: a human right to water; the issue of collective rights, including participation of native people and local communities in policy setting; and the link between water and culture. In addition, many ministers voiced support for explicit recognition in the Declaration of the fundamental human right to basic water supply and sanitation as well as implementation of the MDGs. The representative from Spain highlighted the need for gender equality in water and sanitation issues.

The US representative said the Obama administration is determined to work for a “water secure future,” and noted that the US “Water for the Poor Act” sets water and sanitation as a clear objective of foreign assistance.

Chair Noyan, stressed that the IMD and the IWC are not legally binding agreements. The co-chairs of the 5th Forum’s Political Process, Vural Altay, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey, and András Szöllösi-Nagy, UNESCO-IHP, closed the session.

HIGH LEVEL PANELS

HIGHLEVEL TRIALOGUE: Yaşar Yakiş, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Turkey, opened the High Level Dialogue among ministers, parliamentarians, and local authorities. He congratulated local water authorities for adopting the Istanbul Water Consensus (IWC) on March 19, announcing that 50 authorities have already committed to signing the document.

In the panel session, Rashad Ahmed, Minister of Environment and Water, United Arab Emirates, highlighted



Yaşar Yakiş, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey

the importance of unconventional sources of water and emphasized that the equitable sharing of water is a prerequisite for peace.

Oscar Castillo, Parliament of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), Argentina, noted that the solution to the global water

crisis can only be solved by addressing root causes.

Ruth Zavaleta Salgado, Minority Deputy, Chamber of Deputies, Mexico, regretted that more progress had not been made on implementation of a human right to water since the 4th World Water Forum. She emphasized that ongoing efforts should include civil society, would require the support of developed countries and benefit from the creation of a world water parliament.

Mustafa Öztürk, Parliamentarian, Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), noted the need to, *inter alia*: exchange technologies and information; strengthen the capacity of local authorities; prevent pollution; raise awareness; and improve water legislation and management of transboundary watercourses.

Ines Ayala Sender, Parliamentarian, European Parliament, Spain, stressed the need to recognize access to water and sanitation as a human right, ensure safe water quality and diversify energy sources without harming the environment.

Kasségné Adjonou, Mayor of Atakpamé, Togo, Michael Vauzelle, President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azul Region, France, and M. Hani Abdul Massih, Mayor of Beit Sahour, occupied Palestinian territories, recommended the empowerment of local authorities through the provision of financial and technical resources and stressed that water is a human right.

Participants discussed, *inter alia*: the obligation not to target water infrastructure during conflict; the necessity of protecting water resources to secure a human right to water; and the challenges posed by corruption and lack of finance.



L-R: **Julia Marton-Lefèvre**, IUCN Director General; **Tineke Huizinga**, Vice Minister for Transport, Public Works and Water Management, the Netherlands; **Jean-Louis Borloo**, Minister of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Land Planning, France; **Veyssel Eroğlu**, Minister of Environment and Forestry, Turkey; **Jan Dusík**, First Deputy Minister of Environment, Czech Republic; **Angela Cropper**, Deputy Executive Director, UN Environment Programme; **Roger Pulwarty**, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association; and **David Bresh**, Swiss Re

Loïc Fauchon, WWC President, remarked that water is a political issue that requires political decision making. He encouraged continuation of the dialogue following the Forum.

Yusuf Ziya İrbeç, Parliamentarian, TGNA, closed the session stating that significant progress had been made on several issues, including *inter alia*: transboundary waters, decentralization and the provision of water and sanitation services.

HIGH LEVEL PANEL

ADAPTATION: Ger Bergkamp, WWC Director General, noted that in the water community, the term “climate change” means “adaptation.” He then emphasized the high anticipated cost of adaptation. Noting Turkey’s recent approval of the Kyoto Protocol, Veyssel Eroğlu, Minister of Environment and Forestry, Turkey, said his country is determined to contribute to international efforts to address climate change.

Jean-Louis Borloo, Minister of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Territorial Development, France, said the 2009 UN climate change negotiations in Copenhagen must focus on water and stressed that the water and climate “families” must work together. Jan Dusík, First Deputy Minister of Environment, Czech Republic, said a framework for action on adaptation should be agreed to in Copenhagen and highlighted work to create such a framework for Europe.

Roger Pulwarty, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, stressed that processes for learning and sharing knowledge are not yet part of the climate change dialogue. On financing, Eroğlu urged development of a financial structure for adaptation, and prioritizing between adaptation options. David Bresh, Swiss Re, stressed the need to direct adaptation funding under a post-Kyoto regime at preparedness prevention, technology and risk transfer mechanisms.

Borloo highlighted the link between climate change, water and energy, and under the authority of the Czech presidency of the EU called for immediate and concrete action on at least 10 major water and energy projects. Angela Cropper, Deputy Executive Director, UN Environment Programme, highlighted the cross-sectoral nature of water and creation of UN-Water to address this challenge.

Lindiwe Benedicta Hendricks, Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, South Africa, discussed her country’s “Water for Growth and Development Framework,” which sees water

as a life-sustaining scarce resource. She highlighted the implications of adapting water use to availability rather than focusing on supply management.

Stressing that adaptation is as important as mitigation, Tineke Huizinga, Vice Minister for Transport, Public Works and Water Management, the Netherlands, described the establishment of a high-level committee under her ministry to prepare a flexible national adaptation strategy for the next 100 years. Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN Director General, said that discussions on adaptation often highlight the role of infrastructure, such as dams and dikes, but should also include natural infrastructure, such as aquifers and river basins.

Summarizing, Bergkamp noted that on the public-private sector debate, discussions at the Forum had converged on the need to strengthen the public sector to facilitate adaptation.

REGIONAL SESSIONS

ASIA-PACIFIC: Yoshiro Mori, Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF), opened the Asia-Pacific regional session, introducing the APWF’s Ministers for Water Security Initiative as a platform for dialogue among ministers across sectors.

Siva Thampi, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, highlighted the activities of the APWF, noting in particular the first Asia-Pacific Water Summit held Japan in 2007, and underscored the importance of regional cooperation.

Wouter Lincklaen Arriens, Asian Development Bank (ADB), stated the ADB’s commitment to increasing investment in water in the Asia-Pacific region, and said dedicated leadership and the use of existing technologies can improve water management.

Sub-regional representatives from Northeast Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, discussed *inter alia*: specific regional challenges including floods, saltwater intrusion and water storage limitations; the impacts of climate change, population growth, energy demands and urbanization; transboundary water governance strategies; and the importance of environmental protection, water conservation and meeting the MDGs.

Speaking as hosts of a leadership meeting held in the region, Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, Singapore, identified the importance of knowledge networks and low-cost water technology, and Yasushi Kaneko,

Senior Vice-Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan, lauded the Ministers for the Water Security Initiative.

Ravi Narayanan, Vice-Chair, APWF Governing Council, launched the Regional Document, saying it addresses, *inter alia*: water financing and capacity development; water-related disaster management; monitoring of investments and results; and water for development and ecosystems. He highlighted its guiding principles, including decentralization accompanied by adequate financing and capacity building.

Ministers and representatives from the Asia-Pacific region outlined national initiatives to increase water security, including: modifying legal frameworks and tariff structures; upgrading outdated infrastructure; sustainably harvesting water resources; and making river basins fundamental planning units. On transboundary water sharing, some suggested that upstream states mitigate or compensate for damages to downstream states.



Margaret Catley-Carlson, Chair of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Water Security

Updating participants on the G8 Experts Group on Water and Sanitation's work, Akihiko Furuya, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, noted that the Group's most recent meeting was held at the 5th World Water Forum, and that in addition to writing an update report on the G8 Evian Water Action Plan, the Group would also develop an implementation strategy on water and sanitation.

Margaret Catley-Carlson, Chair of the World Economic Forum Global

Agenda Council on Water Security, moderated a discussion among APFW partners, challenging panelists to recommend priorities for improving water security and to name the most important actions that could be taken by water ministers. The priorities identified included: improving scientific knowledge and data harmonization; developing technology, including for rainwater harvesting; improving mitigation strategies, water storage and groundwater recharge; increasing agricultural water efficiency; and promoting broader stakeholder participation, particularly in communities responsible for stewardship of upstream water.

Key recommendations for ministerial actions were: the implementation of existing commitments by governments; creation of strong policies and extension services; coordinated planning by water ministers and ministers in other sectors; promotion of community-led activities, particularly for short-term adaptation; and mainstreaming of water activities by governments, evidenced through budget allocations.



South African dancers at the forum

THEMATIC SESSIONS

MANAGING AND PROTECTING WATER RESOURCES

ENSURING ADEQUATE WATER RESOURCES AND STORAGE INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET AGRICULTURE, ENERGY AND URBAN NEEDS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

Peter Van Niekerk, Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, South Africa, described his country's national water resource strategy, "Water for Growth and Development Framework," which includes catchment and reconciliation strategies, inter-basin transfers and dams, water reuse, desalination and groundwater use. Adem Şanlısoy, Water Supply Istanbul, highlighted the regulatory framework used to protect the lake basins supplying the city of Istanbul with drinking water, and noted in particular the importance of conserving these basins by reforestation and limiting settlements and economic activity in zones around the lakes.

Kazuya Kumagai, Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW), Japan, highlighted two large-scale bulk water supply challenges in Japan, namely treatment and transport. He noted that environmental protection provides the benefit of improving water quality.

Ángel García Cantón, Ministry of Public Works, Spain, underscored that increased water demand has traditionally been addressed by constructing dams, but in the future must be tackled through water demand management, wastewater reuse, desalination and use of integrated planning approaches that consider quantity and quality within the framework of ecosystem health. Felix Bogliolo, Via-Marine, described



Tadahiko Sakamoto, Japan Commission on Large Dam

the advantage of a new method for transporting freshwater in large quantities and over long distances by underwater flexible pipelines. Tadahiko Sakamoto, Japan Commission on Large Dams, stressed the importance of dams and reservoirs to cope with water demand, noting that project benefits and environmental and social impacts must be carefully balanced.

Participants noted: the need for a paradigm shift among water users to reduce water demand; the role of water use efficiency and water demand management in meeting domestic water supply needs; the need to promote water recycling and cost reduction; and the importance of stored water for the "green revolution." They exchanged examples of best practices for water saving, such as increasing irrigation system efficiency.

Ryosuke Kikuchi, Japan Water Agency, concluded by stressing the need for urgent implementation of IWRM, including water reuse, environmental assessments and improved finance frameworks for infrastructural development.

EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

THINKING OUTSIDE THE WATER BOX: Kala Vairavamoorthy, UNESCO Institute for Water Education, provided an overview of the 5th World Water Forum topic "water science and technology: appropriate and innovative solutions for the 21st century to address the needs of society." Introducing the session "thinking outside the water box," Lies Janssen, Netherlands Water Partnership, said participants

would be encouraged to explore perspectives from outside the sector, and to use short message service (sms) and email to post comments to an interactive website during the session.

Drawing on the animated film “Madagascar” as a backdrop, Djeevan Schiferli, IBM, summarized lessons for water entrepreneurs from IBM’s restructuring process, including “dare to dream, collaborate beyond your comfort zone by forging non-traditional partnerships and start your journey today.”

Rebecca Straw, Charity Water, drew attention to innovative ways of raising funds for water projects, including micro-blogging on Twitter, public service announcements incorporating celebrities and use of global positioning satellite system (GPS) to track funded projects for individual donors. She emphasized that combining such technologies with routine site visits and local partnerships is critical for delivering on-the-ground results.

Henk Roulofs, Water board, De Dommel, and Bjorn Hoogwout, Brabant Water, the Netherlands, presented the “Helixer” project, which brings together businesses



Bjelkeman-Petersson, akvo.org

in the south of the Netherlands to brainstorm on creative solutions in the area of water and health. Bjelkeman-Petersson, akvo.org, presented on “akvo.org,” an open source initiative comprising: “Aquapedia,” an online resource of

low-cost solutions and best practice; an online market place to match donors to beneficiaries; and a simplified reporting tool combining GPS technology and micro-blogging tools to show project results in real time.

On internet and innovation, Alix Zwane, Google, encouraged water managers to make use of information technologies in their work, highlighting: sms channels to monitor, track and evaluate water service provision; Google Earth to make earth resources and earth systems’ information more accessible; and expanding support for “cloud computing.”

Ben White, Africa Interactive, noted that the pan-African network enables local reporters to directly post stories, images and video. He underscored its potential for monitoring implementation of water and sanitation projects on the ground. Gurdal Ertek, Sabanci University, Turkey, presented an open source software application to enhance decision making for water efficiency in the chemicals industry. Speaking on “games for water” Joke Witteveen, xmediaworks, the Netherlands, discussed the use of online gaming techniques to stimulate creative thinking in the water management sector.

During interactive discussions, participants discussed ways to apply new information and communication tools to address water and sanitation issues, including: demanding greater accountability from governments; exploring opportunities to combine “old” and “new” knowledge; and encouraging youth involvement.

WATER AND HISTORY: UNDERSTANDING THE WATER CULTURES OF PAST CIVILIZATIONS AND DERIVING LESSONS FOR THE PRESENT: Nurunnisa Usul, Middle East Technical University, introduced the

session, noting it would continue discussions on how water-related knowledge systems, practices and values have evolved throughout history, and provide lessons in water management today. Zieaoddin Shoaie, International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas, described the 3000-year old qanat underground water supply system as a successful model of public participation in water resource management. Orhan Baykan, Pamukkale University, presented on the water structures of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods in Turkey. Other presentations discussed the water historical library in Mexico and water rituals in eastern cultures and their applications in modern technology. Participants noted that the motivation for developing such advanced water systems was to use the best technology possible to ensure reliable delivery of clean water, and emphasized that the underlying institutional structures and cultural norms that ensured their success is as important as the actual engineering achievements.

FOSTERING SOCIO-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES IN WATER SCIENCES AND MANAGEMENT: IDENTIFYING BRIDGES AND BARRIERS:

Lida Schelwald van der Kley, Dutch Water Board, and Linda Reijkerkerk, Center for Conflict Resolution, the Netherlands, explored the theme of water as a source of life, inspiration, power, conflict, cooperation and sustainability. Canguzel Zulfikar, Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations, drew insights from the Sufi writings of Sāmiha Ayverdi, whose images of water works illustrated her belief that reaching water through digging symbolizes an effort to reach unity with truth.

Prachanda Pradhan, Farmer Managed Irrigation Systems Promotion Trust, Nepal, noted that the promulgation of the Nepali Water Resources Act in 1992 undermined traditional value systems that treated water as a community resource. He underlined that national legal frameworks should foster pluralistic governance models based on collaboration and community leadership over shared water resources.

Jeroen Warner, Wageningen University, the Netherlands, presented on water and conflict resolution, using case studies on flood management from the Netherlands and France to illustrate the importance of engaging local communities in problem analysis, project design and management of flood programmes.

Sasaki Takatsugu, City of Saijo, and Taniguchi Makoto, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, Japan, provided an overview of community-science collaboration around groundwater in Saijo, Japan. They noted that as a result, sustainable groundwater management in Saijo can be based on both precise scientific data and customary principles, enabling the codification of traditional norms for the benefit of future generations.

Barbara Rose Johnston, Centre for Political Ecology, USA, cited research on the human and environmental impact of large dams, concluding that “development-induced displacement is a major cause of global poverty.” She said water infrastructure projects should: comply with national and international law; recognize “off-the-map” protected areas; respect the human right to water; implement indigenous peoples’ rights to free, prior, informed consent; and ensure the right for all affected people to access information about projects to allow meaningful participation in decision making, and to share the benefits of development.

In closing, participants discussed 10 draft policy recommendations prepared by the session convenors to be forwarded to the Secretariat of the 5th World Water Forum. They highlighted the role of the Forum in building bridges across the natural and social sciences and called for water to be viewed as a human as well as a cultural right.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT: GETTING THE BALANCE RIGHT FOR EQUITABLE WATER ALLOCATION: Matt Hare and Reza Ardakanian, UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC), and Raoul Darwish, Arab Water Council, said the session aims to find ways to support equitable water allocation and inform policy reforms and institutional capacity building.

Hare asked panelists to identify: drivers for and barriers to ensuring equitable allocation of water; policy and legal frameworks needed to overcome barriers and strengthen drivers; and capacity development activities needed to support development of these institutions.

Tarek Majzoub, Association of the Friends of Ibrahim Abd El Al, emphasized the importance of mechanisms that support the participation of women and for institutional accountability; Ebenizario Chonguica, Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission, stated that equitable allocation requires quantifying available water resources and that assessments of demand must consider possibilities for enhanced efficiency; and Patricia Avila-Garcia, National Autonomous University of Mexico, said that economic terms alone are insufficient for addressing water resource management. Kenichi Tsukahara, Japan International Cooperation Agency, stated that capacity building requires consideration of diverse backgrounds; Abbasgholi Jahani, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, listed “pillars” of equitable allocation, including effective, flexible and transparent water law; and William Moraka, United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, underscored the importance of a “sector-wide approach,” with all stakeholders involved in finding collective solutions.

Participants divided into working groups, to address six themes: definitions of equitable allocation; integrating traditional knowledge and traditional water rights into legislation; strengthening regulation and enforcement of legislation; developing an effective mix of governmental regulation and market mechanisms to promote water access; developing tools for measuring water demands; and establishing knowledge-sharing platforms for institutional capacity development.

Each group reported back on their discussions. Participants shared success stories, noting that although solutions are context-dependent, lessons can be learned across experiences. No consensus was found on the definition of “equitable allocation,” but some saw the term as a description of the allocation of water to meet the minimum needs of all sectors and individuals, contingent upon availability of water resources. Participants noted the need for: tariffs as incentives for efficient water use; clear mandates and accountability in water resource management chains; community-oriented management approaches; and organizing existing information networks.

Fatma Abdel Rahman Attia, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt, concluded the session by stressing the need to consider cultural and social values in water allocation decisions.

YOUTH FORUM

CLOSING OF THE YOUTH FORUM: Oktay Tabasaran, 5th World Water Forum Secretary General, congratulated the youth on their successful session, emphasizing that they had been important stakeholders at the Forum. Assuring them that their recommendations would be taken into consideration “at the highest level of the Forum,” he urged them to continue communicating to solve water problems.

A statement from Turkey’s Environment Minister reiterated the youths’ important role in shaping the future of the continent, welcoming the Youth Declaration as a manifestation of their courage and determination.

David Boys, Public Services International, emphasized the need to make legislators accountable for their actions, stressing that water is a basic human right. Alison Bartle, Aquamedia, commended the youth on their dedication to addressing water problems. Highlighting themes within the Youth Declaration she expressed hope that their “voices would continue to be heard.”

Amanda Cleghorn, World Wildlife Fund, encouraged the youth participants to pursue their dreams. Speaking on behalf of WWC President Loïc Fauchon, Charles-Louis de Maud’huy, WWC, expressed hope that the youth had felt like “part of the family of stakeholders” at the Forum, and urged participants to transmit the accomplishments of their Forum to future generations.

Meera Karunanathan, Council of Canadians, speaking on behalf of the Alternative Water Forum and the People’s Water Forum, applauded the youth on recognizing water as a human right and regretted that, where water is concerned, “human need has become subservient to human greed.” Calling the World Water Forum a “big-corporation affair,” she challenged the WWC stand on the commodification of water.

Youth representatives gave an overview of: graffiti around the conference, the “Wave” initiative, the “Water from the Youth Perspective” publication, and the Blue Ribbon campaign to raise awareness on water issues. Stating that the Youth Declaration will be available online, Yiğit Canay, Secretary General, Youth Forum, called the Forum to a close.

ISLAMIC MINISTERS’ MEETING: Ministries of Muslim countries convened at the Forum to discuss their countries’ water concerns. Organization of the Islamic Conference Secretary-General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoğlu noted that the region’s populations are being impacted by regional conflicts, the global financial crisis, climate change and limited access to drinking water. Veysel Eroğlu, Minister of Environment and Forestry, Turkey, commended the group’s efforts to collaborate through projects related to water.



David Boys, Public Services International