



AMCOW Bulletin

A Summary Report of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6)

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/](http://www.iisd.ca/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/)
VOLUME 4, No. 6, MONDAY, 4 JUNE 2007

SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER: 28-31 MAY 2007

The sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6) took place from 30-31 May 2007, at the Palais du Parlement, in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. Attended by ministers and government representatives, together with issue experts from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the meeting focused on strengthening regional and international cooperation and solidarity to address the African water and sanitation crisis and to make progress on achieving the water-related targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

A number of events were held in the lead-up to the session. On Monday, 28 May, a Youth Forum on Water was held, in addition to AMCOW subregional consultations. A Civil Society and Media Forum convened on Monday, 28 May and Tuesday, 29 May, while the AMCOW Executive Committee convened on Tuesday, 29 May, to receive communications from subregional groups and recommendations from the AMCOW Technical Advisory Committee.

AMCOW-6 commenced on Wednesday, 30 May, with ministers listening to opening addresses from distinguished guests, including Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of Republic of Congo, and policy statements. They also addressed organizational matters. On Thursday, 31 May, ministers participated in roundtable discussions on partnership issues, water infrastructure development, water supply and sanitation, and climate change impacts and adaptation. They also attended side events focusing on: groundwater management in Africa; the promotion of rainwater harvesting in Africa; and the Congo River Basin.

At the close of the meeting, ministers adopted a meeting report summarizing their discussions, and the Brazzaville Declaration containing ministerial decisions on future work. Key issues addressed in these decisions include governance, institutional and operational matters, financial issues and means of implementation, and partnerships and other initiatives. Ministers also decided on the composition of the AMCOW subsidiary bodies for 2007-2009 and confirmed the new President of AMCOW.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMCOW AND RELATED WATER GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES

AMCOW was formally launched in April 2002, when African water ministers adopted the "Abuja Ministerial Declaration on Water: A Key to Sustainable Development in Africa," in Abuja, Nigeria. This declaration followed up on commitments made by African ministers at the 2001 International Conference on Freshwater, held in Bonn, Germany, and the 2002 Stakeholders Conference on Water and Sustainable Development in Africa, held in Accra, Ghana.

AMCOW creates a platform for providing political leadership, policy direction and advocacy in the provision, use and management of water resources for sustainable social and economic development and for the maintenance of African ecosystems. AMCOW actively reviews the state of Africa's water and promotes actions of common African interest. It also

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The *AMCOW Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Richard Sherman and Hugh Wilkins. The Editor is Ingrid Barnsley <Ingrid@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Programme Manager of the African Regional Coverage Project is Richard Sherman <rsherman@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism through the IISD/DEAT/UNEP ROA project for IISD Reporting Service coverage of African regional meetings. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists HTML and PDF format) and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <<http://www.iisd.ca/>>. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.

facilitates regional and international cooperation through the coordination of African countries' policies and actions on water resources.

AMCOW consists of a Council of Ministers and an Executive Committee (ExCom). The ExCom is composed of three water ministers or representatives from each of the African subregions, namely, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, Central Africa, Northern Africa and Southern Africa. The ExCom ensures that decisions of the Council of Ministers are implemented, develops work programmes and budgets for approval by the Council of Ministers, and mobilizes the necessary financing for, and supervises the work of, the AMCOW Secretariat. The ExCom is advised in its activities by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

KEY AMCOW MEETINGS

INAUGURAL MEETING OF AMCOW: The inaugural AMCOW meeting was held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 30 April 2002. At this meeting, ministers adopted the Abuja Declaration, which includes a resolution establishing AMCOW and setting out its vision, objectives, institutional arrangements and other aspects.

FIRST MEETING OF THE AMCOW STEERING COMMITTEE: The first meeting of the AMCOW Steering Committee was held from 23-24 May 2003, in Dakar, Senegal. The meeting emphasized that the supply and quality of freshwater in Africa remains one of the most critical issues of the twenty-first century. The meeting adopted the "NEPAD Statement on International Solidarity with Africa for the achievement of the water-related targets in the MDGs and the outcomes of the WSSD."

FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF AMCOW: The fourth Ordinary Session of AMCOW took place on 10 December 2003, during the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Ministers endorsed the outcome of the African Regional Implementation Meeting for presentation as Africa's contribution to CSD-12. They also agreed to present the PANAFCON recommendations to the second Extraordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Assembly, held in February 2004, in Libya.

FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF AMCOW: The fifth Ordinary Session of AMCOW was held from 4-6 November 2004, in Entebbe, Uganda, and addressed various water policy challenges in Africa, including meeting the goals of the AU and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), financing, and strategies to achieve international water and sanitation targets. Outcomes from the session included agreement on: a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on institutional arrangements; AMCOW Rules of Procedure; the AMCOW 2005-2007 work programme; modalities for establishing the AMCOW Trust Fund and its hosting within UNEP; a regional position for CSD-13 on the implementation of the MDGs and water-related targets; and a concept proposal on the German G8 transboundary water initiative.

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE AMCOW EXCOM:

The seventh AMCOW ExCom meeting was held alongside a meeting of the TAC in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27-30 June 2005. Participants at the ExCom meeting focused on the AMCOW 2005-2007 work programme, the AMCOW Trust Fund and strengthening AMCOW's work at the country and subregional levels.

KEY CONTINENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL WATER INITIATIVES

G8 KANANASKIS SUMMIT: The 2002 G8 Summit was held in Kananaskis, Canada, from 26-27 June 2002. In response to an invitation from African leaders, G8 leaders adopted the G8-Africa Action Plan, which includes provisions supporting African efforts to improve water resources development and management.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. In the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), governments reaffirmed their commitment to the safe drinking water and human settlements goals agreed to in the Millennium Declaration, and further committed to halve by 2015 the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation. Governments also agreed to develop integrated water resources management (IWRM) and water efficiency plans by 2005. The international community agreed to support Africa's efforts to promote IWRM, optimize the upstream and downstream benefits from the development and effective management of water resources, and protect water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

G8 EVIAN SUMMIT: The 2003 G8 Summit was held from 1-3 June 2003, in Evian, France. At the Summit, G8 leaders adopted a water-related action plan focusing on promoting good governance, utilizing financial resources, building infrastructure by empowering local authorities and communities, strengthening monitoring, assessment and research, and reinforcing the engagement of international organizations. They agreed to support NEPAD through two initiatives in the field of transboundary water management, which focus on strengthening cooperation among river basin organizations and which seek to map donor support by developing an overview of the current activities of G8 member states in this field.

PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE ON WATER: PANAFCON met from 8-12 December 2003, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Ministers agreed to establish national task forces on water and sanitation and to create national plans with service delivery targets for achieving water and sanitation goals by 2015. They signed a joint declaration with the European Commission on the implementation of the African-European Union (EU) Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation. Ministers also launched a number of initiatives, including: the African Water Facility (AWF); the African Water Journal; Phase II of the Water for African Cities Programme; and the G8-Action Plan on Water for Africa.

SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU ASSEMBLY: The second Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly, took place from 27-28 February 2004, in Sirte, Libya, and resulted in adoption of the “Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Water in Africa.” In the declaration, leaders agreed to: promote the strengthening and establishment of centers of excellence and/or networks; support AMCOW in its role of preparing plans and policies related to water resources management on the continent; encourage bilateral agreements on shared water resources and enjoin regional economic communities (RECs) to develop appropriate regional protocols to guide IWRM; strengthen existing river and lake water basin organizations and establish new ones, wherever appropriate; and adopt the AWF and acknowledge the African Water Vision 2025. Leaders also declared support for AMCOW and its role in developing plans and policies related to the management of all water resources in Africa and recommended integrating AMCOW into the AU as one of its Specialized Technical Committees (STCs).

THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CSD-13 took place from 11-22 April 2005, in New York, USA. The meeting focused on policies and options to expedite the implementation of commitments in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. Its main outcome document identified the need to, *inter alia*, provide additional resources, as appropriate, for regional and subregional initiatives, and support African initiatives in the area of water, within the framework of AMCOW.

2005 WORLD SUMMIT: The 2005 World Summit was held in New York, USA, from 14-16 September 2005. In the Summit’s outcome document, world leaders resolved to assist developing countries’ efforts to prepare IWRM and water efficiency plans as part of their national development strategies, and to provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in accordance with the Millennium Declaration and the JPOI.

CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN RIVER AND LAKE BASIN ORGANIZATIONS: The AMCOW Conference of African River and Lake Basin Organizations took place in Kampala, Uganda, from 19-20 October 2006, to chart the way forward for a continent-wide effort to address Africa’s water crisis. The conference brought together senior-level African decision makers on water to agree to the establishment of and support for new river and lake basin organizations, while rejuvenating existing ones within the framework of a region-wide mechanism under the auspices of AMCOW.

REPORT OF THE AMCOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

On Wednesday, 30 May, prior to the opening of AMCOW-6, the ExCom met to address recommendations from the TAC meeting held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 4-5 March 2007, and to hear reports on activities in each of the AMCOW regions. The ExCom reviewed the TAC recommendations and forwarded

them with minor additions to AMCOW-6. This report summarizes the opening statements, TAC recommendations, subregional presentations and related discussions.

OPENING STATEMENTS

Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President and Ugandan Minister of Water and Environment, said AMCOW has been at the forefront of African cooperation, stressing AMCOW’s important role in strengthening the regional integration process in Africa and promoting the prioritization of water and sanitation issues in national policy making. She said AMCOW is a platform for defining African water priorities and developing common perspectives and decisions and provides a single voice for interacting with the international community. Outgoing



Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President and Ugandan Minister of Water and Environment

President Mutagamba noted future challenges, including: adapting AMCOW’s role to meet the requirements of the AU; improving AMCOW’s support structure through a strengthened Secretariat and the establishment of centers of excellence; better engaging civil society and other stakeholders; and better addressing transboundary water issues.

Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, incoming AMCOW President and Republic of Congo Minister of Energy and Water, welcomed delegates on behalf of the President of Republic of Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, noting that the meeting demonstrates a commitment to addressing water and sanitation issues in Africa. He pointed to issues affecting access to water, such as the depletion of water resources in some regions, institutional weaknesses, underinvestment and the effects of climate change. He underscored the ExCom’s role in promoting effective decision making and the generation of new perspectives on water issues, and called for the consolidation of efforts.

Babagana Ahmadu, AU Commission, underlined the significance of AMCOW as a vital AU policy organ given the context of environmental issues in Africa. He discussed initiatives emanating from the Sirte Declaration to enhance cooperation and strengthen river and lake basin organizations and elaborated on draft AU/UNEP guidelines on a cooperative framework for the integrated management of transboundary basins.

TAC RECOMMENDATIONS

Henry Ntale, TAC Chair, presented the TAC Report to the ExCom, including outcomes and recommendations on issues for consideration by AMCOW. On rotation of the AMCOW presidency, he said the TAC recommended that the presidency rotate as follows: Central Africa; Southern Africa; Northern Africa; Western Africa; and Eastern Africa. He noted that presidencies would be determined through subregional consultations. Lesotho announced that South Africa would

assume the presidency on behalf of Southern Africa in the next cycle.

Regarding financing of the triennial work programme, TAC Chair Ntale stated that due to a funding shortfall of 3.3 million Euros for implementing the work programme, the programme had been revised to cover 2007-2009. He said the TAC recommended that a resource mobilization subcommittee be established and that contributions from member states continue even if AMCOW is integrated as an AU STC.



Henry Ntale, TAC Chair

TAC Chair Ntale noted that the AU Assembly agreed in principle that AMCOW become an STC. The AU Commission stated that this issue is being addressed at the highest level and that the AU Assembly's final decision would be made in July 2007. Morocco stated that his country is not an AU member, and does not wish to be excluded from AMCOW. Outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, stressed that a political solution would be found to address this issue.

Regarding the AMCOW Secretariat, TAC Chair Ntale noted that the TAC recommended that recruitment of an Executive Secretary should commence as soon as possible, and that the AMCOW President and the Secretariat should consult and establish an interim arrangement for the Secretariat. He said the AU would assist in selecting the Executive Secretary, and that the TAC recommended strengthening subregional structures, noting that funds are now available to convene regular meetings of subregional organs.

TAC Chair Ntale noted that the AWF had been successfully implemented. The African Development Bank (AfDB) explained that the AWF was designed to mobilize financial resources for investment in the African water sector, and emphasized that the major challenge would be securing investment resources. Regarding the fourth World Water Forum, TAC Chair Ntale said the TAC recommended creating a task force to promote the implementation of forum recommendations and to take steps to prepare for the fifth World Water Forum, scheduled for 2009. He also highlighted the need for an annual African water week, while the AfDB suggested that the event be held in Tunisia in 2007, and UN-HABITAT offered to assist if the event were held in Kenya in 2008.

Regarding the Africa Dialogue of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB), TAC Chair Ntale highlighted the UNSGAB's proposal to hold a water summit in 2008. Outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba said a proposed joint water infrastructure financing meeting with the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA) should be linked to the water summit. Lesotho and Republic of Congo emphasized the importance of including both finance

and infrastructure ministers at these events. Regarding a TAC recommendation on promoting the institutionalization of groundwater management by river basin organizations, Outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba suggested, and participants agreed, that water harvesting be promoted in a similar manner.

On the EU Water Initiative, TAC Chair Ntale reviewed recommendations related to: promoting water and sanitation-related issues within the African-EU Infrastructure Partnership; establishing a water policy dialogue forum; and continuing the EU-ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific states) Water Facility. South Africa advocated identifying an entry point through which AMCOW could influence decisions on the EU-ACP Water Facility. On new partnerships and consultations with African river and lake basin organizations, TAC Chair Ntale said the TAC recommended establishing a water basin organization subcommittee, noting this would fuse the institutional relationship between AMCOW and the African Network of Basin Organizations.

SUBREGIONAL REPORTS

On Wednesday afternoon, representatives from each of the AMCOW subregions reported to the ExCom on recent activities in the subregions. Asfaw Dingamo, Ethiopian Minister of Water Resources, described how water policy challenges are being addressed in Eastern Africa through promoting policy dialogue. He explained that ministerial consultations held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in September 2006 highlighted the need to promote action on key policies in the subregion and to develop indicators on IWRM. Asfaw Dingamo observed how appropriate policies at the subregional level could create opportunities for achieving the internationally agreed targets on water and sanitation and called for preparing national water sector reports.



Asfaw Dingamo, Ethiopian Minister of Water Resources

Ambassador Ahmed Abdessadok, Algeria, presenting the Northern Africa report, described AMCOW as a good example of South-South cooperation, and said more work is needed to turn political aspirations into sound water policies for achieving the MDGs. Ambassador Abdessadok made a number of recommendations, including: sharing management of transboundary resources; focusing on impacts of climate change; and creating centers of excellence to improve expertise on water issues.

Bonoudaba Dabiré, Burkina Faso Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Fisheries, presented the report for Western Africa. He emphasized constraints experienced by ministers in the subregion in engaging in consultations on water issues and highlighted the need for capacity building and funding.

Monyane Moleleki, Lesotho Minister of Natural Resources, reported on Southern Africa. He noted support for a transition from softer to hard infrastructure programmes on water, and highlighted achievements in his subregion, such as assessing progress made in implementing IWRM and establishing a water research fund and a consultative fund.

Incoming AMCOW President Itoua presented the report for Central Africa. Discussing the water situation in the subregion, he noted challenges, including: ineffective privatization of public water utilities; the low level of civil society participation; inadequate investment in water-related activities; and a lack of policy coherence regarding the MDG water-related targets. He also emphasized the need for a subregional water management authority.

REPORT OF THE AMCOW MEETING

The sixth Ordinary Session of AMCOW convened on Wednesday, 30 May and Thursday, 31 May. This report summarizes the various sessions held at AMCOW-6, including the opening and closing plenary sessions, organizational matters and roundtable discussions. It also summarizes the Brazzaville Declaration, adopted on Thursday, which incorporated all decisions taken by ministers at the meeting.

OPENING PLENARY

AMCOW-6 opened on Wednesday morning, with statements from ministers and other participants. Regarding AMCOW's achievements, Halifa Drammeh, UNEP, said that AMCOW is fully operational and is the preeminent intergovernmental authority for addressing water challenges in Africa, supported by a collective political will directed towards sound management of Africa's water resources.

Edward Kairu, Africa Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation (ANEWS), presented a statement on behalf of participants at the Civil Society and Media Forum held earlier in the week, focusing on institutional issues, financial mechanisms, community empowerment and partnership building for achieving the MDGs. He urged AMCOW to undertake a number of commitments, such as: supporting and funding activities of civil society organizations and the media; endorsing civil society and media efforts at awareness raising, information exchange and capacity building; and ensuring the participation of all stakeholders, especially women and children.

Presenting a statement on behalf of participants at the Youth Forum on Water, also held earlier in the week, Agnes Nansubuga, youth representative, highlighted challenges to water provision, including pollution, conflicts and the declining health of ecosystems. She called on governments to: protect and

manage water resources in a sustainable manner; implement cleaner production methods; properly treat industrial waste; undertake education and public awareness campaigns; and involve youth in the planning and implementation of water policies. Paul Lesly Sambala, youth representative, appealed for the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation for all and the extension of water networks in cities and rural areas to enable children to grow and develop in a safe environment. He called for improving and maintaining water infrastructure facilities and making efforts to address deforestation.

Karl Wokalek, German Ambassador to Republic of Congo, acknowledged challenges that may impact on Africa's ability to meet the MDGs, stressing the importance of water for strengthening sustainable development, food security and peace, and for combating poverty in the region. Regarding the transboundary nature of water resources, Ambassador Wokalek underscored the benefits of joint management and close cooperation between neighboring countries, in addition to effective strategies for addressing climate change.

Highlighting the centrality of improving water supply and sanitation for achieving all the MDGs, Aly Kerdany, Global Water Partnership (GWP), recommended that a number of approaches be taken to develop the water sector in Africa: adopting IWRM; including all stakeholders in planning, particularly the most vulnerable; building cross-sectoral partnerships, with an emphasis on engaging ministries of finance and the private sector; focusing on the effects of climate change; and promoting dialogue.

Kordjé Bedoumra, AfDB, said AMCOW acts as a key platform for developing African water policy, but that much work remains to be done to achieve the water-related MDG targets by 2015. He underlined the necessity for Africa to prepare for the 2008 International Year of Sanitation and the proposed African Water Week and outlined a number of related preparatory meetings.

Babagana Ahmadu, AU Commission, drew attention to the AU Summit scheduled for 2008, which will address water and sanitation issues. He highlighted the climate change deliberations held during the January 2007 AU Summit, which took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and urged integrating adaptation measures into AMCOW programmes and activities at all levels, and taking advantage of irrigation opportunities to reverse negative trends in agricultural production.



Halifa Drammeh, UNEP



L-R: Kordje Bedoumra, Director, African Development Bank; Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President; Isidore Mvouba, Republic of Congo Prime Minister; Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, AMCOW President; and Babagana Ahmadu, African Union Commission

Noting lack of access to water for over 300 million people in Africa, incoming AMCOW President Itoua said progress on improving water and sanitation on the continent has been insufficient. He emphasized the need for the rational use of resources and better management of water. Looking toward the future, he said AMCOW must improve its governance and institutional structure.

Outgoing AMCOW President Maria Mutagamba recalled that five years ago, AMCOW was conceived by a small group in Nairobi, and has now grown into a continental forum. She said the MDG targets on water and sanitation must be met by 2015 in order to influence the achievement of other water-related targets, and said the improvement of water security is critical to achieving these targets. She highlighted the consolidation of water governance in Africa through AMCOW activities and urged incoming AMCOW President Itoua to work on sensitizing finance ministers to water issues. She said opportunities for women and children must be guaranteed and expressed hope that women's voices would be better heard at the next AMCOW meeting.

Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of Republic of Congo, stressed the importance of tackling the water supply and sanitation challenges facing Africa. Noting the importance of the meeting in bringing together key ministers and stakeholders to address these issues, he stressed the importance of AMCOW as a means for promoting cooperation, security and solidarity. He underlined the need to promote the supply, use and management of water to achieve sustainable development without ignoring the preservation of ecosystems. He also emphasized the need to mobilize further resources to address water issues and achieve the MDGs.

Halifa Drammeh, UNEP, on behalf of Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), said AMCOW provides a forum for the coherent and concerted implementation of policies to improve IWRM and achieve the MDGs in Africa. He emphasized the need to exchange hydrological and other water-related data and information to ensure better planning, improved forecasts and timely flood warnings, particularly with respect to increasing climate variability. He said the majority of natural disasters are water-related, for which early warning systems are needed, and drew attention to the World Hydrological Cycle Observing System programme, which assists in improving the quality of hydrological data and information.



Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of Republic of Congo

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

POLICY STATEMENT BY AMCOW PRESIDENT:

In the afternoon on Wednesday, outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, presented the AMCOW President's Handover Report, observing that a key strategy for engaging in the regional integration process lies in consolidating and strengthening relations with: entities such as NEPAD; parallel ministerial bodies like the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST); and civil society organizations, river and lake basin authorities and regional development organizations. She noted AMCOW's "coming of age," adding that her tenure had witnessed the evolution of AMCOW into a credible entity with many African governments now recognizing the urgent need to address water policy challenges.

She noted successes, including: the operationalization of the ExCom, the TAC and subregional ministerial committees and structures; the adoption at AMCOW-5 of a triennial work programme containing specific priorities for action; and the leveraging of 2.6 million Euros from the EU and US\$100,000 from UNEP to enable AMCOW to finance its core meetings and activities. She said that AMCOW had succeeded in building a platform for defining Africa's water agenda and priorities and presenting a single voice for interacting with the international community. Outgoing President Mutagamba spoke of the need to strengthen the AMCOW Secretariat to: enable it to effectively implement AMCOW decisions; and ensure the best strategic input into AMCOW decision making by creating a resource facility or center that builds on past experiences, in partnership with strategic institutions and agencies.

Outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba addressed key challenges and the way forward, including: further engaging in the regional integration process by completing AMCOW's transformation into an STC of the AU; strengthening governance structures and support mechanisms; further exploring modalities for strengthening subregional structures and institutional relationships with African river and lake basin organizations and effectively engaging with the private sector. Regarding the AWF, she noted the need to strengthen communication between the AWF and AMCOW and for the AWF to establish a monitoring and evaluation system for the water and sanitation sector. She concluded by officially launching the status report "Getting Africa on Track to Meet the MDGs on Water and Sanitation," comprising a status overview of sixteen African countries, and by presenting the President's Handover Report to incoming AMCOW President Itoua.

COMPOSITION OF AMCOW BODIES: On Wednesday afternoon, ExCom Eastern Africa Subregional Vice-President Asfaw Dingamo (Ethiopia) announced the nomination of Bruno Itoua as the next AMCOW President. Bruno Itoua was elected by acclamation.

Regarding the composition of AMCOW subsidiary bodies for 2007-2009, the following members were elected for Eastern Africa: ExCom members - Sudan, Ethiopia and Burundi as Vice-President; TAC members - Kenya, Burundi, Ethiopia,

Tanzania and Sudan; AWF Subcommittee - Rwanda and Tanzania; and EU Water Initiative Subcommittee - Kenya, with Sudan as the alternate member.

For Northern Africa, the following members were elected: ExCom members - Egypt and Tunisia, with Mauritania as Vice-President; and TAC members - Mauritania, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Libya.

For Western Africa, the following members were elected: ExCom members - Ghana and Togo, with Senegal continuing as Vice-President; TAC members - Benin, Mali, Senegal, Niger and Nigeria; and AWF Subcommittee member - Burkina Faso.

For Southern Africa, the following members were elected: ExCom members - Botswana and Zambia, with Lesotho continuing as Vice-President until further notice. Lesotho, for the Southern Africa region, said that the TAC members would be communicated to the AMCOW President at a future date, pending consultations.

For Central Africa, nominations included: ExCom members - Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad as Vice-President; and TAC members - Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Cameroon and Central African Republic.

Ministers accepted these nominations, and AMCOW President Itoua noted that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, Republic of Congo would chair the TAC. He urged other subregions to submit nominations for the subcommittees.

PARTNERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

On Thursday morning, Abakar Ramadane, Chad Minister of Environment and Water, and Odette Kayitesi, Burundi Minister of Territorial Management, Tourism and Environment, chaired a partnership roundtable. Partners outlined their commitments to AMCOW, addressing, among other matters: financing of water infrastructure; access to the EU-ACP Water Facility; mobilization of resources for the AWF; follow-up to the G8-Action Plan on Water for Africa; follow-up to the Africa Commission Report; tracking commitments toward achieving the WSSD and MDG targets in Africa; collaboration between UNSGAB and AMCOW, particularly in relation to the proposed 2008 AU Summit on water and sanitation; and preparation for the 2008 International Year of Sanitation.

UNEP reiterated its commitment to support and renew AMCOW, and to assist the AMCOW President and his team. Stressing the importance of the proposed 2008 AU Summit, he offered UNEP's assistance in preparing for the Summit. The AfDB emphasized the importance of water security, and cooperation with AMCOW in preparing for the 2008 Year of Sanitation and the proposed African Water Week. AMCOW President Itoua suggested formalizing an agreement between the AfDB and AMCOW to define goals on water and sanitation, organizing "silent partners" to contribute money, and convening a high-level meeting with the AfDB to define a common programme.

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reiterated its support for AMCOW, and said it was working on the valuation of water resources. Germany underlined the G8-Africa Action Plan's call for more focus on

development cooperation on water supply and sanitation issues. Highlighting Germany's partnership with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Germany pledged support to promote cooperation on river basins, water management and capacity development at the regional level. UN-HABITAT reaffirmed its commitment to assist AMCOW in achieving targets on water and sanitation, particularly as they relate to urban areas, and drew attention to the Water for African Cities Initiative. UN-WATER said it would continue supporting AMCOW through UN agencies.

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE

A ministerial roundtable was held on Thursday morning, co-chaired by outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, Omar Salem, Chair of Libyan General Water Authority, and John Mutua Katuku, Kenyan Minister of Water and Irrigation. The discussions focused on: water infrastructure development; water supply and sanitation; and climate change, impacts and adaptation.

Emphasizing the importance of developing effective water infrastructure for development, outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba said water security must be addressed at all levels, from the family to national and regional levels. She advocated the enhancement of water storage initiatives at all levels and the use of water harvesting to improve water security in Africa. Stressing the need for international support for such projects, she suggested that a World Water Forum be held in Africa.

The AfDB suggested dams provide an important means of addressing water storage issues and generating electricity. Ethiopia reviewed recommendations made by Eastern African ministers during recent consultations in Nairobi. He noted the recommendations urged the development of a pan-African declaration on water financing, which would call for an annual review of progress, and requested a coordinated approach on financing efforts to achieve the MDG water-related targets.

Roundtable Co-Chair Katuku underscored the importance of joint efforts and adequate financial resources to address climate change, while Roundtable Co-Chair Salem emphasized the importance of awareness raising and knowledge building to support decision making, and the need for robust institutional and legal frameworks to enable countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Chad drew attention to the shrinking of Lake Chad due to climate change. Roundtable Co-Chair Salem proposed the use of interbasin transfers as a solution to problems in Lake Chad. Ethiopia called for all developed countries to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Namibia emphasized the importance of approaching water from an economic



L-R: John Mutua Katuku, Kenyan Minister of Water and Irrigation; Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President; Omar M. Salem, Chair of Libyan General Water Authority; and Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, AMCOW President.

perspective and using it to create wealth, and gave the example of hydroelectric power generation. Sudan noted the importance of adequate water storage infrastructure such as dams and reservoirs to provide water during droughts. Namibia expressed hope for a time when every African house has a tap, and urged African countries to invest in and retain control of their water resources. Libya drew attention to a recent UNESCO decision to establish a regional center on managing shared aquifers, to be based in Tripoli, Libya.

WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) used the example of Lake Chad to highlight how poor water management, including unplanned infrastructure, leads to diminishing access to water resources. Burundi called for a solution to Lake Chad's worsening condition, and Chad attributed the situation to water mismanagement. The Niger Basin Authority called for a "shared vision," which would engage all stakeholders to avoid water wars. AMCOW President Itoua said urgent reforms to Africa's water sector had still not been implemented. He stated that continued inaction is adversely impacting the continent's population and ecosystem, and called for assessing how Congo Basin countries can jointly manage water resources.

CLOSING PLENARY

SUMMARIES OF THE PARTNERSHIP AND MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES:

On Thursday afternoon, John Mutua Katuku presented the recommendations from the ministerial roundtables. He said recommendations included: measures to be taken by African countries to ensure the provision of infrastructure to foster economic growth; response strategies and actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change; and actions to develop markets and "fair trade." Babagana Ahmadu, AU Commission, reported on the partnership roundtable, highlighting activities being undertaken by partners to support AMCOW.

ADOPTION OF THE BRAZZAVILLE DECLARATION:

AMCOW President Itoua invited ministers to consider and approve the Brazzaville Declaration. He presented a number of amendments to the original text circulated earlier, including: Tunisia hosting the African Water Week in 2007, followed by Kenya in 2008; commencement of preparations for the fifth World Water Forum; a proposed MoU between GWP and AMCOW; promotion of the institutionalization of groundwater management by river basin organizations; and initiation of a rainwater harvesting programme.

Noting the absence of reference to the media in the AMCOW decisions contained within the declaration, a media representative proposed adding language stating that AMCOW

welcomes GWP's assistance in deepening media's involvement in water issues, and supports developing an action plan for media to highlight and track progress on achieving the MDGs and adaptation to climate change.

Delegates then adopted the declaration by acclamation.

CLOSING SESSION: AMCOW President Itoua conveyed his appreciation for the support he had received, particularly from outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, and noted that the meeting was key to confirming the role of AMCOW in Africa's sustainable development agenda. Stressing the importance of international cooperation, he welcomed support from international partners and emphasized that financial assistance is critical to the sustainability of AMCOW and achievement of the MDGs. AMCOW President Itoua closed the meeting at 6:47 pm.

BRAZZAVILLE DECLARATION

In the declaration, AMCOW recognizes equitable and sustainable management of water as the top development challenge for Africa, affirms the importance of meeting the MDG targets on water and sanitation in Africa by 2015-2025, and underlines that the African water crisis can only be tackled through strong partnerships between governments, the private sector, civil society and development cooperation partners. It further states that ministers welcome discussions on the prospects of convening an AU Summit on Water and note the need to include all stakeholders, including youth and women, in decision making at the local level. It states that African countries are committed to mobilizing support to facilitate the preparation and implementation of IWRM plans, and stresses the need to improve financing and the engagement of finance ministries in water discourse.

Decisions: The declaration contains decisions taken by ministers at AMCOW-6. The key decisions contained in the declaration relate to the following over-riding themes:

- further engaging in regional integration processes and involving all African countries;
- strengthening AMCOW governance structures, and the technological and technical capacities of its organs, including the Secretariat, and the effective implementation of decisions and the work programme;
- consolidating and coordinating existing regional and international partnerships, as well as identifying and engaging in new partnership arrangements;
- securing self-reliance regarding means of implementing decisions, while counting on international solidarity for augmenting efforts and resources; and
- promoting and monitoring actions on the MDGs related to the water and sanitation sectors in Africa, and enhancing AMCOW's capacity to catalyze the necessary measures.

On governance, institutional and operational matters, AMCOW decides, *inter alia*, to:

- continue progress made by the AU Commission toward integrating AMCOW into an STC;
- strengthen subregional presence and structures;
- circulate the AMCOW-AU MoU to member states;



Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, incoming AMCOW President and Republic of Congo Minister of Energy and Water

- rotate the AMCOW presidency in the following order: Northern Africa; Western Africa; Eastern Africa; with Southern Africa assuming the presidency following the Republic of Congo representing Central Africa;
- request the subregional Vice-Presidents to initiate consultations with subregional communities with a view to reaching a formal agreement on collaboration of their respective water units with AMCOW; and
- enhance AMCOW's relations with youth, women and parliamentarians.

On financial matters and means of implementation, AMCOW decides to, *inter alia*:

- form a subcommittee on developing a resource mobilization strategy; and
 - write to all member states affirming that contributions from member states should continue to be remitted even if AMCOW is integrated into the AU as an STC.
- On initiatives, AMCOW decides to, among other matters:
- endorse the proposal to launch and institutionalize an annual African water week;
 - hold the 2007 African Water Week, hosted by the AfDB, in Tunisia in 2007 and in Kenya in 2008;
 - take the necessary actions to prepare for the fifth World Water Forum;
 - enter into an MoU with the World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme, outlining areas of cooperation;
 - enter into an MoU with GWP, spelling out areas of cooperation;
 - consider the proposal to jointly host a water infrastructure financing meeting with the AfDB in 2008;
 - promote the institutionalization of groundwater management by river basin organizations to ensure regional ownership; and
 - initiate a rainwater harvesting programme within AMCOW to promote best practices.

REPORT OF FORUMS AND SIDE EVENTS

YOUTH FORUM ON WATER

A Youth Forum was held on Monday, 28 May, at which local children: discussed water supply and sanitation issues and the role of AMCOW; engaged in water-related educational activities; met with outgoing AMCOW President Maria Mutagamba; and prepared a statement to be presented to AMCOW-6.

Facilitator of the forum, Annika Schabbauer, UNICEF/Integrated Family Development Initiative, highlighted the importance of water in everyday activities and the key role that children can play in improving water supply and sanitation in Africa. Oumar Ndiaye, Senegalese Ministry of Water, discussed the problems of drought and desertification in Africa, stressing the need for good water management and noting the importance of youth in addressing these challenges.

The children were divided into groups, in which they: created wall hangings depicting personal interpretations of threats, needs, opportunities and aspirations regarding water issues; played games and performed water-related experiments;



Children constructed models of human interventions in the water cycle during the Youth Forum on Monday.

and constructed a three-dimensional model of human interventions in the water cycle, including a model village, a spring and a borehole.

In the afternoon, the children viewed a presentation on the MDGs, and were visited by outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, who highlighted the links between clean water, sanitation, land degradation, health and economic prosperity, and expressed the need for youth to engage with these issues. Outgoing President Mutagamba stressed the importance of youth communicating, both at home and at school, the need to address water problems. She emphasized that water is a finite resource, but because demand is growing, the need to preserve water resources is critical.

The children prepared inputs for a statement to be presented at AMCOW-6, focusing on: maintaining and improving water treatment facilities; facilitating the provision of drinking water and reducing its cost; and supervising entities charged with the treatment and distribution of safe drinking water.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA FORUM

A Civil Society and Media Forum convened on Monday, 28 May and Tuesday, 29 May, during which participants exchanged views and experiences relating to water supply and sanitation issues in Africa, and prepared a statement for presentation at AMCOW-6.

OPENING SESSION: After the forum was opened by its facilitator, Jamillah Mwanjisi, ANEW, Francis Bougaire, AMCOW Secretariat, provided an overview of AMCOW's aims and organizational structure. He stated that while ministers responsible for water have a duty to work towards continent-wide water reform, civil society has a corresponding responsibility to reinforce these reforms at the regional and subregional levels.

Simon Thuo, GWP - Eastern Africa, stressed the importance of participatory decision making in achieving the MDGs, highlighted the value that working with AMCOW at the regional level adds to GWP's work, and welcomed this "mutually reinforcing relationship." Evariste Kouassi-Komlan, Regional Centre for Water Supply and Sanitation (CREPA), highlighted CREPA's strategies, including developing appropriate technologies, participatory approaches and alternative funding mechanisms, and presented a review of CREPA's programmes. Edward Kairu, ANEW, explained that his organization's work focuses on sustainable management

of water resources, water supply and sanitation, and achieving the MDGs and WSSD targets. He said ANEW facilitates coordination of diverse civil society voices on water issues, and has networks with civil society organizations in over 50 countries.

Discussion: Participants discussed, among other issues: overcoming the dominance of scientists and researchers in the water sector; ANEW's involvement in Northern and Central Africa; partnerships between ANEW and the media; improving water education; IWRM at the local level; and using water to overcome conflict.

CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT: Goretti Nassanga, Makerere University (Uganda), highlighted how journalists and civil society organizations, acting collectively, can influence the decision making process to bring about positive environmental outcomes. Frank Habineza, Nile Basin Discourse Forum - Rwanda, explained that his organization, which is active in ten Nile Basin countries, seeks to raise awareness of, and enhance cooperation with, Nile Basin projects and to engage in poverty reduction strategies. He highlighted activities undertaken and key achievements, such as the establishment of a discussion forum website and interactive radio debates on Nile Basin issues.

Destä Demessie, Ethiopian Kale Heywot Church, explained that his organization provides self-help programmes to groups living in the poorest areas to reverse the "dependency syndrome." Arguing that civil society must win the respect of governments rather than demand it, he exemplified how groups working on water issues in Ethiopia collaborated on policy proposals, which led to a coordinated approach and enhanced dialogue between civil society and government.

Malick Gaye, Environment and Development of the Third World (ENDA), called for the increased provision of microcredit to individuals and community-based organizations to replicate successful examples already undertaken. He argued that NGOs should be strengthened and that the media should be trained to maximize civil society's impact on the policy process. Evariste Kouassi-Komlan, CREPA, discussed the development of more equitable and participatory water policies and strategies. He said policies must address equity issues and take into account the needs of stakeholders. He stressed the important role of lobbying governments and underscored the value of integrating the work of diverse sectors that deal with water issues.

Discussion: Participants raised a number of issues, including: how to reach the poorest of the poor, particularly the urban poor; consulting women's organizations when developing policies; training government representatives to



Goretti Nassanga, Makerere University (Uganda)

ensure that equitable policies are developed; and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of networks. Participants urged the making of a strong statement that specifies targets and means of achieving those targets, submitting concrete recommendations to AMCOW and using the best approach to ensure that the measures proposed in the statement are implemented.

PREPARATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA STATEMENT TO AMCOW-6: On Tuesday morning, civil society and media participants met in parallel to draft inputs to their statement. In the afternoon, they convened to further discuss the draft statement, before the forum was closed by outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, who encouraged media and civil society involvement in promoting water issues.

Statement: The statement as drafted underscores the role of civil society and the media in contributing to the achievement of the water-related MDGs and targets. On institutional issues, it calls on AMCOW to include participation of all stakeholders in the work of its subregional entities, the TAC and the ExCom, and to nominate a civil society and a media representative to the TAC. On financial mechanisms, it requests AMCOW to allocate funds to civil society organizations, the media and women's groups. It also calls on AMCOW to support community empowerment and partnership building with civil society organizations and the media.

SIDE EVENTS

Three side events were held on Thursday, 31 May. Two events, on "Ground Management in Africa" and on "Promotion of Rainwater Harvesting in Africa," took place in the morning, while an event on "The Congo Basin" was held in the afternoon.

GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA: Eberhard Braune and Yongxin Xu, both from the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, gave a presentation on "Groundwater Management in Africa." Explaining that, excluding polar ice caps, groundwater accounts for 97% of all freshwater worldwide, they demonstrated its importance for Africa, especially for mitigating against the impacts of drought. Presenting the "UNEP-UNESCO Groundwater Initiative," they detailed its aims, which include: raising awareness; developing capacity; transferring knowledge; and creating a multiplier effect through NEPAD centers of excellence. Eberhard Braune and Yongxin Xu concluded by urging the creation of an African groundwater commission.



L-R: Eberhard Braune and Yongxin Xu, University of the Western Cape, South Africa

PROMOTION OF RAINWATER HARVESTING IN AFRICA: Halifa Drammeh, UNEP, highlighted the potential of rainwater harvesting in Africa and expressed hope that events such as the African Water Week would bring it wider attention. Elizabeth Khaka, UNEP, explained how a recent

study by UNEP and the International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) demonstrates that Africa's rainfall potential is sufficient to meet the water and food needs for nine billion people.

THE CONGO BASIN: Benjamin Ndala, Secretary-General, International Commission of the Congo-Oubangui-Sangha Basin (CICOS), emphasized that his organization aims to promote the sharing of water resources among various water users and to guarantee the preservation of the basin's natural heritage. Noting challenges faced in the Congo Basin, including risks of human and environmental disasters, erosion causing the silting of ports and channels, and threats to food security, Benjamin Ndala described regional and international cooperative efforts undertaken by CICOS to address these challenges. Albert Pandi, CICOS, reviewed monitoring and evaluation efforts that are being undertaken in the basin, noting that water levels in recent years have been low and that more research is needed.

Discussion: Libya and Algeria highlighted the important role of groundwater resources in their respective countries. Libya explained that it had developed technologies for its exploitation and management, which it could share with interested countries. Tanzania emphasized the importance of awareness raising and capacity building, and stressed the need for developing relevant hydrological maps to determine the location of groundwater resources and for developing the capacity to assess these resources. The AfDB outlined several AWF initiatives on water harvesting in Africa, including a water harvesting pilot project in Rwanda. Namibia discussed the benefits of IWRM, highlighting basin and aquifer water management. Kenya observed that understanding of the complexity of groundwater resources is limited and that surface water resources are concentrated in limited areas.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SEVENTH WORLD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS:

The seventh World General Assembly of the International Network of Basin Organizations will take place in Debrecen, Hungary, from 7-9 June 2007. The World General Assembly will be organized around four strategic topics for the implementation of river, lake and aquifer basin management: prevention and management of the extreme climate phenomena of floods and droughts; transboundary basin management; monitoring networks, reporting, and inter-collaboration; and preparation of action plans for basin organizations and their financing. For more information, contact: Permanent Technical Secretariat; tel: +33-1-44-90-88-60; fax: +33-1-40-08-01-45; e-mail: inbo@wanadoo.fr; internet: http://www.inbo-news.org/ag2007/index_eng.htm

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON IMPROVING GLOBAL HEALTH THROUGH SAFE WATER: This workshop will take place in Hamilton, Canada, from 9-11 June 2007. It will aim to analyze the linkage between human health and wellbeing and the provision of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. For more information, contact: Conference

Secretariat; tel: +1-905-525-9140; fax: +1-905-529-4261; e-mail: conference@inweh.unu.edu; internet: <http://www.inweh.unu.edu/inweh/Health/HealthWorkshop2007.htm>

WATER FOR A CHANGING WORLD - ENHANCING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY SYMPOSIUM:

This symposium will be held in Delft, the Netherlands, from 13-15 June 2007. On the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, UNESCO-IHE is organizing the symposium to formulate recommendations on three themes related to "Enhancing Local Knowledge and Capacity": knowledge for development; knowledge generation and innovation; and knowledge sharing. The discussions will be framed by five leading water-related themes: water security; environmental integrity; urbanization; water management and governance; and information and communication technologies. For more information, contact: Nicolas Dickinson; tel: +31-15-2151-715; fax: +31-15-2122-921; e-mail: n.dickinson@unesco-ihe.org; internet: <http://www.unesco-ihe.org/news/symposium.htm>

NINTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU

ASSEMBLY: The ninth Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly will take place in Accra, Ghana, from 25 June to 3 July 2007. The meeting will be devoted to a "Grand Debate on the Union Government," and will include the fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee, from 25-26 June, and the eleventh Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, from 28-29 June. For more information, contact: AU Commission; tel: +251-11-551-7700; fax: +251-11-551-7844; e-mail: dconference@africa-union.org; internet: <http://www.africa-union.org>

GEF BIENNIAL INTERNATIONAL WATERS

CONFERENCE: The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Biennial International Waters Conference will be held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 31 July to 3 August 2007. The conference will seek to: share experiences and innovative practices among GEF's Global International Waters portfolio; promote learning and capacity building; develop strategies to enhance stakeholder collaboration; and encourage GEF International Waters projects to apply evolving GEF policies and procedures during implementation. For more information, contact: Mindy Butner; tel: +1-703-379-2713; fax: +1-703-820-6168; e-mail: iwc2007@gef.org; internet: <http://www.gef.org/iwc4/index.cfm>

WORLD WATER WEEK IN STOCKHOLM 2007: PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS ON WATER - STRIVING FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN A CHANGING WORLD: The "World Water Week in Stockholm 2007" will take place from 12-18 August 2007 in Stockholm, Sweden. It will scrutinize progress on water-related developments, anticipate and promote prospects for achieving a desirable future and look to renew partnerships for sustainable development. The overall theme of the event is "Progress and Prospects on Water - Striving for Sustainability in a Changing World." For more information, contact: Conference Secretariat; tel: +46-8-522-139-60; fax: +46-8-522-139-61; e-mail: sympos@siwi.org; internet: <http://www.worldwaterweek.org/>

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SANITATION 2008: The year of 2008 has been designated as the UNESCO International Year of Sanitation. Focus areas will include: raising awareness of the importance of sanitation and its impacts on achieving other MDGs from the perspectives of hygiene, household sanitation and wastewater; encouraging governments and their partners to promote and implement policies and actions for meeting the sanitation target; and mobilizing communities, particularly women's groups, towards changing sanitation and hygiene practices through sanitation and health education campaigns. For more information, contact: UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development, tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/sanitation/iys.htm>

EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008: WATER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: This expo will be held in Zaragoza, Spain, from 14 June to 14 September 2008. The three-month public event, which has as its theme "water and sustainable development," is expected to attract a large audience, and will feature a specially-constructed "Water Tower" that will have a capacity of 1630 visitors per hour. For more information, contact: Expo Zaragoza 2008; tel: +34-9-76-70-20-08; fax: +34-9-76-20-40-09; internet: <http://www.zaragoza2008.com/>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GROUNDWATER AND CLIMATE IN AFRICA: This conference will take place in Kampala, Uganda, from 25-28 June 2008. It is being organized by the University College London (UK), the Directorate of Water Development of Uganda and UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme. The conference seeks to bring together water and climate scientists from research and academic institutions, government departments and the private sector, as well as representatives from international agencies and donors, to share knowledge and expertise and to improve current understandings of the impacts of climate variability and change on groundwater resources in Africa. For more information, contact: Conference Secretariat; e-mail: info@gwclim.org; internet: <http://www.gwclim.org/>

THIRTEENTH WORLD WATER CONGRESS: The thirteenth World Water Congress will be held in Montpellier, France, from 1-4 September 2008. The congress will aim to enhance knowledge and raise global consciousness of the impact of global changes on water resources. Its main themes will be: water availability, use and management; towards the future: water resources and global changes; climate change and disasters; the development of water resources and infrastructure; water governance and water security; water conservation and demand management; financing water development and capacity building; and capacity building in developing countries. For more information, contact: International Water Resources Association (IWRA); tel: +33-4-67-61-29-48; fax: +33-4-67-52-2-29; e-mail: wwc2008@msem.univ-montp2.fr; internet: <http://wwc2008.msem.univ-montp2.fr/>

FIFTH WORLD WATER FORUM: The fifth World Water Forum will be held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 5-22 March 2009. The theme of the forum will be "Bridging the Divides for Water," which refers to bridging the divide between rich

and poor, and the developed and developing world, to enhance understanding between water users, decision makers, experts and water practitioners at all levels. For more information, contact: Forum Secretariat; e-mail: dilekkayis@dsi.gov.tr; internet: <http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/index.php?id=6>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific states
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCOST	African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
ANEW	African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation
AWF	African Water Facility
AU	African Union
CREPA	Regional Center for Water Supply and Sanitation
ENDA	Environment and Development of the Third World
ExCom	Council of Ministers and Executive Committee (AMCOW)
GWP	Global Water Partnership
ICRAF	International Center for Research in Agroforestry
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (WSSD)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PANAFCON	Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water
REC	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
STC	Specialized Technical Committee (AU)
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee (AMCOW)
UNSGAB	UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Dancers performed for the delegates during the meeting.