



## PANAFCON HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2003

Delegates met in a morning Plenary session for the opening of the Conference's Ministerial segment, which was attended by some 40 African ministers. In an afternoon Plenary session, several major implementation initiatives were launched, including the African Water Facility (AWF), the EU Water Initiative for Africa, the G-8 Action Plan for Africa, UN-HABITAT Water for African Cities, and the African Water Journal.

### MINISTERIAL SEGMENT OPENING

Meles Zenawi, Ethiopian Prime Minister, officially opened the ministerial segment, noting that: Africa has to increase its irrigated land area; most diseases are water and sanitation related; and Africa critically depends on the efficient use of its water resources. He called for more political will to address the challenges of unbalanced spacial water distribution and transboundary water resources, but also stressed that Africa requires technical and financial support from the international community.

Jose Dione, ECA, acknowledged the high conference participation, which he said reflected a clear political support and commitment of all stakeholders for action on water issues in Africa. He called for enhanced focus on implementation programmes and projects and increased funding for such actions.

Shiteraw Jarso, Ethiopian Minister of Water Resources, underscored that many African countries will be unable to fulfill their global commitments on water without further donor support and called on ministers to take immediate action at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.

Alhaji Mukhari Shagari, African Minister's Council on Water (AMCOW) Chair, stressed that the Conference illustrates Africa's commitment to water issues and to achieving global targets. Noting that water is a scarce resource in Africa, unequally distributed, and inadequately managed, he stated that Africa must develop effective integrated water resource management (IWRM) procedures at all levels and strengthen international cooperation to ensure peace and security.

Patrick Mazimhaka, African Union Commission Deputy Chair, noted current regional initiatives, urged for greater political commitment needed for achieving the targets, and stressed the role of NEPAD and the African Water Vision. He added that the Conference's focus on implementation and partnership arrangements is important for future initiatives and programmes.

Reiterating UNEP's commitment to Africa, Shafqat Kakakhel, on behalf of UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer, identified key issues for meeting water-related MDGs and WSSD targets,

including: combating water-related diseases; addressing water pollution and natural disasters; improving irrigation and hydro-power generation; and ensuring equitable water sharing. Stressing that the current challenges result from policy failure, he called for concerted efforts from African governments, stakeholders and the international community.

Koos Richelle, EC Development Director-General, highlighted the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership's goals, including: raising political commitment to address water issues; creating a platform for reinforced coordination; contributing to achieving the MDGs; and supporting the management of transboundary river basins. Stressing that sustained action requires local ownership and multi-stakeholder participation, he urged African governments to prioritize water and sanitation in their national strategies and called for a comprehensive and transparent monitoring system as a guide to best practices.

Philibert Afrika, African Development Bank (ADB), stressed the importance of cooperation, collaboration, and commitments in order to achieve global targets on water, and called for the adoption of an integrated approach, donor support and a stronger focus on water issues in rural areas.

David Grey, World Bank, highlighted the link between water and poverty and called for greater focus on agriculture and shared river basins. On funding of water projects, he noted the need for increased donor support, emphasized the importance of political will and the development of national water management plans, and warned against the lack of clarity created by the multiplicity of investment in the water sector.

Marie-Elise Gbedo, African Women's Network for Development, presented the declaration of the Network's recent meeting in Niamey, Niger. She appealed to: governments to focus on African women's concerns in achieving water and sanitation targets; AMCOW to include women in its policy making process; the ADB and the EU to fund projects that empower women; UN-HABITAT to focus on women in slums; and development partners to involve and train women in their projects.

Douglas Merrey, International Water Management Institute, announced the availability of the WaterDome final report on water-related WSSD outcomes and presented a copy to the Ehtiopiam Prime Minister.

Efua Dzameshie, Young Volunteers for the Environment, said that sustainable water management needs to be community-driven and focused on the poor, and stressed the need to: involve women and youth; improve knowledge management, including traditional knowledge; and build capacity for IWRM.



## REGIONAL PROJECT PORTFOLIOS

William Cosgrove, World Water Council, chaired the session on regional water and sanitation project portfolios. Jean Rechel Ossete, Republic of Congo Ministry of Water Resources, presented Central Africa's action plan for achieving WSSD targets, focusing on poverty reduction and the improvement of the sub-region's socio-economic development. Henry Kayondo Ntale, Uganda Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment, presented the project portfolio for East Africa, which covers rural and urban water supply, sanitation, water for agricultural production, IWRM, and capacity building.

Mahmoud Abu-Zeid, Egyptian Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, presented North Africa's portfolio, stressing the region's shortfall in agricultural production and highlighting, *inter alia*, the possibility of utilizing non-conventional methods of water distribution. Omar N'diaye, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), presented on ECOWAS's portfolio of programmes, which aims at adopting regional integrated management plans and developing national portfolios of water projects. Thomas Chiramba, South Africa Development Community (SADC), presented on the Southern Africa's portfolio. He noted SADC's programme of action, highlighting challenges including implementation capacity, effective resource mobilization, and disbursement of funds.

## IMPLEMENTATION INITIATIVES

Sylvia Masebo, Zambian Ministry of Local Government and Housing, chaired the session. Nicolas Drouin, Canadian International Development Agency, announced support for the NEPAD Water Agenda, the AWF, the UN-HABITAT Water for African Cities programme, and five IWRM plans throughout Africa. Cautioning against duplication of funding and implementation mechanisms, he urged donor governments to support African-led processes and seek guidance for preferred implementation modalities.

AMCOW Chair Alhaji Muktari Shagari presented on the AWF, which will be hosted by the ADB, and announced that US\$620 million will be available between 2004 and 2008 to finance, *inter alia*: project preparation and implementation; sector reform; capacity building; information and knowledge management; and gender integration. He stressed that the AWF's success depends on collaboration and partnerships with other initiatives.

Koos Richelle outlined a joint declaration on the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation. He noted that three working groups had been formed on: water supply and sanitation; IWRM, including transboundary water basin management; and cross-cutting issues, including finance, research and monitoring. Richelle added that the process will develop a more detailed Work Programme, and decisions will be taken by an EU ministerial meeting in May 2004. The declaration was signed in Plenary by AMCOW and the EU.

Habte Selassie, ADB, presented on the Bank's Water and Sanitation Initiative and its concept paper endorsed by AMCOW. He explained that the initiative aims at mobilizing and facilitating the flow of financial resources for water and sanitation projects in Africa. He stressed the link between poor access to water and health, education and poverty issues, and welcomed the support of AMCOW and the international donor community.

Sylvia Masebo launched the second phase of the Water for African Cities programme. She described the dire water situation in Africa, emphasizing the challenge presented by the rapid urbanization in Africa, and said poor sanitation leads to poor health and loss of dignity. She welcomed the UN General Assembly's resolution calling on UN-HABITAT to support the programme and noted the creation of the Water for Africa Trust Fund.

Ronnie Kasrils, South African Minister for Water Affairs and Forestry, endorsed the second phase of the Water for African Cities programme. He noted the importance of information exchange, pro-poor strategies, capacity building, and synergies between actions in rural and urban areas, and emphasized the essential role of local authorities and municipalities.

Jean Marc Chataigner, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presented the French government's view on the G-8 Action Plan for Africa. He underlined three key issues in water resources management: partnerships, coordination and information gathering, and stressed the importance of local institutions, river basin organizations and capacity building. On mobilizing financial resources, he said the G-8 had called on the World Bank to take the lead of the donor community and informed delegates that the Bank was to present a progress report at the next G-8 meeting. He added that France fully supported the creation of a European fund for water and welcomed the creation by the ADB of an AWF.

Stressing Africa's growing need for trained professionals, Mike Muller, South African Ministry of Water Affairs and Forestry, launched the African Water Journal, noting its important role in facilitating the much-needed exchange of knowledge and expertise. He encouraged Africa's water professionals to publish their scientific research.

Rosebud Kurwijila, African Union (AU), presented on the AU Extraordinary Summit on Agriculture and Water, to be held in Libya in February 2004. She said that the Summit aims to: take practical implementation steps using Africa's own resources to ascertain political and economic independence; improve water and sanitation at the rural level; and establish a viable framework for regional cooperation. She said the summit's expected outcomes include: the establishment of mechanisms for financing agriculture and water development and for managing and conserving water resources for agriculture; a framework for public-private partnerships; and a decision on the adoption of the African Water Vision.

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**MINISTERIAL SESSION:** Ministers and development cooperation partners will meet at 9:00 am in Conference Room 4 in a closed session to discuss, *inter alia*: the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation; the EU-African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) Contonou Agreement; and key implementation initiatives.

**PARALLEL SESSIONS:** A session to finalize the thematic recommendations will meet from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in Conference Room 1. A session to finalize the draft document on Africa's contribution to CSD-12 will meet from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in Caucus Room 11.

**CLOSING PLENARY:** The closing Plenary will convene from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm in Conference Room 1 to consider the final outcomes of the Conference and hear closing remarks.