

Background information on the SG's meeting with H.R.H. Willem-Alexander Prince of Orange, Chairman of the SG's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation,

21 November 2007 -12:15 pm

Water and sanitation

[The Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB) is an independent body established in March 2004 by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan. UNSGAB is mandated to give advice to Secretary-General, raise public awareness, and galvanize action of Governments and international organizations in order to advance global water and sanitation agenda. Its actions focus on help achieving MDGs on water and sanitation.

The Chairman of UNSGAB is His Royal Highness the Prince of the Netherlands. UNSGAB has currently 21 members.

The Crown Prince of Japan was appointed as Honorary President of UNSGAB on November 1st, 2007. The Crown Prince was Honorary President of the 3rd World water Forum in Kyoto, in March 2003 (while HRH the Prince of Orange was Chairman of the 2nd World Water Forum).

In March 2006, the Board announced its flagship plan, the Hashimoto Action Plan (HAP), named in honour of Mr. Mr. Ryutaro Hashimoto, former Prime Minister of Japan and the first Chairman of the Board. The HAP was widely supported by international community as a viable blueprint to achieve a breakthrough towards the MDGs on water and sanitation. Activities of UNSGAB are currently dedicated to realize the HAP.

The SG's Board on Water and Sanitation has organized regional dialogues between the Board members and regional decision makers to follow up on the HAP. The regional dialogues are usually held in conjunction with the full-board meeting of the Board.

The 10th Meeting of UNSGAB and the Inter-American Dialogue were successfully held in Bogota on 14-16 November. The Board decided on the next actions to promote the six chapters of the Hashimoto Action Plan and to advance the water and sanitation agenda in major meetings such as the African Union General Assembly (AU Water Summit), the next G-8 Summit in Japan and CSD16. At the Inter-American Dialogue, Ministers and Government representatives of Americas discussed with Board members how the water and sanitation agenda will be advanced making use of Hashimoto Action Plan. Mr. Uribe, President of Colombia, attended the Dialogue. Mr. Sha Zukang attended both meetings representing the SG.]

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S-G's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation

- **I very much appreciate the work of the Advisory Board under your leadership to advance the implementation of Hashimoto Action Plan. I believe that the recommendations contained in the Hashimoto Action Plan provide an integrated approach to overcome the complex issues delaying implementation.**
- **The Crown Prince of Japan has accepted to be the Honorary President of the Board. I am convinced that his joining the Board will further support your efforts in mobilizing actions to promote the implementation of the global water and sanitation agenda.**
- **I note with interest that the Board in each region is facilitating dialogue between the regional development banks and the Water Ministers to mobilize additional resources for the water and sanitation sector. I also understand that some countries have already agreed to hold high-level meetings to ensure that water and sanitation remain a top development priority. I would like to know more about these initiatives, and how the UN system can support them.**

Commission for Sustainable Development

- **The Commission for Sustainable Development at its session in May 2008 will review its earlier decisions on water and sanitation. This provides an important opportunity for further advancing the global water and sanitation agenda.**
- **I encourage wider dissemination of the Board's work at the Commission for Sustainable Development to enrich the discussions.**

International Year of Sanitation (IYS)

- **I consider the achievement of water and sanitation goals very important to the broader sustainable development agenda. We need to make best use of the opportunities provided by the International Year of Sanitation.**
- **I am glad that Your Royal Highness is personally here for the global launch of the IYS. I hope that this Global Launch will encourage effective advocacy campaigns to promote access to basic sanitation services.**
- **I encourage further collaboration between my Board on Water and Sanitation and UN-Water in promoting the International Year of Sanitation.**
- **I understand that you are coming from Bogota where the Advisory Board had its successful 9th meeting. I look forward to hearing the results of this meeting.**