

The Chair's Comments on the Third Meeting of the United Nations Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation

November 4, 2005

The third meeting of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation took place on 3rd through 4th, November 2005 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, Italy.

The Board decided in this meeting to produce the Compendium of Actions, "Your Action, Our Action", to be announced at the 4th World Water Forum which will be held in Mexico in March 2006. The Compendium of Actions will articulate what measures are needed to accelerate activities by the United Nations and other relevant agencies and stakeholders in order to achieve internationally agreed targets on water and sanitation including the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), as well as the actions the Board will take to promote such activities. The Compendium of Actions will comprise a strong message from the Board to the world as well as a comprehensive list of actions with a timetable to be taken by the world and the Board for each of selected key subjects on water and sanitation.

The Board discussed actions on the following three key subjects at the meeting as part of process to compile the Compendium of Actions "Your Action, Our Action".

- Public-Public Partnerships for improving delivery of water and sanitation services by public sectors
- Implementation of recommendations on financing
- Implementation of recommendations on sanitation

The discussions focused on what actions to be taken by the Board in order to realize the most important recommendations items selected from existing major recommendations and agreements.

In the discussion of Public-Public Partnerships (PUP) for improved services of utilities of water and sanitation, the Board focused on ways to establish a new mechanism for improving the effectiveness and services of public water operators, who are providing 95% of the global water supply today, through which they network and collaborate among themselves. It also discussed on measures the Board will take to realize such a new mechanism of PUP.

Under the theme of implementation of recommendations on financing, the Board discussed on the actions it could take based upon findings and recommendations of major reports such as the Report of the UN Millennium Project Task Force on Water and Sanitation and "Financing Water for All" (Camdessus Report). The Board discussed on the strengthening of governance, effective

mobilization of both external funding including ODA and internal funding, and possibility of creating new mechanisms for financing as measures to increase financial flows for water and sanitation sector.

Under the theme of implementation of recommendations on sanitation, the Board discussed on the effective, concrete recommendation items it could support in order to accelerate the progress in the sanitation sector which is lagging behind in comparison with the water supply sector in achieving MDG, and the actions that the Board could take to facilitate this progress. It was agreed that the Board would continue the in-depth discussion by collecting more information from the experts at the fourth meeting.

The details of these discussions will be presented as the Compendium of Actions. The Compendium of Actions will include actions on the other key subjects such as implementation of monitoring recommendations to be discussed in the next meetings.

The Official Website of the Board was launched on November 3, the first day of the meeting. The objectives of the Official Website are to increase transparency of discussions, to share the results of the discussions with public, and to raise international awareness on water and sanitation issues. The website ( <http://www.unsgab.org> ) includes mission of the Board, the results of the discussions made at previous meetings, profiles of the Board members, and its future schedule. The Board decided to make the reports and documents which are used as bases of its discussions available to the public in order to secure transparency of the discussions. “Biblioteca”, a small library of these classified documents, was publicized in the meeting. Biblioteca is available on the Official Website of the Board.

The Board affirmed that new actions for raising awareness on water and sanitation will be explored and implemented under the leadership of the Chair in addition to those above.

It was decided that the fourth meeting of the UN Secretary General’s Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation would be held in February, 2006 in Berlin, Germany and the fifth meeting in March, 2006 in Mexico City, Mexico in order to conduct intensive discussions for compiling the Compendium of Actions. The details of the future meetings will be available on the official website as soon as they are fixed.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation as the Chair of the Board to the Government of Italy for hosting this important meeting.