

The 9th Meeting of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB)

14 November - 16 November, 2007
Bogota, Colombia

Synthesis Report

1. Opening

H.R.H Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, UNSGAB Chair, thanked the Government of Colombia for their generous and efficient hosting arrangements and welcomed UNSGAB's members to the 9th session. He pointed out that during this 9th UNSGAB meeting, extra attention should be paid to Integrated Water Resources Management, Monitoring and Reporting and also to Financing.

The Chair especially welcomed the new *Under Secretary General of the United Nation, Mr Sha Zukang* to his first UNSGAB meeting.

After thanking the Chair, *Mr Sha Zukang* expressed his appreciation to the Government of Colombia for hosting this meeting and also thanked the Government of Japan and GTZ for their support. *Mr Sha Zukang* said the work of UNSGAB is critically important to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets on water and sanitation. He stressed that UN-DESA is strongly committed to the Hashimoto Action Plan (HAP) and said the meeting provides an opportunity to see how UN-DESA can help to support the actions of the Board.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

With the information that the agenda for the Inter-American Dialogue would be presented on Thursday afternoon, the agenda was adopted.

3. Overall review of progress and implementation

Kenzo Hiroki, Head of UNSGAB Secretariat, Inter regional Adviser on Water and Sanitation, UNDESA outlined progress according to the six action areas detailed in the Hashimoto Action Plan (HAP).

The board members expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the secretariat and gave the following comments. The list of actions for UNSGAB is growing at every meeting. Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs) are on track. Monitoring and Reporting, Financing and IWRM need more attention. One suggested establishing background working groups to focus on these issues. The need to work closely with institutions working on Monitoring and Reporting, Financing and IWRM was stressed. Another noted that it is important to motivate the right institutions to do the right thing.

A draft Public Service Announcement (PSA) was shown for broadcast by CNN during the International Year of Sanitation (IYS).

4. Meeting of Working Groups

Meetings of the Working Groups (WG) for the 6 chapters in the HAP, namely, Water Operator Partnerships (WOPs), financing, monitoring and reporting, integrated water resources management, sanitation and water and disaster, were held. The WGs discussed progress and actions to be taken.

5. Reports from Working Groups

Water Operators Partnership

Antonio Miranda (WG Chair) outlined the following recommendations made by the Working Group.

- UN Habitat could consider installing, immediately, a provisional multistakeholder steering committee on WOPs, UNSGAB may assist on suggestions.
- UN Habitat could initiate the selection process for the nomination of the post-provisional steering committee.
- UNSGAB and UN Habitat could propose for regional WOPs to establish multi-stakeholder steering committees as well.

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)

Judith Rees (WG Chair) shared the Working Groups decisions.

- Regarding the 16th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-16) in May 2008: a) the WG should offer to host a side event in partnership with UN-Water the Global Water Partnership and others to discuss the realities of IWRM plan implementation, lessons learnt, and chief constraints; b) UNSGAB should work with the CSD Bureau to provide input into the high level segment and side event; c) post-CSD-16 the WG could revisit the questionnaire sent by UNDESA to countries regarding their IWRM plans;
- Regarding transboundary issues, a) the WG welcomed the initiative taken by the World Wildlife Fund to press for ratification of the UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses; b) the WG Chair will follow up on implementation of actions listed under IWRM objective 2 in the Hashimoto Action Plan.

Financing

Gerard Payen (WG Chair) updated participants on progress made since the Shanghai meeting.

- **Follow-up of agreements.** Regarding the OECD Agreement, there have been several meetings and the OECD has set-up a “horizontal water project” to

mobilize several OECD divisions. The governments-led “Sustainable Financing for Water” task team has been aligned and a meeting of international water experts is being organized. Regarding the Asian Development Bank agreement, the ODA doubling is under way.

- **Letters to Development Banks (local finance and monitoring).** Letters have been sent by the previous WG Chair to presidents of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank to request information about “barriers and constraints” for utilities to access local capital markets and to remind them of the need to report on their contribution to the MDGs and the leverage effect of their aid programme. Replies by ADB, the World Bank and AfDB have been received and are being assessed.
- **G-8 meeting in Japan, June 2008.** The “Toyako Initiative” document and a table comparing the G-8 Evian Action Plan and the HAP prepared by the secretariat are useful. It will not be officially sent by the Board. The WG proposes that the Chair send a letter to the G-8 organisers, the draft should include the impact of climate change, a suggestion to design a “five-year front line” programme to strengthen utilities and increase their access to financial markets, and to support the IYS.

Sanitation

Margaret Catley-Carlson (WG Chair) reported on the WG actions.

- **Raise Public and Private Awareness.** The targeted groups are the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Stockholm Water Institute, the Patel Institute, and religious leaders.
- **Donor awareness.** The WG will draft a letter to donors. Dept swap for sanitation is another area worth exploring.
- **Regional meetings.** The WG will consider which meetings it is realistic for UNSGAB members or the Chair to attend.
- **National level.** The WG will explore using a “community report card” developed in the Caribbean to look at sanitation in post-disaster areas.

Monitoring and Reporting

Gerard Payen (WG Chair) said that at the last meeting the Board found that the global reporting on water and sanitation coverage is unclear with discrepancies between data provided by different issuers and an extreme political sensitivity attached to these matters. And so, the WG concluded that before undertaking actions externally, the Board needs to get a better assessment of the current situation. To that end, Ushi Eid and Gerard Payen participated in a seminar during the Stockholm World Water Week, letters were exchanged with people responsible for the UNICEF-WHO Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) and a draft assessment paper was prepared.

The role for UNSGAB can be to help clarify the situation and reconcile the actors behind the different data collection systems in an effort to clarify the discrepancies. The JMP could be requested to: report on all data available in the surveys they use; report on

differentiated levels of service; and make public the data and regression lines used for each country. When the next JMP report is released, UNSGAB could make a public statement on global progress toward the MDG targets on water and sanitation.

Water and Disaster

Hideaki Oda (WG Chair) shared the outcomes of the 1st High-Level Panel on Water and Disaster held on 6 Sept. 2007 in Tokyo. UNSGAB member Dr. Han Seug-soo Chairs the panel which has two main objectives.

- objective one – to establish clear global level goals to reduce loss of life and livelihood caused by water-related disasters, to be coordinated by UN/ISDR and the Japan Water Forum.
- objective two – to provide adequate and safe water and sanitation during and after disasters with coordination by the World Water Council. The outputs will be announced at the 5th WWF in 2009.

Issues were raised in relation to both objectives and they will be circulated by the Secretariat to the Panel and Board members. The Chair agreed to discuss progress with Dr. Han Seug-soo, including the proposal to add UNSGAB to the Panel's name and the need for greater gender balance on the Panel.

6. Next steps, AU summit, G-8 in Japan and WB and EU dialogue, CSD16 and IYS

AU summit

The *vice chair Uschi Eid* said that it was a very good action of the Chair to write all African heads of state. There was a very positive response also to the presentations of vice chair and secretariat to the Permanent Representatives of the member states to the AU in Addis. *Mr Stephen Maxwell Donkor from UN-Water* praised the way UNSGAB had initiated the process for organizing an AU summit for water and sanitation. UNSGAB has to be involved in the preparatory meetings for this Summit. UNSGAB could provide input and guidance upon request of the organizing committee on the key issues related to water and sanitation.

G8 in Japan

The challenge is to get water and sanitation on the agenda for next G8 in Japan. The Japanese presidency is first to decide on the initial G8 agenda. After that, the sherpa's will meet and then UNSGAB could influence the agenda. Every Board member of UNSGAB can contact his own national sherpa and request that they include water and sanitation in the G8 agenda.

Asian Pacific Water Summit

Mr Kenzo Hiroki outlined the agenda of the Asia Pacific Water Summit. The Chair will attend and will make an opening speech. A meeting among chair, Honorary President, and attending Board members is planned on December 3rd at APWS. The content of the final declaration is not clear yet but Mr Hideaki Oda expects that the final declaration will contain a strong message.

Commission on Sustainable Development # 16:

Mr Chaudhry Muhammad Aslam, Chief of the Water, Natural Resources and Small Island Developing States Branch, UNDESA informed the meeting that CSD-16 will be held from 5 to 16 May 2008. The CSD has a very ambitious agenda but the timeframe of 2 weeks is very strict and will not be extended. There are several opportunities for UNSGAB input.

- 1) The opening session of CSD 16
- 2) Opening session of the water and sanitation session.
- 3) High level dialogue with the ministers.
- 4) Suggest possible ideas to the SG report
- 5) A side event. UN-water will also organize a side event on IWRM

Ms Juanita Castano offered to prepare an outline for the participation of UNSGAB in CSD-16. The general thought was that UNSGAB should organize or be involved in a side event of CSD #16

Dialogue with EU and World Bank:

The Chair reported that he had two meetings with the EU. He expects that two or three more meetings are needed to clarify with the EU where UNSGAB could play a role. One member suggested that the focus of the dialogue with EU should be on access to facilities of the EU for developing countries. For the dialogue with the World Bank the working group on finance should be in charge of preparation.

Address by his Excellency the Ambassador of Japan to Colombia

The government of Japan is willing to continue to assist the activities of UNSGAB. His imperial highness the Crown prince of Japan has become honorary president of UNSGAB. The government of Japan is committed to host next board meeting in May 2008.

The Chair thanked the Ambassador for the support Japan has given to UNSGAB in the past and is very grateful that Japan will continue its support to UNSGAB by hosting the 10th meeting of the board.

International Year of Sanitation

Mr Kenzo Hiroki presented the agenda for the Launch Ceremony for the International Year of Sanitation. The ceremony will be held on Wednesday, November 21st 2007. The Chair will give address in the launch ceremony.

7. Next meeting and other matters

Next meetings

Next UNSGAB meeting will be held in May 26th through 28th, 2008 in Tokyo, Japan.

The following meeting in November 2008 is tentatively scheduled to take place in Egypt depending on financial availability of the hosts.

8. Inter American Dialogue

Please see Chair's summary.

9. Closing

The Chair expressed his sincere appreciation to the Government of Colombia, IaDB and for hosting the meeting and to the Government of Japan and Germany's GTZ for their support. He also expressed appreciation to the UNSGAB secretariat and all the UNSGAB members for their contribution to advancing the Board's work.