

**African Ministers' Council  
on Water Fifth Session  
Entebbe, Uganda  
4–6 November 2004**

**Entebbe Outcomes, Decisions  
and Commitments**



*“Here in Jeju, we must focus our attention on what needs to be done to implement environmentally sound water policies in order to achieve the Johannesburg roadmap on the measures needed to achieve the water targets. The implementation of agreed targets is the key issue. We must seek to address a set of fundamental questions if further progress is to be made. One of the key issues which has been highlighted is the need to improve water governance, which includes water policy, legal frameworks, institutions and management, plus political commitment”.*

*Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director UNEP, 8th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Forum*

## INTRODUCTION

1. The fifth session of the African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW) marked the first time that the Council had met since the landmark Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water held in Addis Ababa in December 2003. That conference resulted in important commitments and the forging of many new and renewed partnerships to address the water crisis in Africa. The challenge facing the fifth session was how to ensure forward momentum of the ministerial commitments made during the fourth session of AMCOW.

## I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. The fifth session of AMCOW was held in Entebbe, Uganda from 4 to 6 November 2004.
3. Opening statements were made by Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Ms. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and Prince Willem Alexander of the Netherlands, all of whom expressed their support to AMCOW. Opening statements were also made by senior officials representing the African Development Bank, the European Commission and the World Bank.
4. In his statement, Prince Willem Alexander of the Netherlands pointed to the fact that billions of people lacked access to safe water supplies and sanitation. Rural communities lacked access to water for subsistence farming, droughts and floods wreaked havoc and destroyed years of hard work and savings, and scarce resources were polluted or over-used. He indicated that many Governments had not included investments in water among their priorities despite the fact that the importance of water for achieving economic and social development was generally accepted. It was crucial, therefore, to continue to raise awareness among ministers responsible for other sectors, in particular, the ministers of finance and economic development.
5. His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of Uganda, welcomed participants to Uganda and noted that the formation of AMCOW constituted an important political development for Africa. He observed that the political commitment of African nations to confront the water and sanitation challenges in the continent had been clearly demonstrated by the establishment of both the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and AMCOW.

The prime objective of NEPAD is to contribute to the eradication of poverty and to put African countries both individually and collectively on the path to sustainable growth and development. Water had been taken for granted in Africa as a free and, unfortunately, valueless resource in the past. He stressed

*“This is indeed a very special occasion - we have been brought together by the common desire to see greater progress in the implementation of the WSSD outcomes and particularly the 2005 IWRM target. So many have expressed and continue to show concern about the status of action on the development of integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans, which are envisaged in the 2005 target. The discussion on IWRM here at the CSD also highlighted the limited progress. On 19 April, in this very hall, the Global Water Partnership presented preliminary findings in its informal stakeholder baseline survey. The findings remind all of us of how much more needs to be done. The countries making good progress, according to the survey, are not so many. Consider the following: Africa: 13%; Asia and Pacific 12%; Latin America and the Caribbean: 14%. What is holding back the international community? Is it political commitment? Is it the lack of financial resources? Is it the lack of capacities? International solidarity and cooperation are urgently required to accelerate progress if the 2005 target is to be met. This is why we must all commend the partners who came together, notably, UNEP/UNDP, UN-DESA, The World Bank, Global Water Partnership, UN-Habitat, WHO, UNESCO and others, to put in place the 2005 Water Resources Alliance Initiative, which is open to all concerned parties. As we launch, together, the 2005 Water Resources Alliance Initiative, it is our hope that many more stakeholders will join hands at the national, Regional and global levels, to increase the prospects for achieving the 2005 target”.*

*Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director UNEP on the launch of the 2005 Water Resources Alliance Initiative, CSD 12, April 2004*

*“The achievement of the target will represent a unique historic and humanitarian milestone. We must all respond in concrete terms to the call for action inherent in the 2005 Water Resources Alliance Initiative. At the UN System-wide level, agencies should demonstrate greater commitment to this overall effort in their programmes and priorities. We in the UNEP are accorded a higher degree of attention to supporting developing countries in the area of integrated water resources management, including in the areas of assessment, management, water policy and legislation, regional policy dialogue, capacity-building, and inter-agency collaboration. In the Jeju Initiative of the recent eighth special session of the UNEP Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum, over 100 governments underscored the need for progress with respect to IWRM. The 2005 target must serve as a basis for a new compact between donor countries and developing countries. Development Cooperation partners should consider the possibility of increasing their assistance, especially with respect to capacity building, to developing countries so as to enhance their prospects of achieving 2005 targets. The EU water initiative for the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific regions is another useful vehicle. We hope that our cumulative efforts will provide a firm basis for reporting greater progress on the occasion of the Millennium Summit+5 in 2005”.*

*Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director UNEP at the launch of the 2005 Water Resources Alliance Initiative, CSD 12, April 2004*

#### African water challenges and targets

- Tripling access to water and quadrupling improved sanitation
- Closing the sanitation gap of the urban poor
- Reducing high water-related diseases and deaths
- Preventing water pollution in cities
- Raising food security
- Expanding irrigation for agriculture
- Doubling hydropower generation and services
- Reducing costs of water-related disasters
- Sharing water among sectors and countries

that freshwater resources were distributed unevenly across Africa and that available renewable freshwater in the region would simply not be enough to sustain the growing population.

6. He noted that problems of freshwater availability in Africa were further complicated by highly variable levels of rainfall and he emphasized the fact that Africa had the highest climate variability in the world. African countries had been greatly affected as floods and drought both took their toll on local economies because of the region's weak capacity and inadequate infrastructure to mitigate such occurrences. He suggested that the solution to this climatic variability was artificial water storage and regulation of Africa's rivers and lakes to meet demands and he highlighted the need for greater storage capacity and hydropower development in Africa.

## II. Organization of work

7. The formal business session of the Ministers of AMCOW and enriching dialogue sessions with development cooperation partners, civil society and other participants, resulted in the consolidation of institutional arrangements and a memorandum of understanding on political commitment and strategic focus of AMCOW.

8. At its fifth session, AMCOW adopted its rules of procedure for the smooth operation of the Council and its constituent organs. That achievement was in no small part due to the ability to build on the existing accomplishments of the Council under the commendable leadership of the outgoing executive committee, in particular, the Chair, Mr. M.S. Shagari. It was agreed that as AMCOW progressed to new heights in the future, their contribution to the early establishment of the Council would not be forgotten.

9. The composition of the new Executive committee was agreed as follows:

President	Uganda
Eastern Africa	Ethiopia (Vice-President), Rwanda and Tanzania
Western Africa	Senegal (Vice-President), Ghana and Burkina-Faso
Central Africa	Republic of Congo (Vice-President), Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad
Northern Africa	Algeria (Vice-President), Morocco and Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Southern Africa	Lesotho (Vice President), South Africa and Namibia

*"Many of the problems facing the water sector are due to poor implementation of the principles of integrated water resources management. While countries agreed at the WSSD to prepare integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005, with support to developing countries, the implementation of that goal requires coordinated action on several fronts. Efforts are needed to improve the quality of databases and information systems, including water accounting systems. Fragmented institutional structures with overlapping mandates and inadequate legislative and policy frameworks are important impediments to integrated water resources management. An equally important challenge is to foster dialogue among riparian states for efficient management and utilization of international waters. Action plans to minimize the impacts of water-related disasters deserve priority in national planning processes".*

*UN Secretary General's Report on Integrated Water Resources Management*

#### Sharing water among sectors and countries

Within catchments where water is already under stress, agriculture is the dominant sector. Inter-sectoral sharing is thus dominated by agricultural water use. Africa south of the Sahara and the Nile Valley are dominated by shared international river basins. Much of Saharan Africa is dominated by shared international groundwater systems. Unlike many other regions where one country has a single shared river system, many African countries share upwards of two and even as many as nine international rivers.

*"Never before have so many nations devoted so much time in pursuit of a solution so vital to human and environment security-integrated water resources management. Perhaps nowhere is the link between environmental sustainability and economic development so closely linked as in the case of integrated water resources management and ecosystems protection".*

*H.E. Mr. Monyane Moleleki, Minister of Natural Resources, Lesotho*

10. At its fifth session, AMCOW agreed on the strategic direction for its work by approving a work programme for the following three years. To ensure the means of implementation of the activities contained therein, it decided to establish a trust fund to which both AMCOW members and development cooperation partners could make contributions.

### **III. Building on the achievements of the Council**

11. AMCOW has gained international recognition in addressing water challenges in Africa and the goals and objectives of continental bodies have provided inspiration for its work.
12. The establishment of the African Water Facility, with targeted funding of over \$600 million for medium-term projects on water and sanitation, was seen as an important achievement. The African Development Bank had put in place the necessary arrangements for the sound management of the facility under the policy direction of AMCOW and in partnership with development cooperation partners, NEPAD and the United Nations system in Africa.
13. At the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water held in Addis Ababa in December 2003, AMCOW endorsed the portfolios of key water initiatives submitted by each of the five subregions. This constituted the first consolidated portfolio of priority water initiatives from the subregional to regional levels and provided a stronger basis for engaging development cooperation partners.
14. The launch of phase II of the Water for African Cities Programme, with initial substantial funding from the Government of Canada, was endorsed by the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water. The Rural Water Supply and Sanitation initiative supported by the African Development Bank was also endorsed at that conference.

15. The strategic partnership entered into with the European Union had culminated in programme support in the following areas: five river and lake basins (integrated water resource management component) with a budget of 10 million euros; water supply and sanitation in ten pilot countries; finance; research and monitoring. In addition, the European Union had launched the 500 million euro Water Facility for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.
16. At their 2003 summit, the group of the largest industrialized countries, the Group of Eight (G-8), endorsed the Africa Action Plan within the framework of which support to river basin cooperation in Africa was envisaged.

#### **IV. Entebbe decisions**

17. Achievements of the fifth session of AMCOW included:
  - (a) Memorandum of Understanding on institutional arrangements, to be signed at a later date;
  - (b) Rules of procedure of AMCOW were adopted;
  - (c) Interim measures to strengthen the secretariat were agreed upon;
  - (d) AMCOW work programme for 2005–2007 was approved;
  - (e) Modalities for establishing the AMCOW trust fund and its hosting within UNEP were agreed upon;
  - (f) Arrangements for the governance, operation and functioning of the facility were agreed upon and the setting up of a working group was approved to strengthen systematic dialogue with the African Development Bank;
  - (g) Concept proposal on the German G-8 transboundary water initiative was approved, paving the way for further action;
  - (h) Some progress was made with regard to the European Union Africa Water Initiative and both partners resolved to expedite achievement of the goals. It was agreed that specific steps would be taken to address the obstacles to implementation and to expedite progress;

*H.E. Ato Dawit Yohannes, Speaker of the House of People's Representatives, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*

*"It is our conviction that, given clear policies and strategies and real commitments to implementation and with the support of our own partners the challenges of the Millennium Development Goal outcomes could be met, and I am confident that water would help eradicate poverty and help achieve sustainable development in Africa".*

*Professor G.O.P. Obasi, Secretary General, World Meteorological Organization*

*"Regional cooperation on water issues has to be an integral part of national water policies and related technical programmes and projects. Africa needs to commit itself to the exchange of hydrological data and expertise in order to ensure improved hydrological forecasts and timely warnings on disasters and for agricultural practices. There could also be regional cooperation at the level of transboundary exchange of experience to exploit water...An exchange of experience across these regions on how to exploit and manage ground water resources could be beneficial to the countries concerned".*

- (i) AMCOW noted that the Water for African Cities Programme, being coordinated by UN-Habitat, had made good progress and, as of December 2003, had graduated to its second phase, with initial support from the Government of Canada. It was agreed that AMCOW would work closely with UN Habitat to finalize the proposals for the implementation of phase II of the programme;
- (j) AMCOW was highly appreciative of the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative of the African Development Bank. The initiative would make a significant contribution to the achievement in Africa of the water and sanitation targets contained in the Millennium Development Goals;
- (k) AMCOW welcomed the active and creative participation of civil society partners. AMCOW recognized the important role that civil society could play in awareness-raising, capacity-building and implementation of water resources programmes. AMCOW resolved to take the necessary steps towards strengthening of collaboration with civil society organizations;
- (l) AMCOW was highly appreciative of the efforts of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council for its campaign on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) and welcomed the new African ministerial initiative on WASH that was intended to be a political advocacy for water, sanitation and hygiene in Africa;
- (m) AMCOW finalized nomination of its representatives to the Governing Council of the African Water Facility as follows: Congo (Central Africa), Egypt (North Africa), Ethiopia (Eastern Africa), Lesotho (Southern Africa), and Senegal (Western Africa).

- (n) In preparation for the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, AMCOW agreed to prepare a significant input outlining Africa's assessment of the major policy challenges facing the region, as well as policy initiatives and approaches underway to address those challenges.

**V. Road from Entebbe: building blocks for strengthening regional and international cooperation and partnership**

18. A dialogue was held on 6 November 2004, during the partnerships segment, which was informed and inspired by the presentations by a number of partners of AMCOW as follows.

**A. European Union Water Initiative**

19. A presentation was made by the representative of the Netherlands, which was co-chairing the water supply and sanitation working group with Lesotho, having taken over from Denmark. He reviewed the progress made and highlighted arrangements for expediting national policy dialogues as well as the respective roles of the parties concerned, namely the European Union and AMCOW member States. In particular, he noted that the European Union was expected to facilitate the exchange of experiences between the ten pilot countries within the European Union Water Initiative framework.

The European Union would also consider the possibility of appointing a roving European Union Water Initiative ambassador to improve communication with selected countries. The Government of the Netherlands would double its support for the water and sanitation programme to approximately 12 million euros. The Netherlands also intended to make a contribution to the AMCOW trust fund, once established. Another representative of the European Union provided a progress report on the work underway on the five river basin projects for which 10 million euros of funding had been identified.

*Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director-General, at the closing ceremony of the International Year of Freshwater*

*"The International Year of Freshwater was an unequalled opportunity not only for reaching all regions, countries and communities with clear messages that our international mission has allowed us to distill, but of listening carefully to what the world, at all levels, has to say on the vital subject of water".*



## **B. German Agency for Technical Cooperation on the German Transboundary Water Initiative**

20. A representative of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation made a presentation on the German Transboundary Water Initiative within the framework of the G-8 action plan for Africa relating to water. He pointed out that the objective of the initiative was to strengthen Africa's capacity for water management through cooperation among river basin organizations. The development objective of the initiative was to improve governance of water resources with a focus on strengthening AMCOW and subregional structures, widening funding and focusing on transboundary water infrastructure projects for poverty reduction.

In addition, the initiative aimed to ensure that AMCOW met all the necessary requirements to become an organ of the African Union, including the adoption of a constitution and rules of procedure. Two million euros were requested to support the inception phase of the initiative, which was scheduled to begin in 2005. The first activities would include developing strong links with other existing initiatives, developing a work plan and annual plans of activities, and holding a launch event in collaboration with the AMCOW secretariat.

## **C. Water for African Cities Programme**

21. A representative of UN-Habitat introduced the respective components and characteristics of the second phase of the Water for African Cities Programme, outlining the potential for linkages with AMCOW. The ministerial commitments undertaken at the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water related, among other things, to the programme with civil society.

#### D. African civil society organizations

22. The statement on behalf of civil society organizations presented proposals for enhancing the engagement of civil society organizations in the activities of AMCOW. The African Civil Society Network on Water and its affiliates would promote closer collaboration with AMCOW in addressing the water policy and management challenges.

The statement gave particular emphasis to water augmentation technologies, notably rainwater harvesting for which strategic partnerships were being entered into. The president of AMCOW highlighted the appreciation of the African Ministers of Water of the contributions made by the continent's civil society organizations to the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference and confirmed that a framework would be put in place by AMCOW to strengthen engagement.

#### E. Institute of Water and Sanitation Development

23. A representative of the Institute of Water and Sanitation Development of Zimbabwe gave a presentation focusing on the outcomes of the Water Resources, Sanitation and Hygiene Fair held in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 23 to 26 September 2004. He stressed that the objectives of the fair were to create an environment to discuss issues critical to the development of water supply and sanitation, to facilitate cooperation between stakeholders in the Southern African Development Community region and developed countries, and to create a network of water supply and sanitation professionals.



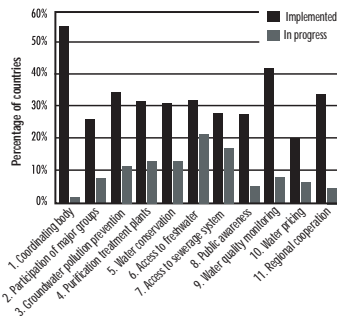
#### Rising food insecurity

Per capita food consumption and associated calorific and nutritional intake has remained disappointingly low in sub-Saharan Africa over the past forty-five years. The number of undernourished Africans rose steeply during the 1990s. While the total number of undernourished people worldwide has fallen, the proportion of the sub-Saharan Africa population has remained virtually unchanged. Food security actions therefore take on a special urgency in this region.

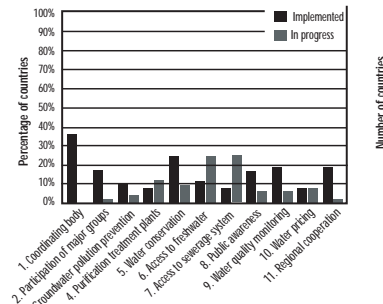
Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

"I am convinced that if the international community and the countries concerned made better agricultural water management a political and financial priority, we would experience fewer disasters like the current food crisis in southern Africa. We could then concentrate our efforts on improving the development and management of water for agriculture to meet the growing demand for food, alleviate poverty and sustain economic growth".

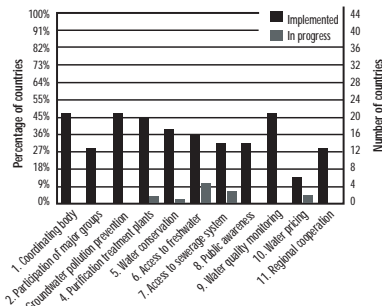
World (190 countries, of which 129 [68%] reported)



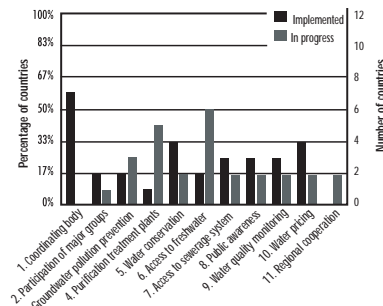
Africa (53 countries, of which 26 [50%] reported)



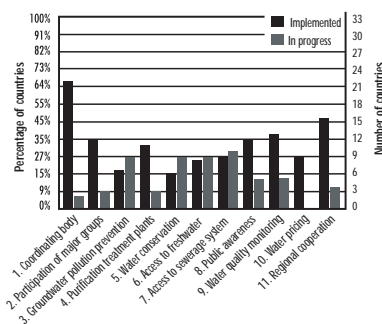
Asia and the Pacific (44 countries, of which 26 [60%] reported)



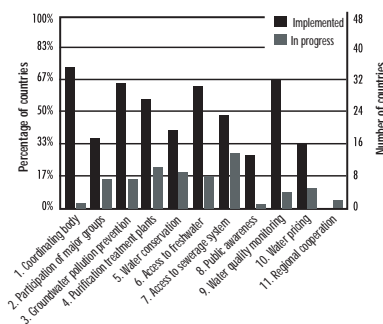
Western Asia (12 countries, of which 9 [75%] reported)



Latin America and the Caribbean (33 countries, of which 25 [75%] reported)



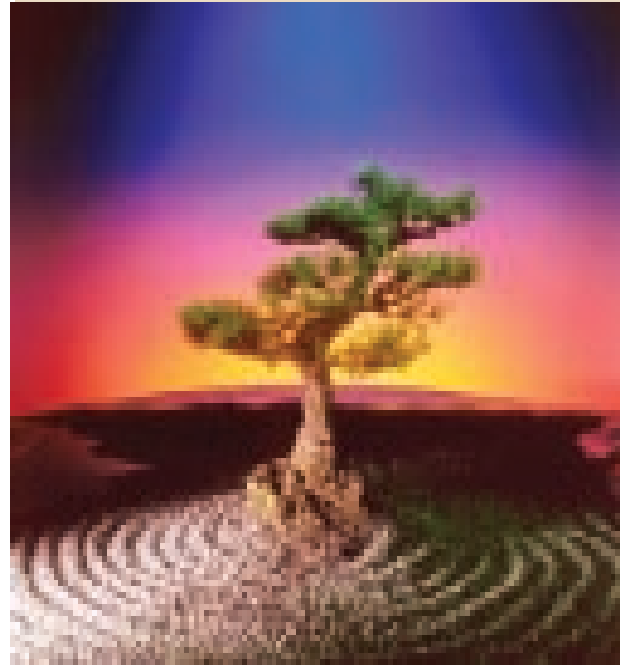
Europe and North America (48 countries, of which 43 [90%] reported)



The fair was praised for promoting water resources, sanitation and hygiene issues as key to sustainable development; for having promoted dialogue between policy makers and water resources, sanitation and hygiene professionals; and for sharing information on progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals. It was noted that AMCOW would maintain an inventory of the fair and similar initiatives to raise awareness of best practices. The President of AMCOW indicated that the Council would be launching an initiative to bring the issue of sanitation to the centre stage of its work.

#### **F. African Water Task Force:**

24. In his presentation, the Chair of the African Water Task Force stressed that advocacy and awareness-raising about key water management challenges remained a primary goals of the Task Force as well as serving as a think tank on strategic issues, initiatives and events pertaining to water as an instrument for economic development in Africa. He presented the following proposals of the Task Force for the consideration of AMCOW: development of a strategy to ensure the achievement of the water and sanitation targets of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa; facilitating the preparation of the input of AMCOW to the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, with special focus on the water



*H.E. S. Jarso, Minister of Water Resources, Ethiopia:*

*"As our people can't afford any more time for discussions and official statements, let us allow our people to hear from all of us here while making new commitments that our real actions would speak louder than promises. We need to quickly transform our written statements into the phase of implementation of programmes and strategies as planned and agreed".*

and sanitation targets of the Millennium Development Goals and investment in water infrastructure; undertaking a comprehensive assessment of water in agriculture with the aim of identifying opportunities for investment; assessment of water and power in Africa, recognizing the low appreciation worldwide of the dire lack of power in Africa and considering that hydro power could meet 90 per cent of Africa's power needs.

The President of AMCOW proposed that the Council mandate its technical advisory committee to work out modalities for linkages between it and the Task Force. She indicated that the Task Force could serve as a think tank for water issues in Africa and its proposals should be submitted to the technical advisory committee for its consideration.

#### **G. African Water Week**

25. A representative of the African Development Bank reported on the outcomes of the Water Week organized by the African Development Bank and held in Tunis, Tunisia, in June 2004. He underscored the role of AMCOW in ensuring the success of the event, the political dimensions of which were noteworthy. It was suggested that AMCOW consider the convening, annually, of an African Water Week to heighten awareness at all levels of the efforts being made to address the water crisis in Africa. The African Development Bank and other AMCOW partners would extend full support to such annual events.

#### **H. Fourth World Water Forum**

26. A representative of the World Water Council presented a progress report on the preparatory work for the fourth World Water Forum scheduled to be held in Mexico in 2006. Regional preparations were unfolding and AMCOW was expected to spearhead Africa's activities and contribution.

## National progress in implementing Agenda 21



*Dr. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT*

*"The Millennium Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development have set clear, time-bound targets for access to safe water and basic sanitation. These goals however, will not in and of themselves change the lives of people. Concrete actions are needed at country, city and neighbourhood levels to translate these goals into reality. We have the technology and talent. It is achievable. We must act, and act now".*

## **I. World Economic Forum:**

27. A representative of the World Economic Forum gave a presentation that focused on membership of the Forum. He described the Forum as a non-governmental organization, based in Geneva, which brought together a variety of stakeholders including water utility companies. On the occasion of the 2003 World Environment Day, the World Economic Forum launched its water initiative, which sought to promote public and private sector partnership in the water sector. He invited AMCOW to engage in the ongoing public and private sector debate, in particular, with respect to the African Economic Forum

## **VI. Venue and date of the sixth session and other meetings of AMCOW**

28. It was announced that the sixth session of AMCOW would be held in Brazzaville, the Congo. The date would be set after consultations at the level of the Executive Committee. The President of AMCOW pointed out that, at present, ordinary sessions of AMCOW took place at least once every two years but that, in future, ordinary sessions might be held annually or as appropriate and subject to the necessary decision by the Executive Committee, as stipulated in the rules of procedure. She invited the Executive Committee and membership of AMCOW to consider the possibility of convening a meeting in 2005 to be held back-to-back with the African Water Week.

That would provide, among other things, an opportunity to reflect on progress made by African States with respect to the 2005 targets set by the World Summit on Sustainable Development for the development of integrated water resources management plans and to consider AMCOW inputs to the five-year review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration at the heads of States summit at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2005. That occasion would also provide an opportunity for consolidating the inputs of AMCOW to the fourth World Water Forum to be held in Mexico in 2006.

#### Preventing water pollution from cities

In the 1990's, 58% of 67 urban cities in 29 nations, including most of the continent's largest cities, were using rivers 25 or more kilometres away and just over half relied on inter-basin transfers. As is common throughout the developing world, very few cities in Africa have rivers flowing through them that are not heavily polluted and much the same applies to nearby lakes, estuaries and seas.

### **VII. Adoption of the report**

29. The report was adopted as amended.

### **VIII. Closure of the session**

30. The Executive Committee, the entire membership of AMCOW and other participants, including development cooperation partners, expressed their gratitude to His Excellency Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda, and to all Ugandans for their warm welcome and gracious hospitality. The Government of Uganda was highly commended for the excellent hosting arrangements, including the magnificent conference facility, which had provided a highly conducive environment for discussions.
31. The Executive Committee and the participants to the fifth session of AMCOW paid glowing tribute to Mr. Alhaji Muktari S. Shagari for the outstanding leadership he had demonstrated as the first President of the Council from its inception in Abuja, Nigeria, in April 2002. Under his tenure, AMCOW had registered a number of notable achievements, making great strides in strengthening water policy dialogue in Africa and catalysing strategic partnerships with the international community, including the European Union, the United Nations System, regional and global financial institutions, the private sector, and civil society organizations.

*H.E. Borge Brende, Chair, Commission on Sustainable Development*

*"It is already clear that certain countries have not yet even begun to think about a national plan. Often, it is those countries that have limited water resources who have the most trouble putting these plans together... It is possible, recalling that in the 1980s some 250,000 additional people were given access to drinking water each day. But it wasn't done in a planned way, and as a result the efforts haven't paid off as well as they could have".*

Mr. Shagari had also presided over the landmark Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in December 2003 at which important ministerial commitments had been made and which had witnessed the launch of a number of initiatives.

Those had included the African Water Facility, the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative, the European Union Water Initiative for Africa, the second phase of the Water for African Cities Programme and subregional portfolios of key water initiatives. Participants to the fifth session of AMCOW also expressed their gratitude to the Government of Nigeria for the efforts it had made and substantial financial resources it had placed at the disposal of AMCOW.

32. The incoming President of AMCOW, Ms. Mutagamba, acknowledged the support extended by various Governments and partners, which had enabled the fifth session to be held. The support of the Government of Austria, UNEP and others had significantly facilitated the preparations and conduct of the session.
33. She expressed her gratitude to the Ministers who attended the session, noting that the meeting had been one of the most harmonious and productive of the Council's meetings to date. She thanked Ministers for the confidence they had shown in Uganda by electing her President and said that she looked forward to implementing the AMCOW agenda. She noted that she would be requesting Governments to temporarily second personnel to the presidency to work on certain issues. She concluded her remarks by expressing her appreciation to all the partners of AMCOW for their support to the Council.

34. Mr. Kahinda Otafiire, Minister of Water, Lands and Environment of Uganda, expressed his gratitude to the Ministers of the Council for having chosen Uganda as host of the present meeting. He noted with satisfaction that serious deliberations had taken place over the last five days as a result of which decisions and resolutions had been agreed upon, and he emphasized that those would contribute to the social and economic welfare of Africa.

He thanked Mr. Alhaji Shagari for having served as President of AMCOW for the last two years. In conclusion, he appealed to Africans to work hard to develop their countries instead of waiting for hand-outs from donors and he underscored the need to focus more on the improvement of infrastructure on the continent.

35. Mr. Otafiire declared the meeting closed at 1.50 p.m. on Saturday, 6 November 2004.

*Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairperson of the NEPAD Steering Committee*

*"We need to turn commitments into action. In this process, it is critical that these commitments and support are coordinated and focused and that linkages and synergies are established toward a common African agenda and set of implementable actions, in order to secure maximum effectiveness in achieving our water and sanitation goals and objectives".*

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