



UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA



For immediate release

Not an official document  
For media only

## PRESS RELEASE

# AFRICA TAKES CENTER STAGE AT THE 4<sup>th</sup> WORLD WATER FORUM IN MEXICO CITY

## WATER MINISTERS OPEN THE AFRICAN PAVILION

### **AFRICA IN NEED OF ENORMOUS INVESTMENT IN WATER SECTOR**

**Mexico City, 17 March 2006:** Africa has developed only three percent of its technically feasible hydropower potential while only six percent of its cultivated land is irrigated, according to a new report which will be released on 19 March 2006 on Africa Day at the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico City. African Ministers underscored this situation today in Mexico City as they declared open the African Pavilion amidst celebration, drumming and dances.

The report, “**Water Resources Development in Africa**” was prepared by the African Development Bank, on behalf of the African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW), UN-Water/Africa, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the NEPAD Secretariat. In total, says the report, only 3.8% of water resources are developed for water supply, irrigation and hydropower use.

The partners behind the report, therefore, called for an enormous investment in irrigated agriculture, water supply and sanitation, and decentralization of water supply and sanitation services to appropriate administrative levels.

“Transparent, open, accountable, gender-responsive, communicative and effective water governance at all levels of water management is needed,” said Kordjé Bedoumra, Director of the African Water Facility (AWF) in a media interview shortly after the opening.

Mr. Bedoumra said this could happen if appropriate policy changes are implemented at the regional and national levels to attract investment in agriculture and negotiate better access to markets.

Currently about 300 million people in Africa do not have access to safe water, about 313 million have no access to sanitation and over 88 million people are malnourished. An annual investment

outlay of US\$ 4.7 billion is required to achieve food security in Africa and about \$20 billion yearly is needed for African countries to meet the 2025 water vision.

Yet, says the report, the volume of financial and technical support pledged so far falls far short of what is required and most of it is still in the form of pledges yet to be honored.

The Ethiopian Minister of Water Resources, Mr. Asfaw Dingamo and his colleague from the Republic of Congo, Bruno Jean Richard Itoua, opened the Pavilion on behalf of AMCOW.

---

For further information please contact:

Sabrina Hadjadj Aoul, African Development Bank, Tel.: +52 55 15 0 66 601

E-mail: [sabrinahadjadj@hotmail.com](mailto:sabrinahadjadj@hotmail.com) or [s.hadjadjaoul@afdb.org](mailto:s.hadjadjaoul@afdb.org);

Yinka Adeyemi, Economic Commission for Africa, Tel: +52 55 32 70 0887

E-mail: [yadeyemi@uneca.org](mailto:yadeyemi@uneca.org)