

Asia Pacific Water Summit

CLOSING CEREMONY

Tuesday 4 December, 2007

Beppu, Japan

**Message from Loïc FAUCHON
President of the World Water Council**

Your Royal Highness(es),
Mister Presidents,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the first time in the history of humanity, 49 States have decided to meet at the highest level to discuss the issue of water.

During these days here in Beppu, a major development is taking place, and in the name of all the participants, and especially in the name of the World Water Council, I would like to thank the Japanese Government for this initiative. We are sure that this initiative will mark a very important step and will be regarded with great interest in the rest of the world.

Water issues are one of the major problems that humanity must solve for its survival, and you, Presidents, Heads of State, and Ministers, have responded by your presence here today that this problem is not a technical problem, but a political one.

The water that we use, the air that we breathe, the energy that we consume, requires primary solutions for the planet's economic and social development.

Yes, for without water, there is no food, without water there is no health, without water there is no industrial production. Only international, national and local political commitments will enable the arrival of a "World Water Equity." And it is the political decision-makers, first, that will guarantee this water equity. And they will guarantee it in spite of the threats that endanger water. Not only climate, but also demographics, migration and pollution that already exist and that keep children, women and men from being equal in rights with regard to access to water.

Of course, climate evolution is an additional worry. For what is new, is that we are no longer only wondering about what the weather will be. We must ask ourselves questions about the weather we create, the weather we prepare, the weather we make, year after year for future generation.

Global public opinion is very attentive to this climate "dramaturgia", and we have the duty to provide answers concerning water and sanitation. What

concrete and precise consequences will this climate evolution have on the availability of water resources and on the future quality of our waters?

Globally, it wishes to contribute to providing the best answers to the effects of natural disasters on water. With the UN and the Japanese Government, we are striving to provide concrete measures for better prevention, as well as for new capacities to estimate damage to freshwater resources and to coordinate rescue and recovery efforts.

We are also focusing our efforts on energy. Today, tensions around energy resources prevent the poorest populations from accessing water, due to a lack of inexpensive energy. It is indispensable to individualize the energy that is necessary for water provision. We, therefore, are calling for a SANCTUARIZATION of energy for water, a minimum reserve which will contribute to this equity that I evoked a few moments ago.

Dear Presidents and Heads of States and Governments, we expect a lot from you. We hope that your awareness related to water and sanitation will be strong and lasting.

We formulate the wish that each of you make water a true national and local priority.

We formulate the wish that you will broaden rights to water and sanitation, increase funding, and support better organization and adapted know-how.

We formulate the wish that, through your action, a true water diplomacy will be established, a real hydro-policy, indispensable for managing harmoniously the planet's great bodies of water.

If you do this, you will have contributed to building this awareness around water that the world so needs. In this way, you, the politicians, you will have shown that you are water's first friend. Please come with us to announce the solutions at the next World Water Forum that we are organizing with our Turkish friends in Istanbul in March 2009. Thanks to your action, we will accomplish a major step on the road to water access.