



UN-MDG High Level Event, 25 September, New York

Side-event on Water and Sanitation:

## “Water and Sanitation for All”

(New York, September 24, 2008)

In order to give strong political support for international efforts to address water and sanitation issues and to highlight the necessity to accelerate efforts to meet the MDG water and sanitation target, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and Tajikistan have organised a side event on water and sanitation in the afternoon of 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at the UN Trusteeship Council Chamber on the occasion of the High Level Event on the MDGs.

During the side event, political statements were made by the Heads and high representatives of State and Government of the four co-organisers (Tajikistan, Japan, the Netherlands and Germany), the United Nations Secretary General and a high representative of the African Union on behalf of its President. Acknowledging the further need for strengthening efforts to implement the international decade for action “Water for Life – 2005-2015” and the efforts taken in this International Year of Sanitation, those leaders shared in their statements the view that strong political commitments and translation of those commitments into concrete actions on the ground are required to achieve the MDG7 by 2015.

Based upon the discussions during the event, the co-organisers call for:

- Strong political and diplomatic support in international efforts to address the water and sanitation issues and enhance human security,
- Promotion of good water cycle management and application of Integrated Water Resource Management in order to effectively and sustainably address water and sanitation issues
- Formulation and implementation of national assistance strategies building on the “Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness”, while considering the specific needs and resources of the recipient countries,
- Mobilization of adequate international and national financial resources for the implementation of the national strategies and the need to strive for using sector wide approaches
- Harmonization and coordination of existing mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation in the water and sanitation sector,
- Develop partnerships with civil society organizations, local authorities and the private sector to implement national strategies and action plans in order to improve the accessibility and quality of water and sanitation services.

It was shared that, taking into account the cross-sectoral nature of water and sanitation issues, improvement in this sector would contribute to advance efforts in achieving the other MDG targets. Among the views and proposals expressed in the event were the importance to fully integrate water

and sanitation in addressing the other development goals, the need to pursue “human security” for individuals and communities through addressing the issue of water and sanitation, and the initiatives to establish a ‘Framework for Action’ to focus on the off-track countries including the possible consideration of a ‘Fast Track Initiative’ with catalytic funding, to install a High Level ‘Task Force’ to reach MDG7, and to make one annual global progress report and to hold one annual high level review meeting.

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### **Messages to the High-Level Event on the MDGs and its MDG-Roundtables**

Acknowledging that access to clean water and adequate sanitation is both a goal in itself and an important catalyst for enhancement of human security and achievement of the MDGs as a whole - acting as an engine for economic growth and sustaining investments in health and education - the co-organisers of the side event on sanitation and water call for full recognition of the integral nature of water and sanitation in the High-Level Roundtables on education and health, poverty and hunger and environmental sustainability.

Messages to the Roundtable on poverty and hunger:

- Recognize water and sanitation as engines for growth in national Poverty Reduction Strategies - lack of safe water and adequate sanitation cost Sub-Saharan Africa 5% of its GDP each year
- Use scientific, UN and private resources to promote sustainable sanitation
- More crop per drop! Promote enhancement in water productivity in Agriculture

Messages to the Roundtable on education and health:

- Recognise that slow progress towards the water and sanitation MDG target is holding back progress in health and education
- Encourage intersectoral approaches in recognition of the interdependence of education, water and sanitation and health
- Prevention is better than cure: Encourage investments and education in water and sanitation and hygiene promotion
- No schools without adequate water and sanitation facilities

Messages to the Roundtable on environmental sustainability:

- No water supply projects without sustainable sanitation
- Promote Water cycle management and Integrated water resources management: Protect ecosystems and groundwater from undue withdrawals and pollution
- Encourage decoupling of water consumption from economic growth for the benefit of future generations
- Recognize water as a key for adaptation to climate change