



ORSAM WATER BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin by ORSAM Water Research Programme

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- ❖ **Cyprus water project a peace pipeline to some, a Turkish Trojan Horse to others**
- ❖ **Turkey battles water shortage**
- ❖ **Turkey's drought fuels fears**
- ❖ **Decrease in rainfall could trigger use of natural gas in summer**
- ❖ **Iraqi Kurdish president: Baghdad budget dispute is "war"**
- ❖ **Egypt, Iraq Reach Agreement On Establishing Water Projects**
- ❖ **Amid Erbil-Baghdad Budget Row, Kurds Control the Water Taps**
- ❖ **Assad Regime's Drought Response Triggered Syrian War**
- ❖ **Israel, Nigeria sign agriculture cooperation agreement**
- ❖ **No child should be afraid to drink a glass of water ...**
- ❖ **Palestinian Water (and Martin Schulz) The Lack of Logic**
- ❖ **Waterways brings Israeli Tech to a Thirsty Africa**
- ❖ **Prince Hassan calls for establishment of regional water investment fund**
- ❖ **Sharing water resources and preventing pollution**
- ❖ **Environment Ministry to establish climate change department**
- ❖ **Court orders state to provide water for sheep in unrecognized Bedouin village**
- ❖ **Egypt plans dam-busting diplomatic offensive against Ethiopia (UPI)**
- ❖ **Ethiopia Will Continue Promoting Principle of Equitable Utilization of Nile**
- ❖ **Ethiopia, Sudan Working to Bring Egypt to Dialogue**
- ❖ **Can Kenya tap its water to double its maize?**
- ❖ **As glaciers retreat in North India, rivers shrink and floods grow**
- ❖ **Baram Dam Blockade Enters Fifth Month**
- ❖ **China Mekong Dam Project Generates Growing Controversy**
- ❖ **Peter Gleick and Pacific Institute emphasize water conservation**

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- ❖ **Water wars with U.S. will become bigger issue than Keystone, Canadian ambassador says**

[BACK TO TOP](#)

❖ **Cyprus water project a peace pipeline to some, a Turkish Trojan Horse to others**

KIRNI, CYPRUS – Mehmet Eligon points to a yellow patch of grass on his sprawling farm to show how this year's meager rains are drying up feed for his goats, sheep and Holstein cows.

"Because of the drought this year, there's no water in our wells and the crops are drying," says the 49 year-old Turkish Cypriot wearing military-style fatigues — popular attire for farmers on both sides of Cyprus, split between ethnic Greek and Turkish camps.

He and his two brothers who have worked since childhood on the 2,000-acre (800-hectare) farm have one source of hope: a new water pipeline that will soon link Turkey with Cyprus' Turkish side and potentially eliminate chronic water shortages for generations.

It's an ambitious plan that some argue may even help open a path to reconciliation: For Greek Cypriots, access to the Turkish water could ease their own vulnerability to drought, while the energy-poor Turkish side might benefit from natural gas projects Greek Cypriots are planning with international companies.

"Inshallah," Eligon says in the traditional Muslim entreaty to God. "We shall have this water."

But nothing is simple in a country where mistrust born of traumatic partition lingers: Instead of an instrument for reconciliation, the pipeline has become — in the eyes of the 850,000 Greek Cypriots in the internationally recognized south — an emblem of a sinister plan to turn Cyprus into a Turkish dependency.

Mistrust took root in 1974 when Turkey invaded and split Cyprus after supporters of union with Greece mounted a failed coup. A Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence nine years later was recognized only by Turkey, which maintains 35,000 troops in the north.

The Turkish side has played its part in fueling suspicion: Although completion of the 66.5 mile (107 kilometer) pipeline is officially slated for September, Turkish engineers say they're speeding up work to finish by July, the month that will mark the invasion's 40th anniversary.

The pipeline project, estimated to cost more than 1.5 billion Turkish Lira (\$680 million), will feed water from the massive Alakopru dam on the Turkish mainland to a smaller dam in the village of Panagra — or Gecitkoy in Turkish — in north Cyprus, near the coast.

For a quarter million Turkish Cypriots in the breakaway north, the pipeline project is an unprecedented marvel of Turkish engineering that will finally quench a parched earth where widespread extraction of groundwater risks turning fertile land into desert.

Construction of two pumping stations in the north and a water treatment plant is well under way. Diggers are already laying pipes as part of a 295-mile (475-kilometer) network to deliver drinking and irrigation water across the north.

The trickiest part of the project is the stretch of pipeline that will traverse the 50 miles (80 kilometers) of Mediterranean sea between Turkey and Cyprus. The pipeline will be anchored to the seabed which goes as deep as 4,600 feet (1,400 meters).

"There is no example like it anywhere else in the world," says project director Birol Cinar.

Bruce Lankford, professor of water and irrigation policy at Britain's University of East Anglia, said he's never heard of an undersea water pipeline before. "My first impressions tell me that it is truly unique," Lankford said in an e-mail, while also sounding a skeptical note: "Also one might safely predict that the costs will be higher than imagined and the benefits lower than imagined."

Some 2.6 billion cubic feet (75 million cubic meters) of water is estimated to flow to the north annually, enough to meet needs of Turkish Cypriots for the next half century. Half of that amount will be for drinking water and the rest for irrigation.

Some have already taken to calling the project the "water of peace," in hopes that a mutual need for the precious resource can inject impetus to a fresh round of reunification talks that began this month after a 20-month hiatus.

Water needs in the south are met by a network of dams and four desalination plants. Although rainfall this winter is less than half the average seasonal amount so far, the Cypriot Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Ministry says there's plenty of water in reservoirs — in combination with the desalination plants — to satisfy needs into next year.

But it was less than six years ago that a major drought depleted reserves, forced water supply cuts to Greek Cypriot households and compelled the government to ship 282.5 million cubic feet (8 million cubic meters) of water to the island from Greece while pushing ahead with construction of additional desalination plants.

Osman Ertug, spokesman for Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu, says an offer to share in the water is on the table — as long as Greek Cypriots share in natural gas reserves discovered off the island's southern coast, close to Israel's newly found offshore gas fields. Turkish Cypriots say they pay some of the highest prices in Europe for electricity from their pollution-spewing power plants and insist they have rights to a fair share the island's offshore mineral wealth.

"Just as coal and steel laid the foundation for the creation of the European Union," says Ertug, "so can oil, gas, water and any other natural resource pave the way for reunifying Cyprus."

Not quite, says Tasos Tzionis, the Cyprus Foreign Ministry's top civil servant. Tzionis labels the pipeline as an "act of aggression" dressed up as a well-intentioned gesture that only helps to entrench division.

"In reality, it reinforces the status quo and makes it even more unacceptable since the pipeline will deepen the occupied areas' dependence on Turkey and it will lead to an influx of Turkish settlers," he told a parliamentary committee. "Consequently, this project will bolster prospects of the occupied areas' full integration with Turkey."

Greek Cypriot lawmakers from across the political spectrum have echoed Tzionis in denouncing the pipeline as Turkey's bid to "annex" the north and to counterbalance the recent natural gas finds with the allure of plentiful water.

Even Greek Cypriot farmers are suspicious.

Farmers' union EKA says the pipeline aims to give the Turkish side leverage in peace talks and to help Turkey's goal of transforming itself into a regional power. They also warn that the pipeline may lead to cheaper Turkish Cypriot produce flooding the market in the south, undercutting Greek Cypriot producers.

Rhetoric from Turkish politicians hasn't helped. Last year, the Turkish forestry and water affairs minister, Veysel Eroglu, reportedly likened the pipeline to an "umbilical cord" linking Turkey to Cyprus. And there are plans to build an electricity cable linking Turkey with Cyprus.

Even some Turkish Cypriots cast suspicion on Turkish motives. Sener Elcil, chairman of the Turkish Cypriot teacher's union, says the pipeline above all else serves Ankara's interests.

"Turkey has been using our community for their benefit, for their interests," Elcil says.

But Elcil also says that the pipeline might serve peace if it helped create interdependence between Turkey and Cyprus — and even bring Israel into the chain of mutual reliance: "Cyprus and Israel need water, while Turkey and Europe need energy."

The idea of interlocking interests morphing into peace has increasingly gained traction here at the highest political levels. Cyprus' President Nicos Anastasiades said that a fair Cyprus peace accord could give Turkey access to ample supplies of gas and heal the strained relations between Ankara and Tel Aviv.

"A Cyprus settlement, reached as quickly as possible, will assist not only in Israeli (gas export) planning, but also contribute greatly to restoring relations with Turkey," Anastasiades told The Associated Press in an interview.

Turkey's Energy Minister Taner Yildiz alluded to the prospect of regional "energy-related projects" if peace is achieved.

Farmers have a simple take on the dividends of water diplomacy.

"Water is life for this island, for both sides," says Cyprus Turkish Farmers' Union boss Alican Kabakci. "People need to find a way to live together."

"Cyprus water project a peace pipeline to some, a Turkish Trojan Horse to others", 28/02/2014, online at:
http://www.foxnews.com/world/2014/02/28/cyprus-water-project-peace-pipeline-to-some-turkish-trojan-horse-to-others/?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=8b9880cff6-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-8b9880cff6-250657169

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Turkey battles water shortage

Turkey has a serious water issue. The country is struggling with its worst drought in a decade. Climate change is only part of the reason; poor water management is also to blame.

Swimming pools in Istanbul are either empty or only half full, as Turkey braces for a particularly low-water summer. And that could be a huge problem for the city's nearly 14 million inhabitants who use more than 2 million cubic meters of water daily.

Ten dams supply the city with water. But the current water levels of their reservoirs are only at 29.8 percent of total capacity, according to the Istanbul Water and Sewerage Authority (ISKI).

Especially hard hit by the water shortages are the western part of Turkey and central Anatolia. Turkish Environment Minister Veysel Eroglu, however, doesn't appear to be overly concerned.

Poor urban planning

"There will be no water shortage," he said in an interview with the Turkish newspaper Hürriyet. "We will be able to supply water. Don't worry."

But Istanbul Mayor Kadir Topbas promptly tweeted that the city already has a drought. A month earlier, Agriculture Minister Mehdi Eker already warned of a dry period.

"With local elections approaching, few politicians are willing to admit to the problem that Istanbul only has enough water to last four months," said Umit Sahin, former chairman of Turkey's Green Party. Rainfall over the winter, he told DW, has only reached a third of its normal level.

Apart from climate change, poor urban planning is seen as a further reason for the water shortage. "Istanbul's urban sprawl has overtaken fields, forests, wetlands and other areas where water resources lie," Sahin said. He admits that the Istanbul metropolitan municipality has begun to build dams and new water channels, but the population continues to grow and has prompted the city to begin rerouting water from sources outside the city, such as the Istranca Mountains near Bulgaria or the

Melen River, which is about 180 kilometers away. As Sahin points out, that's scarcely sustainable, since it merely takes the water from some other eco-system.

Megaprojects

Another issue affecting Istanbul's ecological system is possible development of the northern part of the city, which has forests, lakes and rivers. Although current urban development plans focus on the western and eastern parts of the city, Sahin warns that megaprojects such as a third airport or a third bridge over the Bosphorus would destroy the eco-system in the north.

Nilsun Ince, an environmental scientist at Bogazici University in Istanbul, doesn't give any one particular Turkish government the blame.

"Bad water management and the resulting shortages have always been a problem of this city," Ince told DW, noting that good management begins with controlling population growth and thus demand. "The Marmara region and especially Istanbul only have a limited number of water basins compared to regions in eastern and southern Turkey," she said. "That's why agriculture, which requires the most water, should be concentrated there. And there should also be no industry in Istanbul and the Marmara region so that households have access to available water supplies."

Istanbul, Ince noted, also doesn't recycle water for lack of regulations and know-how. "The government needs to provide training," she said.

The drought of 2007

Turkish Greenpeace activist Pinar Aksogan recalls the summer of 2007 when Istanbul struggled with water cuts at least twice a week. And back then, water levels in Istanbul dams were at 55 percent - nearly double today's levels.

"Sometimes we went for 12 hours without water; we were also asked to leave the city and spend the summer in summer homes," Aksogan told DW, arguing that politicians have a duty to do something

about the current drought. "But we have yet to hear of any emergency plan, and the issue has not yet come up in political debates."

Turkey needs more water-efficient systems in households and factories, Aksogan argues. It should also give renewable energies a greater focus and introduce water-saving measures in each and every home.

"We scarcely make any use of our roofs," she said. "We could use them to collect rainfall or produce energy with solar panels."

"Turkey battles water shortage", 26/02/2014, online at: <http://www.dw.de/turkey-battles-water-shortage/a-17458001>

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Turkey's drought fuels fears

High temperatures and a lack of rain are fueling fears over agricultural production and energy prices, as Western and Central Anatolia experience one of the driest winters in recent years.

Water levels in dams and humidity levels, in Turkey, have dropped to alarming levels, with the temperature across Turkey hovering around 10 degrees Celsius above the average and rain and snowfall levels remaining far below seasonal averages.

The average rainfall in the October-January period was 222 millimeters, 27 percent below the seasonal norm, according to data from Meteorology General Directorate. The sharpest drops were recorded in the Mediterranean and Central Anatolian regions, where the average rainfall was 38 percent below average levels.

The persistence of the drought could slash fruit and vegetable production by a quarter and increase prices at least 20 percent, the head of the Turkish Agriculturists' Association (TZD) has warned. "We are passing through a critical threshold. There is no joke here," TZD Chairman İbrahim Yetkin told daily Hürriyet yesterday.

Yetkin said he was collecting the latest information from every city in the country daily and described the current situation as "worrisome."

He said the planting season for products like sugar beet, sunflowers, corn and soya had arrived, but the soil was not suitable for planting, as these products require humid soil and periodic rainfall. He added that potato growers would have to reap their harvest in April and if the soil did not get enough water by that time, efficiency targets would not be achieved.

In addition to the potential rout it would create in the domestic market, the dropping harvest and production would deal a major blow to exports, Yetkin also warned.

In order for an efficient harvest to be yielded and for further losses to be avoided, sector representatives say that total rainfall in March and April will be crucial.

Energy Minister Taner Yıldız has drawn attention to another aspect of the issue, saying the government could boost natural gas use in the summer to cover the gap that will emerge by the drop in electricity production by dams.

"The current decrease in the level of rainfall and snowfall across the country negatively affects water levels in the hydroelectric power plants and is likely to decrease electricity production in dams," said Yıldız during a press conference in Ankara.

He said the use of natural gas for electricity production in the summer, which usually declines during the summer season, would increase in order to compensate the drop.

The gas price, which generally does not see a price surge in the summer, may also increase if the use of natural gas increases.

Turkey produces a quarter of its electricity from hydroelectric power plants, built on the country's rich river systems. Turkey also depends heavily on natural gas and lignite thermal power plants.

Yıldız also said other alternative options for electricity production should be optimized, including renewable energy and thermal power plants using lignite, in order to avoid electricity shortages that would affect industries and households.

"Turkey's drought fuels fears", 25/02/2014, online at: <http://www.balkans.com/open-news.php?uniquenumber=189544>

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Decrease in rainfall could trigger use of natural gas in summer**

The use of natural gas could increase in the summer in order to close the gap in electricity production caused by a lack of rainfall, said Turkish Energy Minister Taner Yildiz on Monday.

The current decrease in the level of rainfall and snowfall across the country negatively affects the water levels in the hydroelectric power plants and is likely to create a decrease in electricity production in dams, said Yildiz during a press conference in Ankara.

He added that the use of natural gas for electricity production in summer - which usually declines periodically in the summer season – is set to increase.

The gas price, which generally does not see a price surge in the summer, may also increase, if the use of natural gas increases.

Turkey produces a quarter of its electricity from hydroelectric power plants, built on country's rich river systems. Turkey also depends heavily on natural gas and lignite thermal power plants.

The country plans to build two nuclear power plants to increase energy resources and decrease its dependence on energy imports, to prevent an increased trade deficit.

Yildiz also said that other alternative options for electricity production should be optimized, including renewable energy and thermal power plants using lignite, in order to avoid electricity shortages that would affect industries and households.

The minister emphasized that taxes on the oil and diesel may decrease, depending on the approach of the finance ministry.

Turkey currently has taxes on oil and diesel at around 58 percent and 50 percent respectively.

The minister also accepted the newly appointed Mustafa Yilmaz, head of Energy Market Regulatory Authority, EMRA, during the press conference.

“Decrease in rainfall could trigger use of natural gas in summer”, 24/02/2014, online at:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/129546/decrease-in-rainfall-could-trigger-use-of-natural-gas-in-summer>

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Iraqi Kurdish president: Baghdad budget dispute is "war"**

The president of Iraq's Kurdistan Region says Baghdad's decision to withhold the budget is a declaration of war against Kurdistan. President Massoud Barzani's comments come as Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki continues to withhold Kurdistan's share of the national budget. That includes monthly wages of more than \$700m for hundreds of thousands of government employees. Baghdad has also suspended the flights of two small airline carriers that fly to Kurdistan. The central government says the carriers aren't complying with regulations. But Kurdish officials say the move is further punishment against Kurdistan. Baghdad is withholding the budget because of Kurdistan's new oil pipeline via Turkey. Kurdish leaders say Iraq's constitution allows them to export oil. However, Baghdad argues that all oil deals must go through the central State Oil Marketing Organization. Some observers say Kurdistan could retaliate by shutting down the water supplies that irrigate farms in central and southern Iraq. But others believe that would make the dispute even worse. Iraqi officials admit that they want Kurdish people to lobby the regional government to export oil in agreement with Baghdad. But Kurdish officials say that withholding wages for employees is unacceptable and they refuse to negotiate on that issue.

"Iraqi Kurdish president: Baghdad budget dispute is "war"", 28/02/2014, online at:

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/02/28/352584/iraqi-kurdish-president-baghdad-budget-dispute-is-war/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Egypt, Iraq Reach Agreement On Establishing Water Projects

Irrigation Minister Mohamed Abdel-Motaleb announced an agreement between Egypt and Iraq on carrying out water projects and joint research programs between the two countries.

Abdel-Motaleb also noted that a memorandum of understanding is currently being prepared as a prelude to signing it shortly.

This agreement would be signed with the attendance of the two countries' irrigation ministers to be a start of cooperation and integration with Iraq in all fields related to water resources.

“Egypt, Iraq Reach Agreement On Establishing Water Projects”, 22/02/2014, online at: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201402242098.html>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Amid Erbil-Baghdad Budget Row, Kurds Control the Water Taps

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region – Amid an Erbil-Baghdad oil war, the autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is reportedly ignoring a request by Baghdad to increase water flow to irrigate agricultural areas in the center and south of the country.

The head of the Hawija district council, Hussein Salihi, has requested the federal government to ask the KRG to let the water of Dukan dam flow to irrigate wheat and barley farms.

Akram Ahmad Rasul, general director of dams and water storage in the KRG, told *Rudaw* that the farming areas of Iraq require water from Kurdistan for irrigation.

"From Darbandikhan to Diyala, Jalawla, Khalis, Hamreen and from there to Baghdad and from Kirkuk, Hawija, Khurmatu, Samarra, Tikrit again to Baghdad and south depend on this water," said Rasul.

The reported request from Baghdad comes at a time when Baghdad has shut financing for the KRG by blocking monthly payments from the national budget that are needed for the day-to-day running of the regional government, such as paying the salaries of government workers. The move is part of a tactic by Baghdad to prevent Kurdish control over oil exports to Turkey and beyond.

Baghdad's refusal to send the money to Kurdistan has forced the KRG to employ its own pressure tools, such as over water. Kurdistan's two major dams are used to irrigate most farms in Diyala, Kirkuk, Saladin and Baghdad.

Dukan and Darbandikhan are located in Kurdistan's Sulaimani province, and can hold up to 7.4 million cubic meters of water.

"Let them endure a water shortage; that's their problem," said Rasul, referring to farmers outside Kurdistan.

"We have not let the people of Kirkuk have issues over drinking water, but it's not our problem any longer to provide water for Hawija and other areas," he said.

Ali Hashmi, spokesman of the ministry of water resources in Baghdad, said that, "Large farming areas of Iraq depend on water from Dukan, even those in the center and south."

He said that this year's agriculture plan envisages water for irrigation from Dukan. "If the matter continues like this, we will face problems."

Meanwhile, Salhi said that Baghdad must find a solution for thousands of farmers who are suffering because of water shortages, otherwise many farming areas will be devastated.

"Amid Erbil-Baghdad Budget Row, Kurds Control the Water Taps", 25/02/2014, online at:
<http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/25022014>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Assad Regime's Drought Response Triggered Syrian War

NIJMEGEN, The Netherlands, February 28, 2014 (ENS) – The long drought that gripped Syria from 2006 through 2010 was a trigger of the conflict that has torn the country apart with devastating consequences, finds new research from a Dutch scientist.

Writing in the current issue of the journal “Middle Eastern Studies,” Francesca de Châtel of Radboud University in the Netherlands explains that “it was not the drought per se, but rather the government’s failure to respond to the ensuing humanitarian crisis that formed one of the triggers of the uprising, feeding a discontent that had long been simmering in rural areas.”

The drought hit hardest in the northeast, the most impoverished and neglected part of the country, which was also the country’s breadbasket and source of oil, explains de Châtel.

“Since 2000, this region has been rapidly sinking further into poverty as groundwater reserves were depleted and a series of overambitious agricultural development projects overstretched both land and water resources. The drought that struck in 2006 merely formed a final coup de grace,” she writes.

Once known as part of the Fertile Crescent, the region lost its underground water sources, grazing animals died and lush farmlands turned to dusty desert. The drying of Syria’s northeast region was not a sudden, catastrophic event, de Châtel writes, there was no humanitarian crisis; but it highlighted the rising poverty levels and accentuated a series of trends that had been taking shape for decades.

“The humanitarian crisis that followed the 2006-10 drought can thus be seen as the culmination of 50 years of sustained mismanagement of water and land resources, and the dead end of the Syrian government’s water and agricultural policies,” writes de Châtel.

Climate change may have contributed to worsening the effects of the drought, but de Châtel argues that “overstating its importance is an unhelpful distraction that diverts attention away from the core problem: the long-term mismanagement of natural resources.”

She warns that “an exaggerated focus on climate change shifts the burden of responsibility for the devastation of Syria’s natural resources away from the successive Syrian governments since the

1950s,” and allows President Bashar al-Assad and his regime to blame external factors for its own failures.

It is de Châtel view that the “relentless drive to increase agricultural output and expand irrigated agriculture” blinded policy makers to the limits of the country’s resources.

Overgrazing caused rapid desertification; the cancellation of subsidies for diesel and fertilizer as part of a botched transition to a social-market economy increased rural poverty; and many families abandoned their farms for the cities in search of work, she writes.

In short, says de Châtel, the “ongoing failure to rationalize water use and enforce environmental and water use laws” has depleted resources and caused “growing disenfranchisement and discontent in Syria’s rural communities.”

This destruction of Syria’s natural resources has led to a devastating war. More than two years after the first protests in the rural town of Dara’a in March 2011, what started as a peaceful uprising against the Assad regime has resulted in the deaths of more than 130,000 people, with more than 500,000 wounded, according to the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The year 2013 was the deadliest, with 73,000 fatalities.

At least 2.4 million refugees have fled to Egypt, Turkey and beyond, according to the United Nations. An estimated 4.25 million people are internally displaced within Syria.

The article is based on extensive research that was carried out in Syria between 2006 and 2010, including fieldwork in the Jezira region in 2008 and 2009, interviews with Syrian officials and interviews with migrants who left drought-affected areas and settled temporarily in Damascus, Damascus Countryside and Dara’a governorates in Syria and in the suburbs of Beirut and the Mount Lebanon region in Lebanon.

In her study, de Châtel is particularly critical of the culture of secrecy that surrounds the subject of water within the Syrian government.

“Water has become a taboo that is reluctantly discussed, not only in the public domain but also at government level,” she writes. “In Syria the fixation on water as a ‘sensitive’ issue has extended far beyond strategic considerations and covers all levels of water management.”

“The government’s response to the drought – attempts to downplay it and subsequently deny the humanitarian crisis or blame it on externalities – is part of a mindset that influences all aspects of policy making and implementation in the Syrian water sector,” writes de Châtel.

As in many other countries in the water-scarce Middle East-North Africa region, water is considered a strategic resource that pertains to national security. As a result, accurate and up-to-date information on water availability and use is not readily available to the general public, she explains.

Yet the Assad regime has taken this security concern much farther than other governments in the region.

“The idea that water is, and should remain, ‘sensitive’ goes unquestioned,” writes de Châtel. “As a result, government officials, water experts and analysts avoid any deeper analysis of the state of the country’s water resources. This in turn means that any efforts to reform the sector remain cosmetic.

“Assad Regime’s Drought Response Triggered Syrian War”, 28/02/2014, online at: <http://ens-newswire.com/2014/02/28/assad-regimes-drought-response-triggered-syrian-war/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Israel, Nigeria sign agriculture cooperation agreement

Agreement signed by Agriculture Minister Yair Shamir and his Nigerian counterpart, will focus on bolstering food security.

Agriculture Minister Yair Shamir and his Nigerian counterpart, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, signed a joint declaration on Friday to increase agricultural cooperation between the two countries.

The ministers signed the agreement, which will focus on bolstering food security, in the Nigerian capital city of Abuja. As part of the agreement, Israel will help Nigerians expand the amount of land they cultivate, increase their water sector efficiency, improve crop quality and strengthen professionalism of those engaged in agriculture, Shamir's spokesman said.

Israeli companies, in return, will be able to partake in more agriculture, infrastructure and construction projects in the West African nation of some 175 million people.

"Israel and Nigeria will increase their strategic cooperation in the agricultural and economic development of Nigeria," Shamir said.

During his visit to Nigeria, in which Shamir is representing Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu at events celebrating 100 years since the unification of Southern and Northern Nigeria, he has met with the Nigerian president, foreign minister and water minister.

The Nigerian economy has an annual growth rate of 7.4 percent that can afford Israeli companies the opportunity to conduct business in the economy of the most populated African country, Shamir's spokesman stressed. In the last year alone, Nigeria invested more than \$4 billion in its agricultural sector, and the country has gained more geopolitical importance due to its seat on the United Nations Security Council, he added.

"The Nigerian government is interested in increasing the involvement of Israeli companies in the

fields of agriculture, water, renewable energy, homeland security, telecommunications and IT,” Shamir said.

The minister will also visit Ghana and Ethiopia, his spokesman said.

“Israel, Nigeria sign agriculture cooperation agreement”, 01/03/2014, online at: <http://www.jpost.com/Enviro-Tech/Israel-Nigeria-sign-agriculture-cooperation-agreement-343930>

BACK TO TOP

❖ **No child should be afraid to drink a glass of water ...**

... in case there is none tomorrow. Nasser Nawajah wrote this open letter to Israel's economics minister Naftali Bennett - leader of The Jewish Home - about the water starvation suffered by Palestinians.

Dear Minister Bennett,

My name is Nasser Nawajah. Although we have never met, I am sure that you have visited very close to my home. My neighbors from the settlement of Susya are very fond of you. In the last election, 270 of the 381 voters from the settlement of Susya voted for you and your party.

I understood from your response to the speech of European Parliament President Martin Schulz that you find dealing with the issue of water - or, more precisely, the water shortage among the Palestinians living in the West Bank - to be something of a nuisance.

You may be surprised to hear that unlike you and most Israelis, water is not something I take for granted. Instead, it is a daily existential struggle. It is no theoretical matter; it is my family's life. The war of statistics has already begun, but I want to tell you about myself and my village.

That 'ancient city' was my home

I live in the village of Susya, which is located between the settlement of Susya and the archaeological site that you have named "*the ancient Hebrew city*". That "*ancient city*" was my home.

In 1986, when I was 4 years old, Israeli occupation forces came to the village. The soldiers told us that it had been expropriated "*for public needs*", threw us out of our homes, demolished our homes and forbade us to return there. Without home or property, we moved into caves on our land and tried to rebuild our lives.

Unfortunately for us, during that time the settlement of Susya was established very close to my family's land. Army troops threw us out again and again. We would build and plant, and everything would be ruined.

In 2001, we were expelled twice. Your Supreme Court ruled that the second expulsion was illegal. We were told it had been a mistake. But the destruction was awful: water wells and caves were destroyed and fields were trampled.

We did not give up

We kept living on our land, holding onto what we could. Our story is one of many in the southern Hebron Hills region, and one of thousands across the West Bank.

We live from day to day, never knowing when the next expulsion will come. But even in the midst of this uncertain life, one of the major difficulties we have is the same thing that angered you so much when Mr. Schulz spoke about it: water.

For generations, my family and community have lived mainly on the natural water reservoirs on our land. These are wells that my ancestors dug in the hard ground, and on rainy days we collect our year's supply of water in them.

The State of Israel, which has complete control over Area C, treats us differently from our settler neighbors and refuses to connect us to the water infrastructure. We have two options: buying water or pumping it from our wells. Does that sound simple?

Access to 70% of our water wells is currently blocked. Demolition orders hang over our heads. To reach the wells, we need a special permit from the Israeli army.

One third of our expenses are for water

When we are lucky enough to obtain a permit, we must deal with violent attacks by settlers, who keep us from the water by force. Dozens of attacks have taught us to be careful. My children know not to go near the area by themselves lest the settlers come.

When the army arrives, it disperses us and the settlers, and sometimes arrests a few of us, but in any case we cannot draw water that day. The water pipe that belongs to the settlement of Susya passes through our private land, beneath our homes, but we have no access to the water.

We can buy water in tanks, but we pay 35 shekels (about \$10) per cubic metre for water from the nearby city of Yatta. You certainly know that you, like every Israeli, like every settler, pay less than 9 shekels for the same amount.

One-third of my family's monthly expenses go for water, but unlike the Palestinians in the southern Hebron Hills, we are lucky because we live near a road. The inhabitants of the more distant villages pay more than NIS 50 per cubic liter of water.

No one should live that way

I understand that these statistics are hard for you to hear, but average water consumption among the Palestinians is less than 70 liters per person per day, while for Israelis (including the settlers), water consumption reaches 250 liters per day.

No matter what the figures are, I can assure you that we use much less water than the average. I would like to believe that you, too, understand that no one should live that way.

No child should have to be afraid to drink a glass of water lest there be none tomorrow. These are my difficulties. These are my children's fears.

“No child should be afraid to drink a glass of water ...”, 02/03/2014, online at:

http://www.theecologist.org/blogs_and_comments/commentators/2301461/no_child_should_be_afraid_to_drink_a_glass_of_water.html

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Palestinian Water (and Martin Schulz)

The Lack of Logic

The supporters of the Palestinians think that by alleging a higher per capita use of water in Israel they are accusing Israel, but instead they are emphasizing the failures of the PA (here as in many fields). And while the Israeli spokesman thinks that he is defending Israel with his lower per capita figure, he is actually defending the PA against the charge of incompetence.

The obligation upon Israel to supply water to the PA from aquifers in Israel has nothing to do with whether the Palestinian population is two million or four million or a hundred million, if that is what the Palestinians want. That obligation derives from the amount of rainfall in the mountains of the West Bank, and from nothing else.

Martin Schulz, the President of the European Parliament, is a phenomenon that Israelis should appreciate: a leading European politician who is a fervent admirer of their country. As such, he accepted an invitation to address the Knesset, Israel's parliament, on February 12, 2014. The Jewish Home party of Naftali Bennett, however, reacted with demonstrative fury to a sentence in that speech which referred to the water usage of Israelis and Palestinians. Quite naturally, the media pounced on that reaction, with the result that his praise of Israel went to waste and the whole matter continues to be surrounded by confusion.

In what follows, we shall be partly involved in establishing the facts of the case, but only in small part and without, say, going out to measure water usage ourselves. Rather, the emphasis will be on showing that there is generally no logical relationship between the facts alleged and the conclusions drawn from them for propagandistic purposes.

The Perils of Schulz

First, here is exactly what Mr. Schulz said, quoting some Palestinians that he had met in Ramallah: "One of the questions of these young people, which most moved me, was: How can it be that Israelis are allowed to use 70 liters of water per day, but Palestinians only 17?" (*Einer der Fragen dieser jungen Menschen, die mich am meisten bewegt hat, war: Wie kann es sein, dass Israelis 70 Liter*

Wasser am Tag benutzen dürfen und Palästinenser nur 17?" Here we have translated word for word from the German rather than use the official translation, which is freer.)

In the current [English version](#) of his speech, posted on the official site of the EU Parliament Presidency, the following disclaimer has been inserted into the sentence: "although I could not check the exact figures" ("wobei ich die genauen Zahlen nicht nachschlagen konnte" in the official [German version](#)). At the time of writing, however, the sentence *without* the disclaimer is [still available](#) in the version of the speech on the website of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and probably elsewhere, whether on internet or in printed newspapers. Moreover, he can be heard saying it in that form in the Knesset, without any disclaimer, in video clips [here](#) and (behind the Hebrew voice-over) [here](#).

It was understandable that Mr. Schulz or his aides wanted to put the matter straight by making that admission in the versions preserved for posterity. By doing so, however, the fury of Mr. Bennett and his party has been made less understandable. They were upset because organizations such as Amnesty International have used such comparisons of water usage to make [outrageous claims](#) against Israel. Yet Mr. Bennett's party was wrong to accuse Mr. Schulz of lying: the latter had truthfully said that a Palestinian has asked him that question.

Moreover, Mr. Schulz was a double victim: he was both actively misled by Palestinians and passively misled by Israelis. Between his visit to Ramallah and his appearance in the Knesset, he was invited to a dinner hosted by Lars Faaborg-Andersen, the EU Ambassador to Israel. [As reported](#) in *Israel Hayom* "Among those in attendance was Naomi Chazan, a former Meretz MK and deputy Knesset speaker who is now a director in the left-wing NGO New Israel Fund; Yossi Beilin, former Meretz leader and cabinet minister and one of the architects of the Geneva Initiative; Ron Pundak, who helped draft the Oslo Accords in 1993 and is a former director-general of the Peres Center for Peace; Akiva Eldar, former Haaretz correspondent, and Professor Manuel Trajtenberg, chairman of the Planning and Budgeting Committee at the Council for Higher Education. Labor MK Hilik Bar was the only politician at the event. No government or right-wing representatives were invited."

Mr. Schulz, wrote the newspaper, "said that he had just visited the Palestinian Authority, where he had been told that Israel did not distribute water fairly. He also said he was told of infringements on

Palestinian freedom of movement. No one in the audience challenged Schulz on the facts or tried to set the record straight."

After the speech in the Knesset, Mr. Bennett demanded an apology from Mr. Schulz. But it is rather Mr. Bennett who should have apologized for an impetuous and churlish reaction to a friendly speech that praised the return of the Jews to their homeland, hailed the achievements of the State of Israel, and affirmed: "Acting responsibly means for us a clear avowal of Israel's right to exist and the right of the Jewish people to live in security and peace. The European Union will always stand at the side of Israel" ("Verantwortliches Handeln, das bedeutet für uns: ein klares Bekenntnis zum Existenzrecht Israels und zum Recht des jüdischen Volkes, in Sicherheit und Frieden zu leben. Die Europäische Union wird immer an der Seite Israels stehen.").

In the meantime, Mr. Bennett took the opportunity of a visit to Brussels to ask for a meeting with Mr. Schulz. Water was not discussed, according to [reports](#), but "a positive atmosphere prevailed" ("während des Gesprächs herrschte eine positive Atmosphäre"). Although neither made any apology, they agreed on the need for continued cooperation and Mr. Bennett gave Mr. Schulz an ancient coin. Thus much Mr. Bennett made amends for his and his party's behavior. To expect an apology from the dinner guests is probably too much.

The European Ambassador, by the way, is in a different class. According to [another report](#) in *Israel Hayom*, he wields both a big stick and a big carrot at Israelis and Palestinians alike, offering to shower upon them financial benefits if they reach peace and threatening them with penalties if they do not. He adds that if the EU decides to cut its vast subsidies to the Palestinian Authority (PA), "I think there is a great likelihood that Israel would have to provide far more." But he is new on the scene: he has only just [presented his credentials](#) to Israeli President Peres and has time to learn. Israelis will not sacrifice their security, however big the stick. Palestinians, whether in Ramallah or in Gaza, will not abandon their ultimate aim of engulfing Israel in a unitary Palestine, however many carrots are thrown at them. The Hamas regime makes no secret of that aim; in the PA it is expressed in numerous [petty ways](#) or by demands for the "right of return."

Figures and Propaganda

Everyone is agreed, says the *Jerusalem Post*, that the figures mentioned by Mr. Schulz were wrong. Friends of the Palestinians say that 70 liters of water per day is the Palestinian figure (or rather 100 liters, of which 30 liters go to waste in faulty infrastructure), while Israelis have 250 liters a day, so the ratio is still close to 4:1. Uri Schor of the Israel Water Authority counters that the figures are more likely 110 liters per Palestinian and something under 170 liters per Israeli. Since January 2012, a 36-page study of the issues by Prof. Haim Gvirtzman has been available online. One can also consult almost thirty briefs on water in the Middle East produced by CAMERA since 1995.

But this battle of ratios is not merely bewildering; it is irrelevant to what the spokespersons for each side are trying to prove. Behind the battle is the assumption is that a high ratio proves Israeli injustice to the Palestinians, whereas a low ratio shows that Israel is better than you thought. The conclusions for the propaganda war, however, should be the other way round.

Over 95% of the Palestinians live in Gaza and the officially termed "Areas A and B" of the West Bank, which were turned over to Palestinian rule in 1995 (the differences between Areas A and B are immaterial here). Since Hamas seized power in Gaza in 2007, of course, the PA is now directly responsible only for those Areas A and B. Israel is responsible for its own pre-1967 areas and for "Area C" of the West Bank. Note that Jewish settlers live *only* in Area C, where they outnumber the resident Palestinians.

In the meantime, however, the settlers have been connected to the Israeli water grid; they do not draw water from the Palestinian grid. Consequently, if Israelis, be it in Israel or as settlers in Area C, enjoy much more water per capita than Palestinians, the relevant implication should be that the State of Israel is doing a much better job than the PA and Hamas in supplying water to the populations under their respective rule.

So the supporters of the Palestinians think that by alleging a higher per capita use of water in Israel they are accusing Israel, but instead they are emphasizing the failures of the PA (here as in many fields). And while the Israeli spokesman thinks that he is defending Israel with his lower per capita figure, he is actually defending the PA against the charge of incompetence.

That is the simple answer. It will be objected, loudly, that the situation is not so simple. Indeed, it is not. But we shall see that the complex answer is the same as the simple answer, at least in respect of phony accusations against Israel.

The Complex Answer

For one thing, it is undeniable that Israel has invested much money and expertise in expanding its sources of water. It is a world leader in recycling waste water and in desalinating sea water. Whereas just a few years ago recurrent droughts were becoming a nightmare, today Israel has ample water. Only the price of water has also gone up: everyone pays markedly more on the basic rates and there is a punitive charge for households that use more than a certain upper limit of water per capita.

With expertise come exports. Bloomberg [recently reported](#) how "North of San Diego, Israel's IDE Technologies Ltd. is helping to build what it says will be the largest seawater desalination plant in the Western Hemisphere." That is just the biggest of Israel's overseas desalination projects.

The Palestinians have done none of that. On the contrary, wastage of water from leaky pipes and plain theft of water are rampant. The PA complains that it cannot stop all that in Area C, but what about the 95% of Palestinians who are indeed subject to the fearsome multiplicity of Palestinians security services? A friend who just came back from a West Bank town reported hearing from the locals that there nobody pays water bills or even municipal taxes. This may have been boastful exaggeration, but it testifies to an attitude.

There is, however, one major complicating factor in the West Bank. Amid all the shouting about ratios, you will rarely find it mentioned, so here it is. Rain falls predominantly on the mountain ridge running from Jenin in the north to Hebron in the south, all of which, except Jerusalem, is ruled by the PA. But most of the rain goes underground and emerges far away in aquifers in pre-1967 Israel. So who owns this water? Similar problems occur elsewhere in the world, but there is no generally accepted legal procedure for solving them. The second Oslo Accord of 1995 dealt with the issue by decreeing an annual quantity of water that Israel would supply from its own sources to the PA. Before 1967, of course, *none* of that water was given to the Palestinians.

Up to 1995, that is, Israel was responsible for the supply of water to every individual Palestinian. In 1995, that responsibility was transferred to the PA, except for the few Palestinians who reside in Area C. Israel no longer has any obligation to *individual* Palestinians in Gaza or in Areas A and B of the West Bank, but only an obligation to provide a *global* amount of water from within Israel to the PA, an obligation that it has fulfilled. Since 1995, therefore, the per capita figure of water available to a Palestinian in Ramallah or in Gaza is a criterion exclusively for evaluating the performance of the PA or Hamas respectively, not of Israel. The complex answer is indeed the same as the simple answer.

Thus the real mistake of Mr. Schulz was not that his figures were false but that his figures were *irrelevant* to any evaluation of Israeli responsibilities. To quote such figures was irrelevant in a speech made to Israelis in the Knesset. Moreover, to insert the disclaimer after the event (a dubious move in itself) did not eliminate his mistake but merely compounded the confusion.

Note that in Gaza the situation is the opposite of that in the West Bank. In ancient history, Gaza and other flourishing settlements were built where a geological formation accumulates water and dew (an important factor in that area) that fall today partly in Israel. Strangely, nobody has suggested that if Israel is obliged to send water back into the West Bank, then Gaza should send water back into Israel.

On the contrary, Palestinians have drawn so much water from legal and illegal wells in the Gaza Strip that the ancient water system has been invaded by sea water and may soon be completely destroyed. So the Hamas regime is becoming increasingly dependent on water from Israel, all the while threatening Israel with destruction.

Gaza, of course, is the one place where the Palestinians could build desalination plants. Only, say the Palestinians, Israel is obstructing it. That complaint serves to distract attention from the implications of Hamas rule in Gaza, so let us recall those implications.

To begin with, the Hamas regime is an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and is clandestinely helping the Brotherhood in its struggle against the new Egyptian military regime. The Egyptian army's reaction includes the systematic destruction of houses on its side of the border with Gaza, in order to end the two-way smuggling of personnel and goods via tunnels between Gaza and Sinai.

Gaza has thereby become totally dependent on Israel as a source of supplies, including metals and building materials. These the Hamas regime is using to create a new arsenal of rockets and a vast network of underground tunnels in preparation for its next assault on Israel (as [recently reported](#) by the *Times of Israel*). The tunnels included a recent one that penetrated into Israel, from which Hamas hoped to kidnap more hostages like [Gilad Shalit](#). After discovering all that, Israel [clamped down](#) again on the supply of cement to Gaza.

If Gaza had a government genuinely devoted to the wellbeing of its citizens, then it would cut all relations with Ramallah and negotiate a separate peace with Israel. After that, besides building desalination plants, it could make its population rich by developing the natural gas field in its territorial waters.

Instead, the Hamas regime's overriding concern is to turn its citizens into an army indoctrinated with the supreme aim of "liberating" cities in Israel. Recognition of Israel, let alone negotiations, is totally excluded. It is hardly surprising that Israel does little more for the Hamas regime than suffices to keep Gazans alive.

So who pays the bills for the water and electricity from Israel on which Gaza depends? The PA in Ramallah. Only it does not pay: it owes hundreds of millions of shekels to Israel because it fails to collect bills owed to it by its own Palestinian customers.

Desalination in the West Bank, of course, is not a possibility, but recycling of waste water would be. To date this hardly happens and the Palestinians blame Israel. Let us look into their arguments.

To begin with, the PA has no money to spend on sewage treatment schemes. This is because the PA has no money to spend on anything, but depends on massive financial support from donors, principally the EU and the US. Its tax revenues consist mainly of duties on imports, which are collected on its behalf and turned over to it by Israel. Among the reasons for the recent fall of Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad was his attempt to introduce a fair [income tax](#).

The money, therefore, has to come from donors, while the sewage plants would have to be built mainly in Area C of the West Bank. Here Israel demands the creation of plants to serve both

Palestinians and Jewish settlements alike. But the donors reject that demand, saying that they will give money only to serve Palestinians.

Here both the Palestinians and the donors have blinded themselves with ideology. If they thought rationally, they would realize that if Jewish settlements are handed over to the Palestinians, as they demand, these settlements will need sewage plants *then*, so why not build them *now*? Almost everyone except Naftali Bennett's party anticipates that if there is ever a final peace treaty, then Jewish settlements, at least scattered isolated ones, will be evacuated.

Moreover, Israel and the West Bank are so intricately interwoven that the management of sewage will have to transcend any final border between the two. Practical reason would demand that the whole area be split into its geographical components and that a relevant scheme be devised for each of these, regardless of peace negotiations. But practical reason is constantly trumped by ideology, especially when the PA can abdicate its responsibilities to donors.

Another complaint of the Palestinians is that the Oslo Accord of 1995 was supposed to be replaced by a permanent settlement five years later, but twenty years have passed and much has changed. Agreed, but what has changed? Mainly, that the Palestinian population has doubled, or so the Palestinians say, just as it doubled in the previous twenty years.

But why is this an argument that Israel is now obliged to supply twice as much water from its own water sources? The obligation upon Israel to supply water to the PA from aquifers in Israel has nothing to do with whether the Palestinian population is two million or four million or a hundred million, if that is what the Palestinians want. That obligation derives from the amount of rainfall in the mountains of the West Bank, and from nothing else.

The Palestinians would have an argument if the rainfall had doubled in the meantime. But the last decade has been one of droughts. The winter of 2012-13 was an exception, but 2013-14 looks to be another drought year. So if "what has changed" is to be the criterion, then Israel could demand a reduction in its obligation. In fact, or so the Israelis say, Israel is supplying more water than it committed to in 1995.

A further complaint is that Israel is demanding higher standards for any new sewage plants in Area C than for many plants in Israel itself. But this is to ignore the fact that Israel is constantly raising its own standards, just as the EU is constantly raising standards for gas emissions from cars. The complainants are simply refusing to admit that Israel has developed a high culture of dealing with waste water, which is becoming a model for much of the world except, apparently, for Palestine.

Once again, we see that the Palestinian complaints about their water situation are specious arguments based on irrelevant facts. Their arguments serve merely to distract attention from their own massive failure to provide for the needs of their population.

Read the Speech

Mr. Schulz understandably felt [hurt and disappointed](#) by the response to what he felt was a [pro-Israel speech](#). So let us give that speech a little of the due attention that it failed to receive. Here (as opposed to the remark about water) the quotations will be taken from the official English translation, since its stylistic adjustments do not affect the essence of the original German.

The speech began with his thanks for being permitted to speak in German. Although this was his right, in retrospect it may seem to have been a mistake. Had he spoken in English, many would have understood his words immediately and doubtless applauded at appropriate places. The awkward point about water might then have been met with mere silence. What are intended as warm words do not have the same impact when one hears them in the jerky monotone of simultaneous translation.

Two main elements can be detected in the speech. On the one hand, as President of the European Parliament, Mr. Schulz was obliged, as he emphasized in later interviews, to relay views widely expressed in that body. That is, all the usual European clichés about the Arab-Israeli conflict. This element was prominent in the later paragraphs of the speech.

The other element was his own personal sympathy for, and admiration of, Israel. That was evident throughout the earlier paragraphs of the speech, but also reappeared in the later part. "The crimes committed by the Nazis," he said, "were the reason I became involved in politics," and he went on to decry the reappearances of anti-Semitism in today's Europe. So "Israel," he said, "embodies the hope cherished by a people of being able to live a life of freedom in a homeland of their own. As a result

of the actions of brave men and women, Israel represents the realisation of that very human dream." He then went on to praise Israel's achievements in a paragraph that deserves quotation in full:

"Today, Israel is a robust democracy, a vibrant, open society with all the conflicts that implies, and a modern economy. The kibbutzim which once made the desert bloom have been replaced by hundreds of start-ups and high-tech research centres in which work is being done which will lead to the inventions of the future; minute microchips and robots, computer tomography and ultrasound scanners. Israeli researchers are world leaders in many areas. Israel has only eight million inhabitants, but it can boast seven major research universities, including the Technion in Haifa and the Weizmann Institute in Revlion [sic], and 12 Nobel Prize winners!"

"Israel," he proclaimed, "has built a society founded on the values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law. Israel and the European Union share these values." On this basis he surveyed the recent developments in neighboring countries, especially the "ever more brutal escalation of violence" in Syria, "The Assad regime would rather massacre its own population than give up power! Even children are being tortured and killed. The opposition is also guilty of perpetrating appalling massacres and recruiting child soldiers." He expressed understanding for Israel's fears about Iran and for "what it means for parents in Sderot and Ashkelon to live every day with the fear that their children may die in a rocket attack on their way to school."

Only after all that did Mr. Schulz come to the EU clichés about the two-state solution, the Israeli settlement program in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and so on. But he also firmly emphasized that "the EU has no intention to boycott Israel. I am of the conviction that what we need is more cooperation, not division."

It was here that he quoted the young Palestinians in Ramallah, then made a second remark that prompted Mr. Bennett to lead a walkout of his party: "The blockade of the Gaza Strip is your response to attacks on Israeli civilians and I can understand that. But it is stifling all economic development and driving people to despair -- despair which in turn is being exploited by extremists. The blockade may in fact undermine, rather than strengthen, Israel's security." The last sentence, of course, is another irritating European cliché.

What pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli reactions to his speech have alike overlooked is that those two remarks were almost the only expressions of sympathy for Palestinians in a speech that was otherwise overwhelmingly sympathetic to Israel. (He said, of course, that Palestinians like Israelis "have the right to fulfil their dream of creating their own viable democratic state," but that is another habitual cliché.) So when the pro-Palestinians claim that "Schulz dared to tell the truth," they are, albeit inadvertently, recommending his encomium for the Zionist enterprise. And pro-Israelis have denounced a speech that, studied in the Israeli education system, could serve to counter "post-Zionist" skepticism in Israel itself.

The Investigations of Prof. Gvirtzman

In January 2012, Prof. Haim Gvirtzman of Bar-Ilan [published a study](#) entitled "The Israel-Palestinian Water Conflict: An Israeli Perspective" under the aegis of his university's Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies. In response to the speech of Mr. Schulz, he also [issued a long summary](#) of his earlier findings.

The main focus of his study was on the West Bank, where he sketched the role of the British and Jordanian administrations before detailing the immense improvements to the Palestinian water situation implemented by Israel after 1967. He explained the nature of the various aquifers and the post-1995 developments, then listed the ways in which the PA fails to live up to its responsibilities.

Critics have fastened upon the fact that he refused to use the official PA figure of 2.4 million for the Palestinian population of the West Bank, preferring the figure of 1.4 million given in [another study](#) made by his university. Such a discrepancy seems incredible. Still, Prof. Gvirtzman has a point if the PA figure includes, as he claims, 250,000 Palestinians living under Israeli rule in Jerusalem and 150,000 who moved to Israel under family unification schemes. All such draw water from Israel, not from the PA.

His supposition was, of course, that a more favorable per capita Palestinian water usage would reflect to the credit of Israel. As was pointed out above, this is a misconception: it is the PA that would then deserve more credit. The lower the amount of water available to the average citizen of the PA, the greater the manifest inability of the PA to fulfill its duties.

So, on the one hand, Prof. Gvirtzman published an outstanding collection of facts, which others have widely used. On the other, by taking sides in the controversy over the correct size of the Palestinian population, he encouraged the false idea that Israel continued to be responsible for per capita usage of water in places like Ramallah even after 1995. That false idea reappeared in the speech of Mr. Schulz.

It would be helpful to rewrite the study of Prof. Gvirtzman so as to make unambiguously clear what are the responsibilities of the respective governments. This could be done by recasting the study in a different sequence of sections.

The first section would describe the main aquifers. As it is, only near the end of his study does Prof. Gvirtzman explain the nature of the mountain aquifer, although this is crucial for determining Israel's responsibilities in respect of Palestinian water. The second section would cover earlier history: the situation on the eve of the British Mandate, the developments introduced by the British, and the various performances of Israel, Jordan and Egypt between the end of the Mandate and the Six Day War of 1967. The third section would describe the improvements during the period when Israel had sole responsibility for the entire area west of the Jordan River (1967-1995).

The fourth section would explain that the principal issue facing the negotiators in 1995 was how to share the water of the mountain aquifer. It would emphasize very strongly the central fact: that the water falls mostly in areas assigned to the Palestinians, but appears mostly in areas of pre-1967 Israel. Therefore, when sovereignty was divided between Israel and the PA, Israel had no further direct obligations to individual Palestinians living under the PA, but only an obligation to the PA itself. This obligation, it should also be emphasized, is determined *exclusively* by the amount of rainfall in the mountains; it remains the same whether the PA rules over one hundred Palestinians or one hundred million Palestinians.

The fifth section would record the revolution in water management in Israel since 1995. The sixth and last section would expose the poor performance of the Palestinians since then. It would need to have two subsections: before and after the seizure of power in Gaza by Hamas in 2007. If he wants to, Prof. Gvirtzman could mention somewhere the dispute over the size of the Palestinian population; he ought in that case, however, to give per capita water figures for *both* of the claimed sizes. But he

should emphasize that the *bigger* that population, the *greater* the failure of the Palestinian governments to meet their responsibilities. As it is, Prof. Gvirtzman starts arguing about the size of the Palestinian population near the beginning of his study, so the reader gets the impression that it is upon *this* issue, not the mountain aquifer, that everything hangs.

Put it this way. According to the PA, the population of the West Bank doubled in the first two decades of Israel rule and has doubled again since. If the population had remained stable, then – other things being equal – the Palestinians would today enjoy four times as much water per capita as they do.

If the Palestinians want to pursue a hectic increase in their numbers, they must bear the consequences. They may be persuaded by the extravagant promises of the new EU Ambassador to imagine that the EU will always shower upon them the needed extra money and food. What the EU cannot do is shower more rain upon them from the heavens.

“Palestinian Water (and Martin Schulz) ;The Lack of Logic”, 03/03/2014, online at:
<http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4198/israel-palestinian-water-martin-schulz>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Waterways brings Israeli Tech to a Thirsty Africa

Ask any African who lives off the land, and they'll tell you that water is life. But when the wells and rivers dry up, or become so polluted or full of disease that it kills their children and livestock, water can also be a great cause of sorrow.

Finding her mission in water, former Israeli diplomat Ornit Avidar is taking Israel's "soft" water technology solutions — decentralized, simple to use and maintain, consuming little energy — and applying them all around Africa. Letters of intent are signed, companies have been chosen and projects are just beginning to roll out.

Avidar built connections and experience as a diplomat for Israel's Ministry of Industry and Trade, and in high-tech when she was the CEO at Delta Three Israel, the first Internet telephony company later traded on NASDAQ.

Her current company, Waterways, is a channel for Africans to access Israeli technology and make it work for their lives. While she recognizes the importance of non-profits in Africa, she thinks it is time to update the model with sustainable businesses focused on the bottom line.

One of the companies she is working with is SunDWater, which cleans water in off-grid locations using condensation made from solar rays. Africans in remote locations know about the technology and are asking for it, she says.

Where have all the water-tech projects gone?

Around six years ago, Avidar started researching clean-tech and water, and saw that water solutions for rural areas have gone missing.

"When we started looking at the issue of water in rural areas, the most confounding statistics popped up," she says.

"We found that some 50 percent of water projects in rural areas simply don't exist after one year. For me, this is dollars going down the drain. If for each million dollars of funding, a year later half of that is gone, then there is no way that we are going to see results. This is not economical and not acceptable, and I thought, what we can do about that?"

She then started devising a comprehensive methodology that can help project managers not only get projects, but keep their projects working and running from day one. "We integrate the appropriate technological solutions with social ones," she says.

And this is the launching pad she calls Waterways. Her models include VIC, or Village Income Center, which is a way to integrate soft water and support technologies into the livelihoods of villagers.

Life and Water Development Group Cameroon, a non-governmental organization that does water projects with groups like Engineers Without Borders, is cooperating with Waterways on the VIC, which has already started its pilot stage and is in a feasibility study now.

Another key partnership is with Water and Sanitation in Africa (WSA), which has never before partnered with any country outside of Africa. The Pan-African WSA represents 36 governments, and is already doing “fantastic projects,” Avidar says. So far, WSA has worked with five Israeli companies, totaling some \$5 billion in transactions.

“They loved our concept in Israel as we went from water scarcity to over-capacity. ‘If you want it too, we can do it,’” Avidar told them.

She has 12 letters of intent signed by various governments in Africa. Israeli companies to be involved in deal flows, in addition to SunDWater, will include water resources management company Tahal and Anyway Solutions, a global leader in providing soil stabilization products to the infrastructure and development sectors.

She recognizes that in Africa, deals proceed more slowly than in the West: “There is a process in Africa. Things take time. You can’t get around it,” she says.

Waterways is based in Shoresh, west of Jerusalem, and employs four people. Founded in 2010, it is bootstrapping its way into Africa. “Obviously, we would love to get funding. Some see the use of soft solutions as not fundable, but that doesn’t deter us. We’re there,” says Avidar.

“Waterways brings Israeli Tech to a Thirsty Africa”, 03/03/2014, online at: <http://israel21c.org/environment/waterways-brings-israeli-tech-to-a-thirsty-africa/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Prince Hassan calls for establishment of regional water investment fund**

HRH Prince Hassan addresses participants at the Water in the Arab World: Status, Challenges and Opportunities Conference on Tuesday (Petra photo)

AMMAN — Increasing sustained investment in water infrastructure is crucial, HRH Prince Hassan said on Tuesday, calling on Arab states to establish a fund to protect the region’s scarce water resources.

He also underscored that by preserving these resources, Arab states would be protecting human dignity.

Speaking at the Water in the Arab World: Status, Challenges and Opportunities Conference, the prince added that regional scientists should be brought together to strengthen existing water governance.

In addition, he called for the establishment of a mid-term resilience plan for the region, as an outbreak of diseases in Syria and across all the refugee camps is “inevitable”.

Prince Hassan, who is chairman of the UN Secretary General’s Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, also criticised Arab absence from important water deliberations and negligence of water issues.

“I have never received support from any Arab country... the support I’m looking for is a unified stand regarding issues proposed for this year, which is the sustainable development goals year, and we are living today a sustainable turmoil,” he said.

Prince Hassan added that despite involving Arab ambassadors, he didn’t receive any indication from the Arab states that “water is an important subject.”

“In referring to social tensions, we are speaking largely of undisciplined urbanisation; we are speaking of arid zones,” the prince said, noting that with the help of the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, a proposal was presented to finance the establishment of a regional arid zone academy.

“I have yet to receive any indication of support or interest from this region,” he noted.

The prince said a UN conference on development goals will be held in April, with the presence of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund presidents.

“... those of you who are interested in promoting an authentic Arab participation in this meeting, you serve your communities and I’m at your service. If this initiative fails, it will be another example of an assumption, may I say the fact, that there is no Arab region,” Prince Hassan told the audience.

The three-day conference, organised by the University of Jordan’s water, environment and energy centre, assembles researchers and experts from 15 countries to address water-related challenges that are impeding the Arab region’s socio-economic development.

These challenges include drought, increasing demand due to growing population, low water use efficiency in the agricultural sector, high non-revenue water in the domestic sector, climate change, lack of financial resources to sustain infrastructure and management of trans-boundary water resources.

During the event, Minister of Water and Irrigation Hazem Nasser highlighted the importance of water demand management for the region to tackle its water crisis in light of increasing demand and shrinking resources.

“There is not one Arab country that practises water demand management in a sound way, except for three countries which are close to correctly managing their water demand, and those are Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco,” Nasser said.

He underscored that research centres in the Arab world should conduct extensive studies on several issues that affect the water sector in the Arab world, such as climate change and its impact on the sustainability of water resources, and the effect of the growing population due to migrations on water resources.

Nasser said studies indicate that the region’s water deficit is projected to triple to 130 billion cubic metres by 2030, noting that the expected deficit will necessitate projects estimated to cost Arab states

\$200 billion by 2030, which will place further burdens on the region in terms of raising the required funds and retrieving project costs.

The minister highlighted that water sources in the region are expected to drop by 20 per cent during the next two or three decades due to climate change, noting that Arab states should reconsider their conventional water strategies, which primarily rely on increasing resources and to a much lesser extent on demand management.

“Prince Hassan calls for establishment of regional water investment fund”, Jordan Times, 25/02/2014, online at: <http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/2014/02/prince-hassan-calls-for-establishment-of-regional-water-investment-fund-jordan-times/>

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Sharing water resources and preventing pollution

The recent incident in Knesset during the speech by the president of the European Parliament, Martin Schultz, drew attention to the water-resources aspect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is one of the most important final-status issues which need to be solved in the current peace talks.

An incautious remark by Schultz resulted in a demonstrative exit from the Knesset by Economy and Trade Minister Naftali Bennett and his party members, with Bennett accusing Schultz of lying. This time Bennett was supported by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu who stated that Europeans should not jump to criticize Israel without checking the facts.

What did Schultz actually say? He mentioned that he had met young people in Ramallah who had asked him – “although I could not check the exact figures” – how “it can be that an Israeli is allowed to use 70 liters of water per day but a Palestinian only 17”? If Schultz or his assistants had bothered to check the facts, they would have found that these figures cannot be true, and in fact are totally incorrect. The average daily per capita consumption of water is above 100 liters in both Israel and the West Bank.

What he presumably wanted to say was that there is some gap in water consumption which might seem unfair and should be resolved. Israelis and Palestinians all need water for drinking, other domestic use and irrigation in agriculture.

Until he arrived at his water remark, Schultz must have given one of the most supportive speeches of Israel ever given in Knesset by a European politician.

The figures given in good faith by Schultz implied that Israelis are consuming four times more water than Palestinians per capita. Is this an accurate ratio? Is the ratio only 1.4:1 – as the figures from the Israeli Water Authority’s website indicate – or is it another ratio? A famous statement says that there are three kinds of lies: ordinary lies, damned lies, and statistics. Available statistics on water resources and water use in the region are confusing, at least for non-experts, and can easily be manipulated for political purposes by both sides.

The ratio of 4:1 is not taken out of the blue. The Oslo II interim agreement from 1995 contains an annex with figures. The total “annual recharge” in the disputed mountain aquifer – in fact three underground basins of water stretching across the West Bank and parts of Israel – was estimated to 679 million cubic meters (MCM) Out of this amount, 483 MCM or some 70 percent of “existing extractions, utilization and estimated potential” was at that time used by Israel. The Palestinians were using 17% and the remaining 12% were promised to them for future needs.

The agreement did not stipulate how the water should be allocated in an equitable way in the future. In the agreement “Israel recognizes the Palestinian water rights in the West Bank. These will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations and settled in the Permanent Status Agreement relating to the various water resources.”

About 10 years later, in 2006, Israeli geography professor Elisha Efrat more or less confirmed the figures in her book on the geography of the occupation. The mountain aquifer supplies a total amount of 600 MCM out of which Israel consumes 500 MCM and the Palestinians about 100 MCM.

Professor Efrat argued that Israel cannot risk that the coastal plain will be dried out by relinquishing its control of the mountain aquifer. On the other hand he thought that the Palestinian demands for a more equitable allocation were reasonable.

He guessed that the settlements in the territories are getting three or four times more water for domestic use than the Palestinian inhabitants.

The ratio of 4:1 appears also in a report in 2009 by the World Bank on restrictions on Palestinian water sector development.

The study is based on both Israeli and Palestinian sources and is probably the most comprehensive report on the water issue to date.

It criticizes both sides for inefficient management and governance of water allocation and waste

water treatment in the West Bank. Because of the political deadlock they cannot agree on building common plants to take care of waste water and sewage from Israeli settlements and Palestinian communities.

The objective in the Oslo II agreement that sewage should be properly treated and reused has not been achieved. The result is an ongoing pollution of wadis in the West Bank with spill-overs to the Israeli side.

The issue was also addressed in two reports in 2012, by Haim Gvirtzman from the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies and by the Palestinian Water Authority.

Both reports agree that most of the waste water from Palestinian communities currently is being untreated but disagree on the reasons why. Nor can the two sides agree on the use of treated water from the Israeli plants. There is also a disagreement on the amount of treated waste water from the Israeli settlements.

On a positive note, the vast majority of Palestinian communities have by now been connected to the water network.

While the average water consumption might be sufficient, there are huge differences among the Palestinians themselves.

Water leaks in the supply systems and a low collection of water fees are big problems.

The World Bank report acknowledged the economic and technical disparities between Israel and the West Bank. This explains of course the higher water extraction and consumption in Israel.

The natural fresh water from the mountain aquifer accounts for only about half of the total natural fresh water used in Israel.

The rest comes from other sources inside Israel, including an increasing amount of water from

desalination plants. To this should be added the extremely high reuse in Israel of waste water for agriculture.

Nothing of this is available in the West Bank so any comparison between water consumption in Israel and the West Bank is like comparing apples and oranges.

Another difference is governance and infrastructure. While Israel has built up an efficient infrastructure, the Palestinian water authority is hardly capable of managing and developing its scarce water resources, not to mention the restrictions imposed by the Oslo II interim agreement.

An overriding problem seems to be the arrangements which were put in place back in 1995. A Joint Water Committee was established, with an equal number of members from the two sides, to oversee the management of the aquifers in the West Bank. Decisions were to be taken by consensus.

While the committee has met from time to time and taken decisions on developing water infrastructure and expanding water availability for the Palestinian inhabitants, it seems that it often has rejected or delayed new water projects in the territory.

With no arbitration foreseen in the agreement, both sides can veto projects they do not like.

What is required is a more constructive approach to the water problem in the West Bank aiming at fair allocation of water resources and treatment of waste water. It is terrible that the land which both sides claim is being polluted. If the parties cannot agree, they should turn to the EU for mediation.

“Sharing water resources and preventing pollution”, 02/03/2014, online at: <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/Sharing-water-resources-and-preventing-pollution-342332>

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Environment Ministry to establish climate change department**

Jordan has 128 olive presses spread across the country, according to a study prepared by the USAID-funded Jordan Institutional Support and Strengthening Programme (JT file photo)

AMMAN — Although Jordan ranks as the eighth largest olive oil producing country in the world, it still lacks proper facilities for the treatment of zibar, an oily waste generated during the olive oil extraction process, according to a study.

Jordan has more than 15 million olive trees that produce over 130,000 tonnes of olives, 85 per cent of which farmers send to the 128 olive presses spread across the country, the study indicated.

Seventy per cent of the mills are located in the northern region, 22 per cent in the central region and 8 per cent in the south.

The majority of olive presses and tankers that transport zibar illegally dispose of it in wadis, sewers or at the sewage dumpsite in the capital's Ain Ghazal Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Olive Mills Wastewater (zibar) Study revealed.

The Environment Ministry has designated three dumpsites for the disposal of zibar: Ikeider in the north, Al Humra in the central region and Allajun in the south.

“None of these dumpsites have lined evaporation ponds and subsequently are not equipped with proper mitigation measures to prevent the environmental impacts of zibar disposal,” said the study, which was prepared by the USAID-funded Jordan Institutional Support and Strengthening Programme.

In 2012, the country's olive mills produced 212,418 cubic metres of zibar, which resulted from the processing of 115,282 tonnes of olives, according to the study, which indicated that almost a third of the zibar was generated in Irbid Governorate, 80km north of Amman.

Zibar is black or reddish black, with a strong offensive smell, a high percentage of fat, oil and grease as well as a high organic load, which is 400 times higher than that of domestic wastewater.

If it spreads on soil or is dumped in wadis, zibar can cause serious environmental problems and reduce soil fertility as it contains many chemicals, the study warned.

The authors of the study presented several recommendations to manage the disposal of zibar, including the establishment of an olive oil wastewater treatment plant and evaporation ponds to serve all the presses across the country.

“The evaporation ponds can be established as part of an already existing dumpsite or a wastewater treatment plant, depending on the geographical location, technical suitability, land suitability and available land,” the study proposed.

Olive mills operate during the harvest season which extends over a 75-day period between mid-October and mid-January, according to the study.

It also indicated that the month of December witnesses the maximum zibar generation due to the rise in olive oil production.

“Environment Ministry to establish climate change department”, Jordan Times, 24/02/2014, online at:

<http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/2014/02/environment-ministry-to-establish-climate-change-department-jordan-times/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Court orders state to provide water for sheep in unrecognized Bedouin village

Water Affairs Court rules that lack of access threatens both the herd owner's livelihood and the animals themselves.

The Water Authority and Agriculture Ministry must allow a sheep farmer in an unrecognized Bedouin village to extend his water connection to the herd's paddock, giving the animals easy access to water, the Water Affairs Court in Haifa ruled last week.

The panel, headed by Haifa District Court Vice President Ron Shapiro, said that not only does a lack of access threaten the herd owner's livelihood, it is liable to harm the animals.

The court was ruling on an appeal submitted by Hassan Masudin, who lives with his family in an unrecognized Negev village near Be'er Sheva. Masudin has a herd of 200 sheep and 100 lambs. The family has a connection to drinking water, but the spout is a considerable distance from the paddock. Every time Masudin needs to water his animals, he must take them out of the corral and bring them to the spout.

Not only is Masudin's herd properly registered and vaccinated, argued his attorney, Shmuel Zilberman, but the authorities have allotted him 500 cubic meters of extra water annually for the animals. Having to herd them such a distance just to water them is discriminatory when other farmers' herds are allowed easy access to water, Zilberman added.

The Water Authority and Agriculture Ministry argued that the government policy on the unrecognized villages allows the supply of water only for drinking and humanitarian purposes. They argued that it was made clear to Masudin that the state would not allow a water connection that would be liable to serve illegal communities. They further stressed that the policy is to allow water for herds only in grazing areas, adding that the herd is kept in the paddock for only two months a year.

But the court ruled that once the state had approved Masudin's herd and a water allotment, it could not evade its responsibility to make the water accessible.

“The solution offered by the state is not practical, and not only harms the livelihood of the herd owner but the animals themselves, about which we must also be concerned,” the judges ruled.

The court accepted Masudin’s appeal and allowed him to extend the water pipe to the paddock, on condition that this is done in a way that would not allow any other use of the water.

“Court orders state to provide water for sheep in unrecognized Bedouin village”, 26/02/2014, online at:

<http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/2014/02/court-orders-state-to-provide-water-for-sheep-in-unrecognized-bedouin-village-haaretz/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Egypt plans dam-busting diplomatic offensive against Ethiopia (UPI)

Egypt may be in the throes of political turmoil, but the government has begun a diplomatic offensive aimed at stopping Ethiopia from building a huge hydroelectric dam on the Nile River that Cairo says will be a disaster for the Arab world's most populous nation.

The military-backed administration began its effort to internationalize the thorny issue in hopes of gathering support for its case against Ethiopia, where the Blue Nile rises in the northwestern highlands, after bilateral negotiations deadlocked in January.

“The campaign initiated by Egypt ... aims to persuade the international community to reject the dam's construction because it may lead to further conflict and instability in the region of the Nile Basin,” an Egyptian diplomatic source in Cairo told the Middle East's al-Monitor website Feb.19.

“More negotiations with Ethiopia only waste time and directly threaten Egypt's water security,” said the source, who declined to be named because of the sensitivity of the issue.

“We realized that Ethiopia doesn't want genuine solutions to end the crisis, but is only trying to portray Egypt as approving of the dam's construction to facilitate access to the funding.

“But Ethiopia hasn't provided genuine guarantees the dam will not affect Egypt and has shown no intention to amend the technical specifications to minimize the potential risks according to the report by the international experts' committee, which recommended reconsidering the dam's safety studies.”

Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn said Feb. 13 that Addis Ababa will not back down on the \$4.8 billion Grand Renaissance Dam, which will be the largest in Africa.

He observed that since there's no international court specializing in arbitrating water disputes, Cairo had no choice but to negotiate to reach a settlement acceptable to everyone.

Gamal Bayouni, secretary-general of the Egyptian-European partnership at the Ministry of International Cooperation in Cairo, said Egypt now seeks to “target all countries that provide technical assistance for designing and building the Renaissance Dam through private contractors and also the states likely to fund to construction of the dam.”

On Feb. 6, Egypt's minister of water resources and irrigation, Mohamed Abdul Muttalib, visited Italy, considered to be Ethiopia's main technical supporter in building the dam.

Italy's Salini Construction Corp. is building the 6,000-megawatt facility on the Blue Nile, the main tributary of the Nile that flows northward through nine African states to the Mediterranean.

The Blue Nile accounts for 85 percent of the Nile's water flow. It joins the White Nile, whose headwaters lie in the East African highlands in Burundi.

Muttalib, who was accompanied by Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy, said after a series of meetings that "the visit has achieved its goal. Italy has understood Egyptian concerns."

Egyptian sources say Muttalib's next trip will be to Norway, which is one of the countries funding the dam project.

But it's not clear at this stage whether Egypt's diplomatic offensive will be able to secure enough international support to influence Addis Ababa.

The Ethiopians consider the Renaissance Dam and the other dams they plan to build as a symbol of national pride as they will produce electricity that will transform the economic prospects not only for their country but for much of seriously under-developed East Africa as it stands on the cusp of a major oil and gas boom.

For Cairo, maintaining the current flow of Nile water is a matter of national security.

Egypt's last two presidents, Hosni Mubarak, overthrown Feb. 11, 2011, and Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood, ousted by the army July 3, 2013, both made thinly veiled threats to use military force to uphold Egypt's current access to the waters of the world's longest river.

The current military regime in Cairo is focused, so far at least, on riding out the domestic political turmoil and restoring stability amid a growing Islamist insurgency.

But it can't afford to let this issue slide. The Grand Renaissance Dam is to become operational in 2017.

Egypt, with its 84 million people totally dependent in the Nile for water, cites British agreements in 1929 and 1959 that guarantee it the lion's share of the water and a veto over upstream dam construction.

But Ethiopia, along with Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya and five other African states with growing populations and mounting demands on agriculture, dismiss these accords as colonial relics.

“Egypt plans dam-busting diplomatic offensive against Ethiopia (UPI)”, 28/02/2014, online at:
<http://www.abugidainfo.com/index.php/22316/>

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Ethiopia Will Continue Promoting Principle of Equitable Utilization of Nile

Ethiopian will continue promoting the principle of the equitable and fair utilization of the Nile River, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

While briefing journalists on current issues here today, MoFA Spokesperson, Ambassador Dina Mufti said Ethiopia has a firm stand on the fair use of the river among the riparian countries.

"The upper riparian states have the right to use the Nile for their development as far as it doesn't cause any significant harm on the lower riparian countries and that is why Ethiopia is building the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GRED)," he said.

Ethiopia will continue building the dam and Egypt's request to pause the construction of the dam is unacceptable, he said.

The government of Egypt has no alternative but to move quickly and start discussions with all Nile countries about using the waters in the best interest of all, he said.

Ambassador Dina added that Ethiopia would continue to play its role towards contributing to the peace and stability of the Horn of African region.

In addition to finding solution for the current crisis in South Sudan, Ethiopia is playing its part for the prevalence of durable peace and security in Somalia through deploying its troops, he said.

According to Ambassador Dina, rival factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) are here in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for further peace talks.

"Ethiopia Will Continue Promoting Principle of Equitable Utilization of Nile - Foreign Affairs", 27/02/2014, online at:
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201402271025.html>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Ethiopia, Sudan Working to Bring Egypt to Dialogue

Ethiopia has the right to utilize its water resource and no one can stop it from doing so, Alemayehu Tegen, Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy has said. The Minister made the remark at a consultative workshop held on Sunday to assess the performance of the sector over the past six months of the current Ethiopian budget year.

Addressing participants drawn from institutions under the auspices of the Ministry including regional water, irrigation and energy bureaus and other stakeholders, Alemayehu said because of its geographical location, most of Ethiopia's rivers happen to be trans boundary.

Even so, the country has always been willing and ready to share those trans boundary waters with neighbouring countries, he said. That is why it took the initiative and signed the Nile River Basin Cooperation Framework Agreement. He said Ethiopia has also been working on the handling of possible future claims concerning the utilization of other trans boundary waters.

As regards the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Alemayehu said, three Nile riparian countries will have highly benefited from the dam whereas it will hardly have any harm on downstream countries.

He said discussions had been going on with downstream countries on the report of the International Panel of Experts on the Impacts of GERD on Downstream Countries until they were interrupted recently because of Egypt. Ethiopia and Sudan have been working together to bring Egypt back to the dialogue, he added.

30 percent of overall work on GERD was done by the end of the past Ethiopian month (Tir), Alemayehu said, and attributed the success to the support from the general public. He called on the public to keep up the support until the successful completion of the project.

“Ethiopia, Sudan Working to Bring Egypt to Dialogue”, 24/02/2014, online at:

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201402250068.html>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Can Kenya tap its water to double its maize?

NAIROBI, (Thomson Reuters Foundation) – In an effort to improve food security in the face of climate change, the government of Kenya has embarked on an ambitious irrigation farming project on one million acres of land, a move that will see the country double its maize production in five years time.

“This move is a deliberate confrontation of the monster that is climate change. The earlier we do it, the better for us because climatic patterns are changing from the known to unknown and we can no longer rely on it,” said James Nyoro, a special advisor on agriculture for Kenya’s government in an interview at a function organised by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

The East African region is at the moment experiencing heavy rainfall which unexpectedly started in early February, more than a month ahead of schedule. Nyoro believes the out-of-season rainfall will affect the long rains usually expected in March and April.

“We have no choice but to find a way of adapting to such shifts in climatic conditions. And one of the ways is by investing in irrigation agriculture,” he said.

The one million acre irrigation project, which is expected to cost 250 billion Kenyan shillings (\$3 billion) over five years, was launched by President Uhuru Kenyatta in January, to address the recurring problem of food insecurity in the country.

The project will irrigate government-owned land in semi-arid Tana River and Kilifi counties in the coastal region. The land was acquired from the Galana Game and Trading Company in 1989 by the government through the Agriculture Development Corporation (ADC).

According to the ADC plan, 500,000 acres of the farm will be put under maize production, 200,000 acres under sugarcane, and 300,000 acres will be set aside for other activities such as beef cattle, game animals and fish ponds, among others.

“This will boost the country’s food production to up to 45 million (90 kilo) bags of maize per year, from the current 20 million bags,” Felix Koskei, agriculture cabinet secretary, said during a media briefing at his Kilimo House office in Nairobi.

The Cabinet secretary said that water for irrigation will be drawn from River Sabaki, which a feasibility study conducted by three Israeli firms says will have sufficient water to support the project.

Soil analysis conducted by the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute shows that the area has a potential for high productivity with a possible capacity to produce between 30 and 50 bags of maize per hectare per year.

FOOD SHORTFALL

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Kenyans consume an average of 3.72 million (90 kilo) bags of maize every month, totaling 44.64 million bags per year, against an average production of 20 million bags per year. This consumption rate has been growing every year in part due to a growing population, which now stands at 40 million.

The deficit is usually filled by imported maize from neighbouring countries, particularly Tanzania, and Uganda.

But with the shifting climatic conditions, experts warn that many countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, are going to experience more seasons with poor harvests. “We must expect tougher conditions ahead of us, which gives us a reason to invest in appropriate adaptation projects,” said Dennis Garrity, the UN Drylands ambassador during the World Congress on Agroforestry in February.

Crops produced from the one million acre irrigation project will be stored at the National Cereals Produce Board, which is the country’s grain reserve, then released to Kenyans during time of need, Koskei said.

According to Nyoro, Kenya has many other potential areas that could be targeted for food production through irrigation.

The latest site, which experts say has the potential to produce enough food to feed the entire country, is drought-ravaged Turkana County, whose residents are facing starvation save for relief food being distributed in the region by the government and humanitarian agencies.

The county has been found to have two huge underground aquifers that experts say could supply the country's water needs for the next 70 years at its current rate of population.

“The government is planning to set up another irrigation project in Turkana, using the underground water, as a way of adapting to climate change, and exploiting the natural resources,” said Nyoro, the government advisor on agriculture.

So far, the government has contracted Davis and Shirtliff, a multinational water company, to begin the drilling before a strategy for irrigation is put in place, said John Nyaoro, the director of water resources at the Ministry of Environment.

Though Kenya has opted for a large-scale irrigation project in Tana River and Kilifi, a 2013 [study](#) by Jennifer Burney of Stanford University suggests that smallholder irrigation also has great potential to reduce hunger, raise incomes, and improve development prospects, particularly in the developing world.

According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation, only four percent of the arable land in sub-Saharan Africa is irrigated. This means that the rest of the land is particularly susceptible to climate change-linked variation in rainfall patterns, which can produce droughts and floods.

“Can Kenya tap its water to double its maize?”, 28/02/2014, online at: http://www.trust.org/item/20140227230935-tblny/?source=hptop&utm_source=Circle-of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=8b9880cff6-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-8b9880cff6-250657169

BACK TO TOP

❖ **As glaciers retreat in North India, rivers shrink and floods grow**

JAMMU, India (Thomson Reuters Foundation) – The Tawi River once surged through the city of Jammu in northern India so deep and swift that residents were forced to take a boat to get across. Today the sluggish waterway is barely knee deep for much of the year, its bed a dumping ground for untreated city waste.

What has changed in half a century? In part, retreating glaciers and deforestation that are changing the river’s flow, leading to both increasingly dry periods and worsening floods.

“The glaciers and barrier lakes in the Jujdhar and Seojdhar ranges, which contribute a larger share of water to Tawi, have almost disappeared,” said M.M. Munshi, retired director of operations in Jammu and Kashmir state for the Geological Survey of India, and one of those who used to cross the Tawi by boat.

Right now, “water flow in all the rivers in the state is decreasing. The perpetual snow line in Jammu and Kashmir has gone up to 16,000 feet from 13,000 feet in the last hundred years,” said Munshi, who continues to consult on groundwater and glacier issues for the geological survey.

“It’s happening at an alarming rate because of a combination of factors like global warming, shrinking forest cover and increasing human interference. ... If the water flow keeps receding at this rate, people won’t get water for even drinking,” he warned.

These changes are affecting most of all those who relied on plentiful water for their livelihoods. Farmers in Goran, Sumbh and Nard villages in Kathua district say they have abandoned traditional crops such as paddy rice for maize and beans, which need less water as the Basantar River has become a seasonal river.

FROM SHORTAGE TO FLOOD

But water shortages are not the only consequence of changing weather patterns. During the wet season, extremely heavy rainfall frequently causes the region’s rivers to flood, eroding agricultural land and damaging standing crops.

Jassore village, situated on the left bank of Tawi in Jammu district, loses large tracts of farmland to flash floods every year. About 20 families in the village have been displaced, but district officials say that building embankments along the river to protect the land would be too expensive.

“My house is barely at a distance of 20 feet from the river and I fear it will get washed away in the flash flood any time soon,” said a worried villager, Sham Lal.

Livestock, as well as crops, are threatened. “While we were crossing the Tawi, my 18 buffaloes and two cows were washed away in a flash flood,” said Mohammad Shafi, a milkman of Katiyal Kalai village in Jammu district, recounting an incident three years ago. “I had a narrow escape.”

Rangers on the Pakistani side of the river eventually returned most of the livestock, which managed to swim to the other side, but two buffalo were killed, Shafi said.

People crossing the Tawi River or working along it similarly have been washed away by flash floods, villagers in the area report.

WHAT IS DRIVING CHANGE?

The main reasons for the flash floods are the loss of forests and other green cover in the river’s catchment, combined with quarrying and sand mining in riverbeds, according to Bushan Parimoo, president of the Environment Awareness Forum, a nongovernmental organisation that is leading a “Save Tawi” campaign.

“Due to loss of greenery, the soil can’t retain the rain water. A large number of traditional ponds and wetlands have been encroached upon,” Parimoo said. “Consequently, most of the rain water flows into the rivers, triggering flash floods.”

Parimoo called for a range of responses, including intensive forest planting, a ban on extensive excavation of the riverbed, the revival of ponds and wetlands and construction of barrages. “Otherwise there is no hope,” he said.

Jammu has a limited network of irrigation canals, but the depletion of its rivers is causing the most distant canals to dry up every summer, posing a threat to agriculture. Sushil Aima, chief engineer for

irrigation and flood control in Jammu, said that his department is responding by constructing check dams and barrages for water storage as well as reviving traditional ponds to recharge groundwater.

Besides losing their water, rivers are also experiencing environmental deterioration from the dumping of untreated municipal and industrial waste.

Yash Paul, a scientist at Jammu and Kashmir State Pollution Control Board said that growing urban areas and great industrialisation are leading to more pollution in large stretches of rivers such as the Devika in Udhampur district.

“The river has become polluted to the extent that one can’t even take a bath in it,” he said. “If water flow keeps receding in the rivers and the pollution level keeps increasing, as is happening now, it’s going to have serious impact on human beings, livestock and crops.”

ENOUGH DRINKING WATER?

An acute shortage of drinking water in the region has led to demonstrations by protesters during the past few summers. The state government now is setting up several water treatment plants on rivers in the area to meet demand for drinking water and has started an awareness campaign. It is also encouraging the formation of village sanitation committees to revive traditional ponds and other water bodies to try to restore groundwater levels.

Suresh Chugh, director of the state’s Department of Ecology, Environment and Remote Sensing, said in an interview that at least 10 state government departments were working together to develop and implement a climate change action plan for the state, including reviving the local Himalayan ecosystem to boost water security.

“Jammu and Kashmir has been categorized as one of the most vulnerable states in the country,” Chugh said. “Since (we are) a food deficit state, the depleting water resources pose greater risks.”

Officials are also working on new agricultural policies because “we are witnessing some visible changes in the cropping pattern,” he said.

Chugh said that a team of more than 100 scientists at the state’s Sher-E-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology was developing drought-resistant crops for farmers.

“As glaciers retreat in North India, rivers shrink and floods grow”, 25/02/2014, online at:

http://www.trust.org/item/20140225155301-1t9p4/?source=hptop&utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=c0b15d087a-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-c0b15d087a-250657169

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Baram Dam Blockade Enters Fifth Month

THE indigenous people of the Baram District in Sarawak have in the past four months successfully blocked the construction of Baram Dam in their areas.

"We have earlier driven out the construction workers of the dam and ordered them to move out their heavy machinery when we started our blockade on Oct 23 last year," a group opposing the dam, Damn the Dams said.

In a statement Feb 23, they said the blockade had been conducted in a peaceful manner.

"We are determined to protect our homeland from being destroyed by the proposed Baram Dam," they said.

They said to achieve their objective they have built a new village at KM15 to serve as a permanent base to carry out daily surveillance against intrusion by Sarawak Energy Board (SEB), a company owned by the Sarawak state government under the rule of the Chief Minister.

The new village had been named Kampong Operasi Selamatkan Baram.

The group said more and more villagers were coming forward to volunteer at the new village.

"We fell trees to build permanent structures with zinc roof; constructed sanitary and bathroom facilities; installed lighting and telecommunication facilities and enlarged the kitchen to cater for the increasing number of volunteers and supporters," they said.

The group viewed the proposed Baram Dam as a form of cultural genocide as 20,000 Orang Ulu would be affected when their land, together with their culture, would be submerged under water.

"The project will also pose an economic concern at the national level as cost run-overs are expected to occur like the Bakun Dam," they said.

On a global scale, they said the destruction of large swaths of tropical forest with the loss of biodiversity would be an environmental disaster.

"Baram Dam Blockade Enters Fifth Month", 25/02/2014, online at: <http://malysiandigest.com/frontpage/29-4-tile/489916-baram-dam-blockade-enters-fifth-month.html>

BACK TO TOP

❖ China Mekong Dam Project Generates Growing Controversy

China has the greatest number of dams in the world, though its plan to construct a dam on the cross-border Mekong River is increasingly creating controversy. In 2011, the government in Burma, also known as Myanmar, halted the two countries' joint Myitsone dam project after protests at home. U.S.-based experts think more transparency from China can help ease the disputes.

China not only has built the world's largest hydroelectric dam - the Three Gorges Dam -- it also has the greatest number of dams in the world. Besides building dams in China, Chinese businesses are a top builder of dams abroad.

Chinese banks and companies have helped to build hundreds of dams in dozens of countries, particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia, according to figures from the group International Rivers.

Methodology questioned

Richard Cronin, the director of the Southeast Asia Program at the Stimson Center, specializes in researching hydroelectric dams on the transnational Mekong River.

"Chinese companies are involved in four, possibly five, of the 11 mainstream dams, as well as lots of dams on tributaries," said Cronin. "So, China's role is a big factor in all infrastructure development, particularly in Laos and Cambodia. But it is also a particularly big factor in the development of these dams."

The methods being used to build the dams are increasingly coming under attack, however, because of the projects' environmental and social impacts. And China's plan to build a dam on the Mekong is causing particular concern.

Darrin Magee, an associate professor of environmental studies at Hobart and William Smith College, said, "I think one reason for the controversy is a lack of clear data. A clear understanding of how much these dams are going to impact flows downstream. Flows of water and flows of silt, basically."

Lack of transparency cited

The Stimson Center's Richard Cronin said China has no transparency because it does not disclose hydrology data, information Beijing views as a state secret. To further complicate matters, Cronin said government departments lack coordination and each dam is regarded as an independent project.

The most well-known Chinese-built dam in Southeast Asia is the Myitsone dam in Burma. Located on the Irrawaddy River, the \$3.6 billion dam is a joint venture between the China Power Investment Corporation, Burma's Ministry of Electric Power, and a private company. Burmese President Thein Sein suspended the project in 2011, however, after domestic protests.

At a panel discussion, Sun Yun, a fellow at the Stimson Center, said the Myitsone dam project is a classic example of Chinese policy-making by participants who have different interests.

“China's central government, which is Beijing, local government, which is Yunnan province, and the business interests, China Power and Investment, prioritize different things,” she said.

She said Beijing hoped to maintain good relations with Burma, while the Yunnan provincial government wanted to use the project to become an energy hub for China's southwest. As for the China's Power and Investment Corporation, their main consideration was profit.

“China Mekong Dam Project Generates Growing Controversy”, 26/02/2014, online at:
<http://www.voanews.com/content/china-mekong-dam-project-generates-growing-controversy/1859964.html>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Peter Gleick and Pacific Institute emphasize water conservation

OAKLAND -- Nearly three decades ago, when Peter Gleick started the Pacific Institute to work on water and other environmental issues, California was in the grip of a fierce drought.

Today, things don't look much different. The state is parched, the reservoirs low, and Gleick finds himself in the familiar position of pushing decision makers to adopt new water policies and alerting the public to just how dire the water shortage is -- and how much worse it will get.

"In California, we have a belief that we'll muddle through" the droughts, he said. "And we do muddle through, but it's getting more and more difficult."

It's a slow and often heated battle Gleick, an internationally recognized expert on climate and water issues, has chosen to fight since founding the Oakland-based environmental research center in 1987. The politics around climate change are often combative; water management can be difficult and expensive, and many Californians are quick to resume their lawn watering and long showers during the wet years.

"Peter really is a standout voice for some basic common sense," said Gavin Schmidt, a New York-based climate scientist for the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies. "Peter understands not just the water utilization issue, but climate change's impact on water."

This year, water is center stage in California, as the drought now entering its third year has left farms to wither and put at least 17 communities in danger of running dry. But Gleick's 30 years of effort are starting to bear fruit, according to some climate scientists. These days, California is focused on conserving and recycling water, rather than carving out new reservoirs.

"Peter and his organization were talking about this well before it was fashionable, and they broadened the discussion away from old-style solutions like building more dams," said Michael Mann, a professor of meteorology at Penn State University whose work was influenced by Gleick.

But Gleick, 57, got tripped up in heated climate politics in 2012 when he admitted to using a fake name to obtain internal documents from the libertarian Heartland Institute, an anti-regulation group that works to minimize or refute global warming. He took a four-month leave of absence and was reinstated after the Pacific Institute cleared him of wrongdoing. The incident gained national

attention, and Gleick was forced to resign from the chairmanship of the American Geophysical Union's ethics committee.

The Heartland Institute continues to push for criminal charges.

Gleick proved he "has no moral qualms about committing serious crimes to advance an ideological agenda," said Heartland spokesman Jim Lakely. No one "should take seriously anything he has to say about the climate. To the extent he's shaped public opinion, he's actually decreased the public's understanding of the climate."

Gleick is not remorseful: "The science of climate change is incredibly strong," he said. "There is a remaining small group of deniers who try to misuse the science but I think are really afraid of the policy debate about what to do about climate change. Like the tobacco industry, I think history will show them for what they are."

Despite claiming an aversion to domestic politics, Gleick has very much been a part of the political scene, meeting with state and White House officials to discuss water management practices. He wrote a report in 2003 on urban water use that helped shape the California Water Plan in 2005.

Among Gleick's recommendations for better water management: improved ground water management, stricter water restrictions, improving inefficient agriculture and industry water systems, charging consumers more on their monthly water bill, and replacing manicured lawns with native plants and home appliances with water-saving models -- both of which he and his wife have done at their Berkeley home.

"His work certainly affected California water planning," said Gary Wolff, executive director of StopWaste, the Alameda County waste and water management division, who worked at the Pacific Institute from 2000 to 2005. "But federal policies have been so backwards I can't really say it affected national policy that much."

In 2000, Gleick helped write the national assessment on climate change, and a couple of years ago, he published a book outlining proposals for federal water policy reform. Still, few of his recommendations have been considered, he says.

Although the U.S. House of Representatives this month passed a relief package for California, Gleick isn't convinced water is a priority.

"At the federal level, water is not yet a crisis," he said. But, he cautions, the fight for water is really the fight for life.

"It's tied to energy and climate and health and economics and politics and natural resources," he said.

"In the end, it's really tied to everything. "

"Peter Gleick and Pacific Institute emphasize water conservation", 24/02/2014, online at:

http://www.mercurynews.com/business/ci_25218738/peter-gleick-and-pacific-institute-emphasize-water-conservation

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Water wars with U.S. will become bigger issue than Keystone, Canadian ambassador says**

WASHINGTON — Canada must prepare for diplomatic water wars with the U.S., as demand on both sides of the border grows for this vital but ultimately limited resource, says Gary Doer, Canadian ambassador to the United States.

In an interview that explored a wide range of issues from the Keystone XL pipeline to Iran, Doer predicted that water diplomacy would make the debate about pipelines “look silly.”

“I think five years from now we will be spending diplomatically a lot of our time and a lot of our work dealing with water,” he said. “There will be pressure on water quality and water quantity.”

Here is an edited version of the interview:

Question: Despite Canada’s huge investment of diplomatic capital in Keystone XL, the pipeline appears to be back at square one after last week’s Nebraska court decision. To what do you attribute this failure?

Answer: First of all I don’t conclude that it’s going to fail ... We’ve had court cases at local levels before that have been overturned on appeal in a higher court in different states, for example in Texas and Oklahoma ... So we can speculate all we want but, just in terms of the law, was it a positive development for the pipeline with the ruling a couple of days ago? No. But is it the first ruling against this by a local judge, which we have resolved? No.

Q: Has the whole debate over Keystone had a positive or negative impact on U.S.-Canada relations?

A: I think it will depend on how it turns out. If at the end of the day you have a state department report that says it’s higher GHGs (greenhouse gas) on rail than pipelines and that doesn’t produce a “yes” to the Keystone pipeline, that will be a negative.

Q: Given what has happened in Nebraska, has it changed your strategy at all?

A: We think at the end of the day that rail versus this pipeline is the choice that the president has to make. We think at the end of the day it's hardhats versus Hollywood celebrities, and there are lots of Hollywood celebrities around, and we think at the end of the day it's Venezuela or Canada and North Dakota and Montana. So we are going to keep those choices pretty clear.

Q: To what extent are Canadian agencies sharing information usually deemed private about Canadians with the Americans?

A: We've got a co-operative beyond-the-border plan now with the U.S. that formalizes the rights of privacy for citizens on both sides of the border. Both the United States and Canada have a constitution to protect and balance the privacy rights of people but it is balanced against risk and I know that the way in which information is shared is to try to prevent any incidents of loss of life or loss of limb based on potential terrorist attacks. So that is the balance we try to achieve.

There will always be disagreements about where that balance is, but I think having a formal plan is better for citizens on both sides of that equation ... I think it is better than just an ad hoc sharing of information with kind of a nudge, nudge, wink, wink ... Canadians should know that Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and the U.K. try to provide information to keep our citizens safe.

Q: Does safety include the sharing of banking and tax information? (Note: Reference is to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act, signed into law by U.S. President Obama in 2010.)

A: The overreach of Dodd Frank into sovereign banks and sovereign banking information concerned us greatly ... Some parts of it we are still very concerned about in terms of its impact on the sovereign, safe, prudent financial institutions of Canada ... (We are) dealing with a bill which has in its explicit nature a lot of overreach into the sovereign rights of Canadian citizens.

Q: There is a view that Prime Minister Stephen Harper isn't supportive enough of the nuclear talks with Iran. How has this affected diplomatic relations?

A: Being skeptical about Iran and being fully engaged with sanctions on Iran is very consistent with the feelings in this town. Everybody wants it to work, but everybody is skeptical about Iran. We are

skeptical about Iran. So is the White House and so is the Hill. I don't think it's trust and verify. I think it's verify, verify.

Q: Why has the U.S. ambassador not shown up in Canada yet? (The Senate has yet to confirm Obama's nominee, fundraiser Bruce Heyman.)

A: Well there are 60 ambassadors held up ... There's a lot of politics going on by anybody who is perceived by the Republicans to be part of the fundraising efforts of the president. It's unfortunate.

Q: How do you think the legalization of marijuana in a growing number of U.S. states will impact Canada and cross-border drug smuggling?

A: About 50 per cent on marijuana goes either way ... I don't think what's happening here will have an impact on that reality.

Q: Does Canada welcome this legalization?

A: I'm not going to speak for Canada. I'm just going to say right now at the border it is illegal both ways.

Q: Harper and Obama are really ideological opposites. How does that affect their relationship?

A: They are actually both very experienced politicians and respect each other's political skills and each other's political role of representing their own constituents ... If they disagree, these two leaders are not cupcakes. They are pretty skilled, tough political leaders ... Nobody gets offended if somebody represents their own constituents in a legitimate and forceful way ... if you didn't do it, you would actually be disrespected.

Q: In five years, what issues will dominate U.S.-Canada relations that we haven't seen before?

A: I think five years from now we will be spending a lot of our time diplomatically and a lot of our work on dealing with water.

We have 20 per cent of the fresh water (in the world) in the Great Lakes. We share three oceans. We have the Passamaquoddy dispute (Canada opposes [liquefied natural gas](#) tankers transiting Canadian waters in Head Harbour Passage in New Brunswick.) We have the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence Seaway, Lake of the Woods. We have the Missouri River diversion. We have the Flathead River. We've got the Columbia River Treaty ...

We're blessed with a lot of water, but we cannot take it for granted. We have to manage it more effectively and that means waterflows south to north and north to south ... There will be pressure on water quality and water quantity. I think it will make a debate about going from 85 to 86 pipelines look silly.”

“Water wars with U.S. will become bigger issue than Keystone, Canadian ambassador says”, 25/02/2014, online at:
<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/entertainment/Water+wars+with+will+become+bigger+issue+than+Keystone+Canada/n/9545643/story.html>

BACK TO TOP

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