



ORSAM WATER BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin by ORSAM Water Research Programme

Events-News-Politics-Projects-Environment-ClimateChange-Neighbourhoods-Cooperation-Disputes-Scarcity and more



ORSAM WATER BULLETIN
25 July 2011 - 31 July 2011

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❖ ORSAM Has Published A New Report Entitled “Cooperation and Conflict on the Mekong River Waters”

ORSAM published the numbered 60 report entitled, “Cooperation and Conflict on the Mekong River Waters”

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“ORSAM Has Published A New Report Entitled “Cooperation and Conflict on the Mekong River Waters””, Seyfi KILIÇ, ORSAM, online at:

<http://www.orsam.org.tr/tr/SuKaynaklari/raporgoster.aspx?ID=2356>

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❖ The Al-Wand River Issue between Iran and Iraq

The news, which are related to the Al-Wand river waters flowing from Iran to Iraq, have taken place on the Iraqi press for the last two weeks. The process of the protest, which was carried out against Iran because of the cutting off of the Al-Wand river waters, began on July 8th with the Iraqi farmers' protests of blocking the Iran-Iraq international road, and it continued with the passing blocking of the oil and gas tankers turning back to Iran.

Al-Wand river, which is a river reach of the Diyala river joining in the Tigris river within the borders of Iraq, is an important water resource for the Khanaqin and Diyala region. The Al-Wand river, which is found in the eastern Iraq, originates from Iran's Dolahu Mountains; and it is also one of the major tributary of the Diyala river. Derbendi han dam is found on the Diyala river, and the river provides the Tigris river with 5,74 billion cubic meters contribution.

The Al-Wand river, which separates the province in two by passing through the center of the Khanaqin province, has played an important role in development of agriculture of the region and in creation of the robust rural structure. Because of its aridity, the river, which is used for drinking water and agricultural purposes, caused a great damage in the province of Diyala, where the fruit production is intense. In the region, during the arid period, which lasted three years between 2007 and 2009, thousands of decare agricultural lands were damaged. At that period, on October 2009, Iran stated that she would release much water from the Al-Wand river waters. (1)

On July 2011, Iraq has accused Iran of cutting the river waters. The Iraqi parliamentarian Yusuf Ahmed also stated that the arid river damaged the agricultural sector to a great extent. (2)

Upon the fact that on July 25th 2011 dated newspapers the Iranian authorities promised they would let much water from the Al-Wand river, the further climbing of this tension resulting from Iran's occasional derivation of the river waters has come to an end for now. (3)

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“ The Al-Wand River Issue between Iran and Iraq”, Tuğba Evrim MDEN, ORSAM, 26/07/2011, online at: <http://www.orsam.org.tr/en/WaterResources/showAnalysisAgenda.aspx?ID=716>

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❖ “Climate Change, Water and Food Security” Report

Most recently, the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) published the 36 numbered report entitled, “Climate Change, Water and Food Security”.

The aforesaid report deals with the expected influences of the climate change on the management of agriculture and water, which is used for agricultural purpose; and the report also deals with the critical situation of the availability of water, which was caused by this situation. According to report, in order to provide the adequate offer and efficient usage of declining resources, adaptation is required to a large extent. In addition to this, the report also gives place to the direct influences of the climate change on the food production system, which meets the food need of the prospering world, whose population is increasing; as well as to the consequential problems.

The report, which firstly talks about the difficulties encountered by agriculture and water resources before touching on the climate change, deals with the influence of the climate change on the different regions of the world, and then it deals with the adaptation and mitigation options that were developed against these influences.

While in the final stage, which focuses especially on the developing countries in need of support, investment and cost of the development, adaptation and mitigation of the water management and irrigation are highlighted; besides national and regional concentration, international support, and the cooperation of the international institutions and partners are also included in order to adaptate the strategies.

To reach the full text of the report:

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/i2096e/i2096e00.htm>

“Climate Change, Water and Food Security” Report”, Tuğba Evrim MADEN, ORSAM, 29/07/2011, online at: <http://www.orsam.org.tr/en/WaterResources/showAnalysisAgenda.aspx?ID=717>

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❖ Iraq's marshlands: Resurrecting Eden

It turns out Saddam Hussein did possess a weapon of mass destruction and he used it in a slaughter that few people have heard of until now. After the Gulf War in 1991, Saddam spent untold millions on a weapon designed to exterminate an ancient civilization called the Ma'dan, also known as the "Marsh Arabs." They lived in Iraq between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, where many biblical scholars place the Garden of Eden.

But if this was the place where man fell from grace, Saddam showed just how far man can fall. In a spectacular feat of engineering he used water in a strike against his own people that not even an atom bomb could match.

Back in 2009, "60 Minutes" and correspondent Scott Pelley journeyed there with an American engineer who's resurrecting this magical land that was turned to dust by Saddam's secret weapon.

"We're now officially inside the marsh. And you can see the reeds getting denser and denser, taller and taller," Azzam Alwash told Pelley, as they were heading by boat deeper into the marshland.

Alwash grew up in the water world that the Greeks named Mesopotamia, the "land between two rivers."

"I gotta tell you, this is not like any part of Iraq I've ever seen before," Pelley noted, as they boated past thick, lush and green reeds rising out of the water.

"Right? I mean, when you say Iraq, it's a desert, right? It's burning oil," Alwash said. "It's magical, is what it is. This is magic."

It has been more than 30 years since Alwash pushed through the reeds with his father, who ran the irrigation office there. In 1978, he left to study in America and became a partner in an engineering firm.

"I achieved the American dream, Scott," Alwash proudly told Pelley.

"You'd been living in the United States for 25 years. You're an American citizen. You married an American woman. Your children are as American as they can be," Pelley noted.

"And I'm as American as can be," Alwash pointed out.

"Why did you imagine going back to Iraq after the life you had built?" Pelley asked.

"I realized at some point in time that money and success and the American dream is not everything. Working on passion, on something that drives you is everything," Alwash said.

His passion is a world where Mother Nature meets Father Time: it's the cradle of civilization outlined by the Tigris and Euphrates, the likely birthplace of agriculture, the written word and the wheel.

But once the ancients set civilization on its course, the Ma'dan stayed behind.

Their villages are primitive. They weave a life out of the reeds of the marsh. They bind them into homes, feed them to their water buffalo and burn them to bake their bread.

There's not much in the way of electricity, education or health care.

But elders, like Sahi Salay, told Pelley they did just fine until 1991, when they suffered their own kind of Holocaust. That was when the U.S. and its allies invaded southern Iraq to throw Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait.

The elder President Bush urged Iraqis to overthrow their dictator.

The Ma'dan and other Shiites in the south supported an uprising to topple Hussein's regime. The marshes, known for ages as a smuggler's paradise, turned out to be a perfect place for the rebels to hide, with their endless maze of waterways.

But in 1991, when the allies withdrew, the dictator turned Eden into hell.

"The United Nations Environmental Program called it the biggest engineered environmental disaster of the last century," Alwash explained.

Hussein tried to wipe out the Marsh Arabs by destroying their world. He built six canals to divert the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates out into the desert and the Persian Gulf.

"Iraq's marshlands: Resurrecting Eden", 24/07/2011, online at:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/07/24/60minutes/main20073402.shtml>

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❖ Sectarian thinking in Iraq

Sectarian thinking prevails in Iraq

In Baghdad, on the eve of Friday's "your silence killing us" protests in Syria, the Syrian regime signed a number of agreements with the Iraqi government, editor-in-chief Tariq Alhomayed wrote in a leader in the pan-Arab newspaper Asharq al Awsat.

It is as if those agreements were signed with the blood of Syrian victims, who are facing continuous repression, said the writer.

The move by Iraq's prime minister, Nouri Al Maliki, to stand by president Bashar Al Assad at this time is a show of disrespect to all Syrians. It also denotes that Mr Al Maliki has publicly joined the list of "prominent" friends of the Syrian regime: Hizbollah and Iran.

"Defending Iraqi interests at all levels does not require supporting Al Assad. On the contrary, Baghdad is supposed to spearhead the democratic process in the region, since this is the claim of the Americans and of the current Iraqi government."

Iraq today has a sectarian system of government. By supporting the Syrian regime, Iraq acted purely on factional grounds so as to be in line with Damascus's other allies in the region, mainly Hizbollah and Tehran.

By signing cooperation treaties with Damascus, Mr Al Maliki is also ignoring calls from the Syrian people to stand by them in their time of distress. This shows how interests based on sectarian considerations can outweigh principles of freedom, human dignity and democracy.

Arabs must cooperate with South Sudan

Israel did not take part physically in the celebrations of the new state of South Sudan, but Tel Aviv's presence in different forms has deep implications, the Emirati newspaper Al Bayan said in its editorial.

Israel's secret activity was seen in the recent announcement of official relations between Juba and Tel Aviv, and Israeli pledges of financial and technical aid.

Strategically, the newly established state holds promise for Israel amid the rapid changes in the Arab region. Israel could seek to use Nile water as a new pressure card against Cairo, to strip Egypt of political free will.

Israel may also use the example of South Sudan against the Palestinian Authority's intention to unilaterally declare an independent Palestinian state. Israelis may say mutual agreement of stakeholders is necessary before a new state can be declared.

Apparently Israeli politicians remain loyal to former leader David Ben-Gurion, who called for besieging Arabs through their surrounding countries. This is what Tel Aviv has done by consolidating its relations with the southern Sudanese. We, Arabs, were to blame, however, for being less politically active in the threatened areas.

Accordingly, we need to deal with this realistically. Mostly, we need to accept this new state and provide all forms of support to it so as not to attract those seeking to benefit from the vacuum left by us."

National unity will empower Palestinians

It is no longer possible to put pressure on the PA to prevent it from asking the United Nations for international recognition of a Palestinian state based on the borders of June 1967, argued Mazen Hammad in a commentary for the Qatari newspaper Al Watan.

It is also impossible, he added, to put pressure on the PA under the pretext that negotiations are the only way to settle the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. "In fact, 20 years of staggered talks have shown that the Israelis are less serious about peace. Throughout those years, Israel has used negotiations as a means to buy more time to steal more land."

For these reasons, the PA should proceed with its plan. Now, 122 countries out of the 193 UN member states have reportedly agreed on the project to recognise the Palestinian state. Many of the others will do so in due course.

The PA should also stand firm no matter what, even in the face of increasing warnings from the US about cutting off aid.

If the UN acknowledges statehood, Palestinians will be empowered to engage in serious negotiations under international auspices. This will make the two-state solution practical.

Yet, to strengthen the Palestinian stance ahead of the UN General Assembly in September, both Hamas and Fatah must overcome their differences to ensure national unity and to focus on the statehood challenge.

Mubarak's trial will change Egypt's status

When the trial of former president Hosni Mubarak opens on Wednesday, Egypt will enter a new phase in its history, the Egyptian daily Al Ahram said editorially.

This is a period historians may wish to call the "era of the president's trial", like the "era of pyramid builders" or the "era of dynasties".

"More than that, [the trial means] Egypt will be a leading Arab country, where a ruler can step down from his ivory tower, going from being a tyrant Pharaoh to an ordinary citizen ... and be condemned if evidence show he has broken the rules."

As well as being a symbol of the success of the revolution last January, Mr Mubarak's trial will put Egypt among the countries which draw their strength from the rules of law.

"This will have positive effects on the flow of investments, but also and most importantly, it means Egyptians will at long last breath fine, clean air.

"After all, the trial is likely to be the focus of the attention of the world for months to come.

Accordingly, Egyptians should show the world that they are not prosecuting the ousted president out of a sense of revenge or vengeance. Rather, it should be for truth and justice, no more, no less."

"Sectarian thinking in Iraq", Arabic News Digest , 31/07/2011, online at:

<http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/sectarian-thinking-in-iraq>

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❖ Can water end the Arab-Israeli conflict?

Could solving the water crisis in Israel and Palestine also help resolve the entrenched occupation and conflict?

Around three weeks ago on a late Tuesday morning, Israeli soldiers armed with a truck and a digger entered the Palestinian village of Amniyr and [destroyed nine water tanks](#). One week later, Israeli forces demolished water wells and water pumps in the villages of [Al-Nasaryah, Al-Akrabanyah and Beit Hassan](#) in the Jordan Valley. In Bethlehem, a severe water shortage have [led to riots in refugee camps](#) and forced hoteliers to pay over the odds for water just to stop tourists from leaving.

Palestinians insist that the Israeli occupation means that they are consistently denied their water rights which is why they have to live on [50 litres of water a day](#) while Israeli settlers enjoy the luxury of [280 litres](#). Clearly, water is at the heart of the Israel-Palestine conflict, but commentators are now insisting that shared water problems could help motivate joint action and better co-operation between both sides, which could in turn help end the conflict.

"It's a shame that water is being used as a form of collective punishment when it could be used to build trust and to help each side recognise that the other is a human being with water rights," says Nader Al-Khateeb, the Palestinian director of the environmental NGO [Friends of the Earth Middle East](#) (FoEME).

"We should be using water as a tool for peace and to bridge the gap of confidence in the region - not to create a water crisis," he adds. As part of his work with FoEME - which also operates in Israel and Jordan - Al-Khateeb says he has already witnessed the success of co-operative water projects. Over the past ten years, the FoEME ["Good Water Neighbors"](#) initiative has brought together 29 cross-border communities to encourage them to work together to resolve shared water problems.

According to Gidon Bromberg, the Israeli director of FoEME, the project has managed to leverage around \$120 million in investments to help build sewerage plants and replace old and leaky water pipes. Most of this aid, which has come through agencies such as USAID, World Bank, the EU and other foreign governments, has gone to the occupied Palestinian territories. "There are mutual benefits to be had through co-operative work which identifies common interests and we've seen physical improvements on the ground. Nothing speaks louder than the investment of \$120m," said Bromberg.

Co-operative work on water issues has also been able to tackle wider political aspects of the Israeli occupation. Bromberg recalls the case of the Palestinian village of Wadi Fuqin and Israeli community of Tzur Hassadeh who [worked together to tackle water issues in 2010](#) but also came together to stop the separation wall from being built between their communities. "Till this day that wall hasn't been

built which shows that working together on water can build real trust between individuals and presents a model where everyone benefits."

International backing

It's not just locally based environmental groups that think that water may be the solution to the Middle East's problems. This year a report titled "[Blue Peace: Rethinking Middle East Water](#)" was released by the Strategic Foresight Group and concluded that water could be a useful "instrument of peace and co-operation" in the region. Funded by Swiss and Swedish governments, the report promoted the concept of a "Blue Peace" which states that, if countries work together to protect water and the environment, this could secure peace in their own countries as well as the region.

Ambika Vishwanath, the principal researcher of the report says that we must move on from the focus on land in the Israel-Palestine conflict. "History shows that using land as a means to achieve peace and co-operation has not worked and therefore it's only prudent that we try to achieve the same through water. New avenues are worth attempting ... if not the problem is only likely to worsen."

While the arguments for increased co-operation between Israeli and Palestinian communities when it comes to water are compelling, they do sideline the fact that it is the Palestinians that disproportionately suffer due to deliberate Israeli government policies. Cara Flowers, part of the [Emergency Water, Sanitation and Hygiene \(EWASH\) Advocacy Task Force](#) in the West Bank said: "Don't get me wrong, there are great projects doing some really important work - but what can small organisations achieve without government support? I think that we're very limited without a large shift in government policy and I think that's what we should be working towards and focusing less on communities who have limited ability to change the circumstances."

Under the Oslo agreement, Israel did recognise the water rights of Palestinians, but this failed to translate into fair policies. Today, Israel [over-extracts water from underground aquifers](#) located in the West Bank for its own citizens and also [sells back some of the water to water-short Palestinians](#) at a high price. Water development projects in Palestine face cumbersome Israeli bureaucratic restrictions and delays which mean that more than [200,000 Palestinians in the West Bank remain unconnected to a water network](#) and [95 per cent of water in Gaza is unfit for human consumption](#) due to high levels of pollution.

This systematic denial of water rights by Israel also hinders the Palestinian economy. According to a [2009 report by the World Bank](#), the cost to the economy of foregone opportunities in irrigated agriculture due to water shortages was as high as ten per cent of GDP and 110,000 jobs. Indeed, water remains one of the five issues up for debate to reach a final peace agreement alongside the status of Jerusalem, refugees, borders and the Israeli settlements.

Problem can't wait for change in government policy

Despite these Israeli policies, Bromberg and Al-Khateeb of FoEME insist that joint water community projects can't wait for a radical shift in government policy - which, they add, is unlikely under the current right-wing Netanyahu-led coalition. "One of the most frustrating aspects of our work is to see the lack of political leadership at all levels," says Bromberg. "It's something we all have to deal with in the Middle East. Governments here don't lead, they have to be led and civil society plays a crucial role in how that happens.

"Community action is the way to create the political will because it embarrasses the government, it raises questions about why they are not doing enough and acting in the interests of their own community."

Bromberg points out that both Palestinians and Israelis are suffering under the current water arrangements as the lack of waste-water infrastructure in the Palestinian territories means that Israelis have to deal with Palestinian sewage discharge. "The environment can't wait for a final peace agreement," he remarks.

Maybe not, but joint community action alone cannot change the Palestinian water dependency on Israel either says Amjad Aliewi, a Palestinian water expert at the [Ramallah-based NGO House of Water and Environment](#). Aliewi insists that water will bring people together and encourage peace only if the Israeli government is willing to talk about Palestinian water rights and grants them full control over their own resources. "I mean, once we have that independence, if we want to construct joint projects and pipes then that it is fine - but we don't want to solve the problem in a way that there is a pipeline and Israel controls the tap. That is not a solution."

For Aliewi, Palestinian water independence must come first, as, without it, any co-operation is problematic. When I ask Aliewi if he thinks that Israel is over-extracting water from Palestinian sources because it needs the water or for political and economic reasons he replies that if Israel really needed the water it wouldn't allow Israeli settlers to dump their sewage on Palestinian land and pollute shared water sources. "This is an act of occupation and it needs to end," he adds.

The disparity of the water situation in Palestine is nowhere more apparent than in the illegal Israeli settlements of the West Bank - where settlers enjoy water on tap whilst Palestinians struggle to pay for water from tanks. Israeli settlers, however, fail to see a problem with the water situation.

Israeli's deny water crisis

David Ha'ivri, leader of the [Jewish communities of Shomron](#) which covers the northern West Bank, said he suspected that any notions of water disparity between Palestinians and Israelis were "misinformation spread by those interested in giving a twisted impression of the actual facts". He pointed to a water park in a Palestinian town north of Tubas as evidence of the lack of water shortages in the West Bank, and said that Arabs needed to make the most of Israeli water

infrastructure developments. Ha'ivri did however state that more mutual work to preserve water between Arabs and Israelis would be wise. Both Mekorot, Israel's national water company, and the Israeli Water Authority were contacted but were unavailable for comment.

Whether community projects, political lobbying or a focus on Palestinian water independence is the way forward, it is clear that action is needed to rectify the scale of the water inequality between Israel and Palestine. As Bromberg states: "Peace won't just fall upon us, we all need to be working towards creating a lasting, just and fair agreement on water."

“Can water end the Arab-Israeli conflict?”, Arwa Aburawa, 29/07/2011, online at:
<http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/features/2011/07/20117278519784574.html>

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❖ Holy Land: water company stops supply to Palestinian farmers

The Mekerot Water Company continues to disrupt the flow of water to Palestinian farms in the Baqa'a Valley. The Christian Peacemaker Team was called again on 20 July to document further damage to crops when the water company ripped out plastic irrigation pipes charging that Palestinians are stealing water.

Seleh Jaber, a 67-year-old farmer, told CPT: "Mekerot also cut strings that support beans and cut pipes in violation of Geneva Law." Mekerot has destroyed cisterns and wells on Jabber property filling them with rocks, and has issued orders for the demolition of all wells in the valley.

Jaber said that the interruption of water to crops damages the Palestinian economy. He also said that each farmer in Baqa'a has 10-15 children. "They damage families."

Hassan Jaber, a family member whose new house is under construction after his previous home was demolished by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), said: "Young men are beaten with sticks and clubs when they are in the fields and Mekerot arrives to destroy irrigation equipment." Selah Jaber estimates that over 80 men, women, and children were affected by Mekerot's pipe cutting venture on July 20.

Shaddad Attali, the head of the Palestinian Water Authority, writing in the Jerusalem Post, June 2011, has listed numerous examples of Israel's water stranglehold, such as denying permits for water exploration and destroying cisterns. He concluded that until "these policies are reversed, solutions for water will remain elusive".

The water situation exists for Palestinians despite the fact that the three principle underground aquifers of Palestine, are found largely in the West Bank.

The aquifers are:

Yarkon-Tanninim Aquifer. This supplies Israel with about 340 million cubic metres of water annually, which are used by the Jerusalem-Tel-Aviv area. Palestinians use about 20 million cubic metres a year.

Nablus-Gilboa Aquifer. This supplies Israel with about 115 million cubic meters a year, largely for agricultural irrigation in the kibbutzim (communes) and moshavim (cooperative settlements) in Galilee.

The Eastern Aquifer. This supplies about 40 million cubic metres annually to the Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley, and about 60 million cubic metres to the Palestinians.

Israeli planners consider that the Yarkon-Taninim Aquifer is vital to Israeli water needs, and therefore would like to retain control of settlement blocks over that area, adjacent to the so called 'centre' of Israel, the Gush Dan area. It should be noted that Israel's water supply always came from these Aquifers, both during mandate times and when the land was held by Jordan.

Seleh Jaber said: “The people of Baqa’a live in constant fear that their crops and way of life will be destroyed.” They are constantly seeking ways, in and out of the legal system to plant and harvest beans, melons, tomatoes, and peppers as their families have done in Baqa’a for over 400 years.”

“Holy Land: water company stops supply to Palestinian farmers” , James R Thomas, CPT Hebron, 30/07/2011, online at: <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=18695>

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❖ **Palestinians fear for ancient water source in West Bank**

RASHAYIDA, West Bank: Hewn from rock, the cavernous cisterns which dot the desert beyond Bethlehem have for centuries harvested winter rain to provide shepherds and their flocks with water through summer.

Under a baking sun, an elderly Bedouin explains how cisterns he remembers from childhood, many of them restored to full working order in the last few years, are once again helping his goat-herding community to survive.

That, he concludes, is why the Israeli authorities who control the West Bank have demolished at least three in the area since November.

“Maybe they are doing this to make us leave. We will not leave,” said Falah Hedawa, 64, sitting on cushions in his tent home pitched in the hills that slope down to the Dead Sea.

Out into the desert, a stagnant pool marked the spot where one of the cisterns, chiselled out of a hillside, had stood until its recent demolition. A mud trail on the otherwise dry ground indicated where the water inside had drained away toward a wadi, a valley which becomes a river when the rain falls. Israel has demolished 20 rainwater collection cisterns in the West Bank in the first half of this year, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which monitors conditions in the Palestinian territories.

Their razing is part of a marked acceleration in demolitions of Palestinian structures in “Area C” — the 60 percent of the West Bank where Israel exercises total control.

Defined by interim peace agreements concluded between Israel and the Palestinians in the 1990s, Area C is where all of Israel’s West Bank settlements are located.

In the first half of 2011, more Palestinians lost their homes in Area C than in the whole of 2009 or 2010, OCHA says. Many of them were Bedouin. A total of 342 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in the area so far this year.

Typically, demolitions are carried out on the grounds that the structures, some of them as simple as tents, have been put up without Israeli permission — something Palestinians say is almost impossible to obtain.

As for the cisterns, the Israeli civil administration for the West Bank says that in at least two cases, probably more, it took action because they were located in military training zones where live fire could pose a danger to people using them.

That, Palestinians say, is just an excuse, part of a system of Israeli restrictions designed to curb their development while allowing the settlements to grow.

The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) behind the cistern rehabilitation project are deeply concerned: the Bedouin, who number around 27,500 in Area C, are some of the poorest of all Palestinians.

Rehabilitated, the cisterns have been providing them with a free water resource, easing their reliance on expensive tankered water that they have to tow to their encampments by tractor.

By reviving old cisterns, the project leaders hoped they could sidestep tight restrictions on the construction of new water infrastructure — a factor which the Palestinian Authority says has exacerbated water shortages across the West Bank.

“These cisterns are licensed by history,” said Nadi Farraj, a Palestinian agricultural expert who has helped to rehabilitate around 140 old cisterns in the last four years.

The Bedouin talk of cisterns dating back to the Nabatean era, some 2,000 years ago. During their rehabilitation, workers drawn from the Bedouin communities have uncovered artifacts including Ottoman-era military helmets.

At one remote desert site, amid stone structures believed to be the remnants of an early Christian church, workers found parts of ancient mosaic floors while rehabilitating two cisterns where goats are today taken to drink.

“It’s clear they have been here a long time — from the days of our ancestors at least,” said Ibrahim Moussa, sitting in the shade underneath a rock outcrop as he watched over his herd.

Photographs taken during restoration work reveal cavernous spaces, buttressed by supporting columns and archways. Not all the cisterns are underground. Some consist of pools dug at the end of wadis to trap the rainwater flows.

Reaching the remote sites is often the hardest part of the work, Farraj says.

Once there, workers must remove sediment, waterproof the walls with plaster and then rebuild collection channels that funnel the rainwater into the cistern.

In the desert outside the town of Zaatara, one cistern bears a Christian symbol which shows that it predates the 7th century spread of Islam from the Arabian peninsula, said Ahmad Abou Rabada, a local notable. The cistern is one of two where Israel ordered a halt to restoration work in June on the

grounds the area was within a firing zone. Abou Rabada said firing had not been heard there for years.

“They have presented many excuses,” he said.

He fears it is now only a matter of time before the civil administration demolishes the cistern. The demolitions have drawn UN condemnation. DanChurchAid, a Danish NGO that has financed the project, says five of the cisterns it has worked on have been demolished this year, three by Israeli forces and two by Jewish settlers.

“I find it extremely concerning. The whole Horn of Africa and the Middle East are facing major droughts this year,” said Mads Lindegarde, regional representative of DanChurchAid, part of an NGO coalition that has formed The Emergency Water Sanitation and Hygiene group in the Palestinian territories.

“To destroy ancient water cisterns and water resources in general is madness, but particularly in a situation where people are suffering from an extreme lack of water,” he said.

The demolitions are compounding a water crisis across the West Bank, said Shadad Attili, head of the Palestinian Water Authority.

“I have a water crisis everywhere, especially in the area classified as Area C,” he said. “I fail in providing water to those people. Supposing I have a water source, I have to get approval to lay a pipe, but I don’t, so these people are relying on the cisterns,” he said.

“What message are they sending? ‘Leave this land’ — this is the only message they are sending,” he said. Though Israel denies seeking to displace the Bedouin by such methods, it does have a plan for resettling them in built communities.

“They will get land for free, electricity, water, which will probably improve their situation,” a spokesman for the Israeli civil administration said. “They can’t keep moving from place to place and land is limited.”

“This is the only solution with the Bedouin.”

“Palestinians fear for ancient water source in West Bank”, 28/07/2011, online at:
<http://arabnews.com/middleeast/article479655.ece>

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❖ EU provides €4 million to help Palestinians face drought [ENPI]

The European Commission has allocated €4 million to address water scarcity which is affecting people in the occupied Palestinian territory. Rainfall in the area is 59% down from the rainy season average and the drought is testing the resilience of many Palestinian communities with water and fodder shortages, a European Commission press release said today.

“The rainfall deficit by itself puts at risk the livelihoods of many Palestinians, for instance those who make a living by herding,” said Kristalina Georgieva, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response.

“But the drought is particularly painful when it hits people whose access to water is already very limited by the occupation in the West Bank and by the Gaza Strip blockade. While many wells and other water sources are drying out, the occupation prevents Palestinian herders and their livestock from accessing some water points which have not been as badly affected,” the Commissioner said.

The new funding will provide water for around 50,000 people and their livestock in the West Bank. Special attention will be paid to those most affected by the combination of drought and Israeli-imposed restrictions – in southern Hebron, the Northern Jordan valley and other parts of Area C (which contains the Israeli settlements, buffer zones and includes the Judean Desert and much of the Jordan Valley).

The press release described control over water sources as one of the issues at stake in the conflict between Israeli and Palestinians in the occupied territory. Israeli settlements are usually built around the main water sources, it said, substantially restricting the access of Palestinians to water.

Between 2000 and the beginning of 2011 the European Commission provided €600 million in humanitarian aid for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as for Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

“EU provides €4 million to help Palestinians face drought [ENPI]”, 13/07/2011, online at:
<http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/?p=3111>

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❖ Water regulation bill passes after political maneuver

MK slams rising water prices, says gov't agreed to subsidize more water for disabled people months ago, but has yet to act upon the decision.

Talkbacks ()

A bill allowing the Knesset Finance Committee to regulate water prices passed in its preliminary reading on Wednesday, after the coalition withdrew its opposition to the move.

The bill, initiated by Knesset Finance Committee Chairman MK Moshe Gafni (UTJ), brings back the parliamentary regulation on water prices that was removed in 2006, when a government agency was formed for that purpose. According to the new bill, the Finance Committee will have to authorize the price recommended by the water agency.

“How long can we allow this embarrassment?” Gafni asked in the plenum, in reference to rising water prices. He added that the government agreed to subsidize more water for disabled people months ago, and has yet to act upon its decision.

The bill was rejected by the Ministerial Committee for Legislation, but coalition MKs were given freedom to vote as they chose. It passed in its preliminary reading with 35 MKs in favor and none opposed, and will be prepared by the Knesset Finance Committee for further readings.

A Kadima source said the switch in the coalition's stance was made by coalition Chairman MK Ze'ev Elkin (Likud) after the largest opposition party announced it would support the bill, making it likely to pass despite the government's objections.

After the bill passed, Elkin said, “We are all sick of bureaucrats' inflexibility. If the experts who were supposed to protect all sectors of the population, including the disabled and other, weaker populations, are unable to do their job, regulation will be returned to the Knesset.”

A Likud source said that should the bill be rejected in its later readings, the government would move to increase water subsidies for weaker sectors of the population.

“Water regulation bill passes after political maneuver”, 28/07/2011, online at:
<http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/?p=3076>

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❖ Illinois governor signs Sister Lakes pact with Israel

Officials aim to create exchange for research on maintaining water quality, availability on Lake Michigan, Kinneret
Talkbacks (1)

Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn and National Infrastructures Minister Dr. Uzi Landau signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Jerusalem on Sunday establishing a “Sister Lakes” relationship between Lake Michigan and the Kinneret, to foster an educational exchange for research toward maintaining the two very critical bodies of water.

Some issues of common interest between the two leaders include maintaining water quality, preserving fisheries, eliminating harmful invasive species, curbing algal proliferation and keeping water levels high – all of which are crucial to supplying ample water to the respective populations, the officials said.

RELATED:

Polish native walks on Kinneret’s waters, sort of
Weekend Walk: Mount Arbel

In forging the partnership, Landau and Quinn said they hope to see a direct exchange of ideas and work on projects in both places. Illinois has already formed such collaborations for Sister Lakes (and Rivers) with Poland, Korea, Ireland and Japan, and will soon be establishing one in China, Quinn told The Jerusalem Post after the ceremony.

“It’s beneficial to have comparisons with other bodies around Earth,” he told the Post, pointing to Israel as a leader in sustainability.

“Israel is certainly showing the way.”

During his speech, Landau said that Israel too could benefit from the partnership, as administrating the country’s water needs “is a delicate equilibrium between our environmental needs and all of our other needs – agriculture, industry, domestic use.”

Meanwhile, however, he also expressed confidence that research being conducted in the Kinneret would help those conducting similar studies in Illinois.

“Lake Kinneret, like the rest of our country, may serve as a laboratory for lots of other problems taking place in the world,” Landau said, citing Israel’s Mediterranean climate, desert and plentiful soil as perfect microcosms for international research.

“If we simply go on with this agreement and join hands there is much to achieve,” he added.

The two lakes also have many distinctions from one another that could benefit research, according to Prof.

Barak Herut, director-general of Israel Oceanographic & Limnological Research, who led a tour of the Kinneret for Quinn and his delegation on Friday.

“The large differences between the two lakes make their comparison an attractive natural laboratory,” Herut said, noting that Lake Michigan is 350 times the size of Lake Kinneret. “This might explain why our partnership should really be called Sister Lakes, not Twin Lakes.”

Herut’s office, which is affiliated with the Earth Sciences Research Administration in the National Infrastructures Ministry, will be leading the collaboration from the Israeli side, while the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will head the American team, Herut said.

During his tour on Friday around the Kinneret, Quinn said he visited the Mount of the Beatitudes, a kibbutz and the fishing village of Capernaum, where he lunched on St. Peter’s fish that tasted “pretty good” and understood the importance of protecting fisheries.

In Lake Michigan, fisherman are currently battling a particularly invasive species, the two-meter, 50-kg. Asian Carp, which “literally as it’s coming up river and hears a motorboat, comes out of the river and knocks people off of their boat,” he explained.

To combat smaller invaders – algal blooms – Illinois has banned the use of phosphorous and fertilizers that encourage growth, the governor added.

But one way to ensure a healthy Lake Michigan and Kinneret is by fostering public support through the establishment of official “friends” groups “where people band together and work for clean water,” according to Quinn.

“We would want to work with you on a ‘Friends of the Sea of Galilee’ so that people all over earth who have read the Old and New Testament can [give their support],” he said.

Quinn’s entire trip to Israel was “totally his own initiative,” according to Michael Kotzin, executive vice president of the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago, whose group organized the governor’s visit.

“We are pleased to act as a catalyst for steps that have practical implications and also symbolize the value in bringing people together to the benefit of both Israel and Illinois,” Kotzin told the Post.

Others joining Quinn included Illinois State Senators Jeffrey Schoenberg and Ira Silverstein, and Skip Schroyer, chairman of the Jewish United Fund.

During the visit, which began on Tuesday, Quinn also met with President Shimon Peres, Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor Shalom Simhon, Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon and Ron Dermer, senior adviser to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, the governor told the Post.

The delegation visited Better Place, where Quinn told the Post he enjoyed driving an electric car. Illinois, he explained, has just approved a \$10 million budget to install electric vehicle infrastructure.

Meanwhile, on Thursday, the governor participated in a ceremony at Ben-Gurion University in which the Negev institution and the University of Illinois at Chicago signed an Agreement on Academic Cooperation for faculty and student exchange and joint research projects, also expanding existing public health partnerships, a spokeswoman from the Jewish United Fund said.

But even this partnership stems back to water, according to Quinn, who told the Post that “part of public health is clean water.” Stressing the historical importance of hydrating liquid, both Quinn and Landau cited legendary 19th-century American novelist Mark Twain during their speeches.

Referring to The Innocents Abroad, where Twain wrote about his 1868 travels, Landau spoke about how the author describes “those years when he was traveling on a mule through a desolate land.”

“He also mentioned the Lake Kinneret, but it wasn’t as flourishing as it was today – it was a place that suffered from much of the phenomena of a dry country that he came across then. If you travel across Lake Kinneret today, it’s a different story,” Landau said.

“Since the modern Jewish return to our ancient homeland, much of the attention has been focused on the environment and Lake Kinneret...all that has turned the Kinneret into a major body of drinking water in Israel.” Also quoting Twain, who lived along the Mississippi River, which borders Illinois, Quinn said, “When it came to water he was an expert – he said, ‘Whiskey’s for drinking and water’s worth fighting for.’”

“Illinois governor signs Sister Lakes pact with Israel” , Jerusalem Post, 25/07/2011, online at: <http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/?p=3065>

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❖ Water's not free anymore, and look who is smiling

Water water everywhere, not a drop to drink! Though poetic, Coleridge's words may not be far from truth. A McKinsey report titled 'Charting our Water Future' states that global water requirement would grow to 6.9 trillion metre cube in 2030 from current levels of 4,500 billion metre cube, representing a 40 percent demand-supply gap given the currently accessible water supply. No wonder there is so much of noise about water technology, especially those used to recycle and reuse waste water or desalinate sea water to increase usage possibilities.

According to the Global Market Report, 2008, the global water industry is expected to grow at a compound rate of 5 percent over FY07-16. The water utilities and industrial segments – water supply and water/waste treatment – comprise three-fourths of the \$460-billion market and could become a \$530-billion market by 2016. Of this, around 20 percent consists of water management, which is increasingly gaining focus in India and many other emerging economies so that recycled water can be used for both agricultural and industrial applications. VA Tech Wabag, with a market cap of Rs 1,360 crore, is the only pure play water infrastructure company in India which offers end-to-end solutions including conceptualisation, design, engineering, technology identification, installation and project management services, but outsources the civil work and technological equipment manufacturing.

It was a subsidiary of VA Tech Wabag (Austria), which was a part of Siemens. In 2005, the Indian promoters, along with ICICI Ventures Management Fund, bought VA Tech (India) from Siemens. In 2007, VA Tech (India), in a rare instance in corporate history, acquired its erstwhile parent VA Tech Wabag (Austria) from Siemens and became a global player in the water treatment industry. The company since its listing in October last year has given an unimpressive performance on the bourses. Moreover, Indian companies like IVRCL, Voltas, L&T and KEC International are slowly focusing more and more on this segment as these have realised its potential in coming years.

However, the great opportunities in the water segment, VA Tech's technological expertise and global presence and experience in 19 countries make it a lucrative bet. Firstpost speaks to Rajiv Mittal, managing director, VA Tech Wabag, to understand the opportunities and challenges the company faces.

Tell us about some of the projects that you are handling in India now?

In India, we are part of a Rs 1,000 crore Nemmeli desalination plant that is 70 percent complete. It is a cash project for us which is constructed through a grant Chidambaram had made for this purpose five years ago. We will build and then maintain and operate the plant. We are also doing a Rs 250-crore project for Indian Oil Corporation. It is waste water recycling and reusing plant at Paradeep which is challenging in terms of the technological expertise it demands. There are also three large

projects with the Delhi Jal Board where power will be produced from waste water so that the plant is self-sufficient for power.

With so many players entering the water business, what sets you apart other than the technological expertise?

There are two things here. First, is this technology available locally? If it is available locally, the game is merely that of pricing and margins can be under stress. But if the technology is unavailable here, the main bids will come from foreign companies, maybe in partnership with Indian companies. Here it becomes easy for us as we are very competitive in international standards.

So, are you suggesting that with more competition and infrastructure companies coming into the sector, there are concerns emerging with margins?

Yes and no. It's correct to the extent that the infra sector has seen a slowdown and most players now realise the scope in water. So, they come and quote as infra projects without realising the technical aspects of the job. And they may even offer very low prices. But here, we curve out projects for ourselves. It is true that we have to cherry-pick projects, but there is enough opportunity in the sector to choose projects, not suffer on margins and yet grow.

Your revenue growth for the last fiscal has been almost flat. What are the major reasons for the disappointment?

One of the biggest factors was Libya. Last quarter is the most crucial quarter for us when there was a washout there. In Sri Lanka, we are doing a Rs 360-crore project funded by Exim Bank. We were supposed to get the order by August which we got only in March. And there were losses due to foreign exchange issues. Euro fell from Rs 68 per euro to Rs 60 where we had to show dismal performance in the books.

How much of your revenue comes from Libya? What is your assessment of Libya now?

Things are still at a standstill in Libya. They consist of 8 percent of our order book. But for this fiscal, we have calculated no revenue from there. If it opens up and we earn something, that will be a bonus.

How much of your revenue comes from abroad? Which are the more lucrative markets there?

Sixty-five percent of our revenue comes from India and the rest from abroad. China is increasingly becoming a great market with the government getting concerned about reusing waste water. In South Asian and South-East Asian markets, important markets are the Philippines, Vietnam, and in the Middle East, it's Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman. In eastern Europe, there are lots of funds

channelised into water infrastructure and Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania provide immense scope. In a couple of years, 40-45 percent of revenue should come from abroad.

You have Rs 350 crore cash on your books with plans of some inorganic expansion. Have you shortlisted the companies for acquisition?

We have shortlisted three companies for this purpose. We are not looking at any company in India. All are abroad. There could be two purposes. One is to gain a new technology or improve what we have. Or it could be to gain a new market. We should complete two acquisitions in around four to six months.

What kind of topline and bottomline growth do you see this fiscal?

Revenue should grow by 20 percent. As a listed company, I should not be giving any guidance. But there is no reason why we should not be able to achieve 30 percent growth at a net profit level.

Since we spoke about profit margins, guide me as to how margins are in India and abroad for different projects?

At operating levels, the margins are higher abroad, but then cost of setting up a plant abroad is also higher than in India. But at net margin levels, India offers better margins. Overall, the margins are around 12-12.5 percent at operating levels and 7-8 percent at net level.

Because of dominance of municipality orders, do you feel threatened since you are dependent on single-party orders in most geographies?

That will be obvious for us as abroad, there will be one municipality controlling the water sector. But we only take up projects that are funded either by the central government or multilateral agencies. Whenever we see funding and therefore, execution facing trouble, we do not take up those projects.

How much is your orderbook at present? What are your Bot projects (where companies invest in the projects and can take assets in their book)?

Our total order book is Rs 3, 400 crore. We are doing a couple of BOT projects in Ullasnagar and Ahmednagar and have just achieved financial closure. We entered into a strategic partnership with Sumitomo of Japan last year. We are in talks for a couple of projects that we cannot reveal right now. The orderbook should go up to Rs 5,000 crore in two years.

“Water’s not free anymore, and look who is smiling”, 25/07/2011, online at:

<http://www.firstpost.com/business/water%E2%80%99s-not-free-anymore-and-look-who-is-smiling-46281.html>

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❖ The Geopolitics of Water in the Nile River Basin

In Africa, access to water is one of the most critical aspects of human survival. Today, about one third of the total population lack access to water. Constituting 300 million people and about 313 million people lack proper sanitation. (World Water Council 2006). As result, many riparian countries surrounding the Nile river basin have expressed direct stake in the water resources hitherto seldom expressed in the past. In this paper, I argue that due to the lack of consensus over the use of the Nile basin regarding whether or not “water sharing” or “benefit sharing” has a tendency to escalate the situation in to transboundary conflict involving emerging dominant states such as the tension between Ethiopia-Egypt over the Nile river basin. At the same time, this paper further contributes to the Collier- Hoeffler conflict model in order to analyze the transboundary challenges, and Egypt’s position as the hegemonic power in the horn of Africa contested by Ethiopia. Collier- Hoeffler model is used to predict the occurrence of conflicts as a result of empirical economic variables in African states given the sporadic civil strife in many parts of Africa. In order to simplify my argument and analysis, I focused on Ethiopia and Egypt to explicate the extent of water crisis in the North Eastern part of Africa.

One may question why Ethiopia? My answers are grounded in three main assumptions. The first is based on the failed Anglo-Ethiopia treaty in 1902 which never materialized. The second assumption is based on the exclusion of Ethiopia, since 1902 and the subsequent water agreement of 1929 between Britain and Egypt and the 1959 water agreement between Egypt and Sudan after the later became independent in 1956. The final assumption is the emergence of Ethiopia as a powerful and influential nation in the horn of Africa because of its military power in the sub region.

Ethiopia has pushed forward her demand to develop water resources through hydroelectric power along the Nile. However, for several decades, Egypt has denied other riparian countries complete access to water resources along the Nile, and for that matter has exercised her hegemonic powers over the development and control of the use of water resources in the Nile river basin for many decades. The Nile river basin has survived centuries, and for many years has served as Egypt’s economic hub, political power and growth since ancient times. The water resources in the Nile basins have also served as economic, political, social and cultural achievements of Egypt’s influence in the sub region¹.

The water resources in the past were used as trade routes which enhanced Egypt’s mobile communication and international relations for centuries. In which many earlier contacts of Egypt described Egypt as “the gift of the Nile” This hegemonic status enjoyed, since the beginning of earlier civilizations of the ancient kingdoms of Egyptian civilization compelled the ancient philosopher Herodotus to describe this civilization as “Egypt is the Nile and the

Nile is Egypt.” This again coincides the period of Egyptian economic boom and its political dominion. What has further entrenched Egypt’s position in the past, which ultimately contributed to Egypt’s power over other riparian countries in the Nile river basin is the 1929 water treaty agreement signed between Egypt and Britain². Britain, then in charge of many riparian countries as colonies negotiated with Egypt on behalf of its colonies, thereby, giving Egypt an urge over other riparian countries in the use and access to water resources in the river basin.

However, with the attainment of independence by these countries, high population growth, global warming, global economic crisis natural disasters, political development, pollution and resource depletion, industrialization as well as urbanization, high capital cost of water drilling, poor rural electricity for pumping underground water have impelled these riparian countries to engage Egypt’s control in order to re-negotiate earlier water treaties and to abrogate all attempt by Egypt to control the use and development of water resources over the Nile³. Egypt has been in control of the Nile Rivers for a long time and has emerged as the major country that has complete access to the Nile. The shortages of water and water resources in Ethiopia and of course Sudan has prompted those countries to take a second look at Egypt’s access to the Nile, most especially Ethiopia’s attempt to confront Egypt in the Nile river. Berman and Paul concluded that the tension between Egypt and Ethiopia over the Nile is likely to escalate to a war in the future. Due to Ethiopia’s rapidly growing population, in consequence, Ethiopia’s water demand has almost doubled in the last decade⁴.

Nile River Basin and Declining Water Resources

The Nile river basin comprises of ten countries namely, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. These countries are known as the ten riparian countries due to their proximity to the Nile river basin⁵. It is the longest river in the world constituting about 6700 km or 4100 miles long and drains almost all ten aforementioned countries. The flow of the Nile as a naturally endowed commodity has benefited North Eastern countries’ economic activities through agricultural and tourism. About 90% of Egypt’s land mark is desert and therefore, many populations have concentrated along the Nile river basin, due the economic opportunities available along the Nile river basin couple with irrigation activity for landscape farming and animal rearing.⁶ The complete dependence of water resources over the centuries have caused the Nile river basin to deplete, especially of essential material resources causing high rate of unemployment, diseases and hunger in the countries depending on the water resources. Declan et al, argue that the resource depletion in the Nile river basin is due to three spatial factors, namely global green house effect, regional (through land use) and river basin (land management). This assertion is also consistent with Oxfam studies in Askum region and the drought that has engulfed the entire country. In a brief quote Oxfam indicated the situation in Ethiopia and

said:

“Climate variability in Ethiopia is not new – but now, in addition to the usual struggles, Ethiopians living in poverty are additionally suffering the effects of climate change – both more variable climate and more extreme weather events. People who are already poor and marginalized are struggling with the added burden of climate variability. For now, this means that the little that they have goes to dealing with the current unpredictable weather because their livelihoods are so dependent on it. When selling off assets becomes a mean to cope, there is little left to plan for the future. Thus, communities are faced with simultaneously increasing climate variability, and with it increasing risk and vulnerability.⁷”

Global warming due to climatic conditions and green house emission effect according to Declan et al is one of the contributing factors for the recent water resource decline in the Nile river basin⁸. They argued that high temperature couple with underground water reduction in the Blue Rivers in Egypt and Sudan is undergoing drastic impact of global warming. As a result, development along the Nile River has led to water resource pollutions by many riparian countries.⁹

For example, the Ethiopian and Eritrean wars in the late 1990s polluted a substantial part of the river basin with military accoutrements and missile deposits into the Nile Rivers. This pollution activity is further exacerbated by the huge population growth concentrated in the river basin. This populations growth according to the world water council 2006 have double in the last two decades, and continues to rise amidst migrations to the Nile river basins.¹⁰

The impact of population pressures and the resource decline in the river basins is also consistent with Aston’s argument that the southern and the northern portions get less rainfall than their equatorial neighboring countries.¹¹ For example the Nile has two confluent tributaries connecting the White Nile and the Blue Nile, the Blue Nile which is considered the most fertile for crop production flows from Lake Tanna in Ethiopia through to Sudan from the South East.¹² The Blue and White river basins also coincide with the division of upstream and downstream riparian, and their source of water. While the upstream mainly benefit on water rainfall, the down streams such as the blue river basins enjoys physical flow of water.

Braune, and Youngxin argue that the demand for allocation of water resources has witnessed several treaties and pointed out that “in the past 60 years there have been over 200 international treaties on water and only 37 cases reported on violence between countries.¹³” These magnitude of the problem resulted in lack of adequate resolution in resource allocation of water resources.

The impact of Industrialization and mechanization has played a significant role as a result of

expansion projects along the Nile river basin. In 2004, the Ethiopian minister for trade accused Egypt of using undiplomatic strategies to control Ethiopia's development projects on the Nile. Said, "Egypt has been pressuring international financial institutions to desist from assisting Ethiopia in carrying out development projects in the Nile basin.¹⁴"

Farming along the Nile is one of the major sources of livelihood for communities living along the concentrated Nile river basins, but the ensuing drought, famine, population growth and land degradation have impacted the water resources in the Nile river basin. The Environmental Protection Agency in its 2010 report also argued that land degradation and deforestation in the river basin due to excessive burning for land cultivation in many parts of the Nile River has virtually eroded the oasis making it extremely tough for cultivation and water conservation.¹⁵

Thus before the 1950s, there were fewer resentments on the Nile water resources by riparian countries, however with changing circumstances such as declining water resources, hunger, and diseases, riparian countries have decided to renegotiate themselves in order to access the Nile. Kenya together with Ethiopia are pioneering this process as seen in the cessionary address to parliament by the Member of Parliament for Kenya Paul Muite in 2004 who remarked "Kenyans are today importing agricultural produce from Egypt as a result of their use of the Nile water." In a similar statement, Moses Wetangula, the assistant minister for foreign affairs remarked "Kenya will not accept any restriction on use of lake Victoria or the river Nile" and stated "it however does not wish to be alone ranger in deciding how to use the waters, and has consequently sought the involvement of involved countries."¹⁶

Methodology

Conflict Theory and the Collier-Hoeffler Model

Kofi Anan reiterated that "Unsustainable practices are woven deeply in to the fabric of modern life. Land degradation threatens food security. Forest destruction threatens biodiversity. Water pollution threatens public health, and fierce competition for fresh water may well become a source of conflicts and wars in the future."

This statement by Kofi Anan is buttressed by Amery when he alluded to the Egyptian Member of Parliament's assertion that Egypt's "national security should not only be viewed in military terms, but also in terms of wars over waters¹⁷." The horn of Africa has been bedeviled by conflicts, both interstate and civil wars for several years now. These conflicts are mainly concentrated on the north east and central Africa. While many of these conflicts have been disputes over land occupation in mainly oil rich areas of the Congo, others have been the issue of diverting water resources. This paper examines the water scarcity in the

North East with an attempt to focus on Egypt and Ethiopia through the Collier-Hoefer model of theory of civil wars in order to construct the model on water scarcity with an attempt to reconcile the tensions over water resources and its effects on the people of the north East African people.

There have been several applications and interpretations of the earlier conflict theorists propounded by earlier scholars such as Karl Marx, Lenin, and Weber. Collier-Hoeffler, also known as the C-H model is one of such interpretation of recent times. Their analyses on conflict is based on the framework of many variables such as tribes, identities, economics, religion and social status in Africa, and subjecting the data to a regression analysis and concluded that of the many variables identified in Africa and the examination of the 78 five year increments(1960-1999) in which conflicts occur, and of five year 1, 600 inputs in which no conflicts occur, concluded that based on the data set that economic factors rather than ethnic, or religious, identities are the bane of conflicts in Africa. In complementing this model with the earlier conflict theory propounded by Karl Marx, Marx, recognized the significance of the social and interactions within a given society. These interactions according Karl Max are characterized by conflicts. Hence, the conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of the capitalist system forms a synthesis of the forces of the interaction within the system.¹⁸

Marx, again reiterated the fact that these social and human interactions is dialectical in the sense that when a dominant nation seeks to control dependent nations or peripheral countries what yields in consequence is the tension to rebel against the oppressor by dependent states in order to agitate for equitable and fair share of national resources. This point is consistent with the C-H model when they argued with empirical data on the causes of conflicts in Africa, and concluded that economic factors are the significant predictor of conflict in many parts of the African continent. Therefore, according to C-H, economic reasons contributed to a large extent the greater portion of conflicts in Africa¹⁹. While these economic reasons are varied and numerous due to the resources available in a given region and the allocation of resource whether naturally endowed or man-made, any form of competition to control these resources or allocation of resources will naturally generate two outcomes: tension and potential conflict, and cooperation. In this case, Egypt's sole access to the Nile for centuries now has invariably gratified itself as the sole control of the Nile water resources.

As a result of the 1929 mandate that gave Egypt absolute control of water resources in the Nile, she has worked to sabotage many riparian countries through other diplomatic and international treaties. Ethiopia has vowed to engage Egypt over the control of water resources in the Nile valley basin. This is exemplified in many water agreement initiated by Ethiopia and the other riparian countries to abrogate all previous agreement hitherto entered by Egypt. Consequently, Stars argues that the looming tension between Egypt and the riparian countries initiated by Ethiopia is a recipe for conflict in the North Eastern Africa²⁰. For instance, these

tensions are exemplified in Egypt's response to Kenya's assistant foreign affairs minister's statement when Mohammed Abu Zeid, Egypt's minister for water resources remarked that Kenya's statements were a "a declaration of war" against Egypt and subsequently threatened Kenya of economic and political embargo.²¹

This looming tension among riparian countries is further worsened by Kenya's continuing threat of engagement. In 2002, a senior Kenyan minister Raila Odinga, called for the review and renegotiation of the 1929 treaty which gave Egypt the right to veto construction projects on the Nile river basin, and said "it was signed on behalf of governments which were not in existence at that time." This paper's argument is further rooted in the idea that there are emerging players such as Kenya and Ethiopia in the horn of Africa as major hydro-political powers to engage Egypt's hydro-hegemonic status. Prior to the Nile basin initiative in February 1999, Wondwosen, argues that there have been several similar water treaties such as the 1993 Technical Committee to promote development cooperation among riparian countries. Also, in 1995 the Nile Basin Action Plan was launched, and in 1997, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) through collaborations with the World Bank attempted to foster cooperation among riparian countries to promote dialogue.²²

This initiative including earlier treaties already mentioned shows the magnitude of the problem in the Nile basin, and of course the consensus necessary to equitably allocate water resources and thereby encourage development projects along the Nile. In 2010, for instance, Ethiopia announced that it was initiating a hydro-electric development projects in order to improve its country's electric and energy needs. This announcement few days later saw resentment by Egypt and Egypt attempt to veto any such policy along the Nile. While Ethiopia is poised to making this project reality, Egypt has begun galvanizing international support in order to prevent Ethiopia from undertaking such projects.

Cascao, argued that the asymmetrical flow of water resources in the Nile river basin and the access to physical flow of the blue Nile by Egypt and Sudan in the downstream has extremely heighten hydro-political tension over the Nile. These tensions have attracted the United Nations organizations interventions and other international organization on matters concerning the distribution and allocation of water resources in the Nile river basin and in which compensation are offered to other riparian countries unequal access to the distribution of water resources, especially those on the upstream who only benefit rainfall.²³

Thus in 1999, nine riparian countries met in Dar Es Salem, Tanzania by the Council of Minister of Water Affairs of Nile River Basin Countries and agreed to cooperate in solidarity for equitable allocation of water resources in the Nile basin as well as for economic integration through sustainable development.²⁴

This economic solidarity through cooperation is declared in the Nile Basin Initiative as the shared vision by riparian countries to promote cooperation and economic well being, while at the same time "to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, & benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources²⁵." This Nile Basin Initiative is the first attempt by riparian countries to push demand for equal access to the Nile, and at the time promoting economic cooperation. Egypt's defiance of the NBI and its lack of participation in the NBI's initial attempt to convene such a cooperation agreement is a crucial aspect of the NBI's objective to consolidate through cooperation in the negotiation for equitable distribution. The subsequent institutional mechanism for policy guidelines for riparian countries to agree to follow is set forth by NBI in order to stimulate cooperation rather than intimidation in the allocation of water resources.

The following objectives in February 1999 were set up by the NBI as follows:²⁶

- To develop the Nile Basin water resources in a sustainable and equitable way to ensure prosperity, security, and peace for all its peoples
- To ensure efficient water management and the optimal use of the resources
- To ensure cooperation and joint action between the riparian countries, seeking win-win gains
- To target poverty eradication and promote economic integration
- To ensure that the program results in a move from planning to action.

Thus among the NBI's core functions include among others to promote water resource management, water resource development and capacity building enhanced through cooperation. These initiative have proven worthwhile, in preventing a escalating a major conflict in the region, although there are still tensions among riparian countries along the Nile. Egypt still exercises hydro hegemonic powers in the region because of her absolute control of the Nile basin, Egypt has participated and is willing to cooperate with other riparian countries in bringing lasting solutions to the increasing demand of water resources on the Nile river basin. When it comes down to water resource allocation and distribution, it has always been sidelined and not considered a significant issue in the solution to the Nile problem.

Africa's interstate conflicts in the past have been on a number of issues such as ethnic and tribal as well as land disputes and acquisitions. The discovery of oil however has proven to be a blessing in disguise in many of the oil regions of Africa. In the Congo for instance, there have been several conflicts with rebels over the control of oil regions of the Brazzaville. This area has not been spared of violence and mayhem for several decades now. In Nigeria for example, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) has created havoc and tensions culminating in violence and attacks on oil expatriates in the Niger Delta region. These oil regions in Africa today are bedeviled with conflicts, violent attacks and conflicts in

order to control oil resources. The least said about the diamond and gold areas of sub Saharan Africa the better. Similarly, and in consistent with the paradigm this paper takes is the assertion that water conflicts like many of the natural endowed assets bestowed on the African continent is a bane for the continent's development. In the cases of the Nile, although there is no any imminent conflict, scholars are predicting that the lack of concrete and up-to-date resolution on the water policy regarding the distribution of water resources on the Nile is a recipe for conflict in the region.

Relations of Power

As already mentioned and by extension Herodotus comments on Egypt as “the gift of the Nile,” has been extrapolated by Egypt in order to exercise hydro-political power in the Nile river basin for several decades. This status Egypt has enjoyed for some time now without allowing any riparian countries along the Nile to negotiate any form of control on water resources and development projects such as hydro electric power by neighboring countries. The asymmetrical flow of water resources in the Nile has also afforded Egypt a position of dominance compared to other riparian countries who are situated upstream on the Nile. The Nile's downstream is currently housed by Egypt and Sudan, consequently, Sudan's attempt to renegotiate Egypt's unilateral control on the Nile²⁷.

In 1959, a water agreement signed between Egypt and Sudan gave Egypt 55bcm and 18bcm to Sudan. Again this uneven allocation of resource points to asymmetrical power relations of riparian countries ability to negotiate Egypt to access water resources²⁸. Cascao, provides a theoretical understanding on this hydro power hegemony of Egypt in controlling water resources. And indicated that the hegemonic power of Egypt is due to many factors in the horn of Africa, but argues that this hegemonic status is about to end as counter hydro hegemonic powers are beginning to emerge in order to contest Egypt's long standing hegemony in the region. I totally agree with Cascao, and in fact her analysis is in line with my argument that the position Egypt finds herself is about to change due to first the declining rate of water resources in the Nile.

This is because in the past when life was booming riparian countries made no mention of inequity if water resources however, with the emergence global water crisis due to global warming these riparian countries are beginning to contest power relation on the access to the Nile. Cascao points to “apparent consent” to illustrate the apparent lackadaisical attitudes of consent by riparian countries. This apparent consent, Cascao argues was latent consents by riparian countries along the Nile on many agreements that were signed as far back in 1902. Ethiopia is a case in point. In many of these water treaties Reginald points to about 60 water agreements since the first one in 1902 which either ignored Ethiopia or Ethiopia decided to apparently consent to by keeping mute to the issue. But what is significant is a looming civil

war among riparian countries. There have been scuffles between Sudan and Burundi, also Ethiopia and Eritrea and Rwanda and Somalia in the past several decades without totally engaging Egypt's hydro-hegemonic power in the region, given the emerging hydro political configuration that is beginning to unravel²⁹.

In order to understand the relations of power and dominance in regards to the situation in the Nile river basin it is prudent to again invoke Cascao analysis of power and dominance as they significantly hinges on the Ethiopia's counter hegemonic strategy in the Nile river basin for some time now. Cascao begins by citing Gramsci's definition of hegemony as "political power that flows from intellectual and moral leadership, authority, or consensus as distinguished from armed force³⁰" she continues to argue "power is relational and the outcome of hegemonic power relations is determined by the interaction of diverse actors" diverse actors for me seem meaningful and significant here in terms of the power relations here. It can be recalled that there are ten riparian countries each diverse with varied needs and demands in regard to the fair allocation of water resources in the Nile. This diversity is yet galvanized for a common interest as seen in the Nile basin initiative put forth by the nine riparian countries.

Once gain the significant portion Egypt occupies comes under a counter hegemonic truce by riparian countries to renegotiate earlier treaties concerning the Nile river allocation of resource which is consistent with Cascao assertion that "power relations are not static or immutable" and points to a dialectical thesis of challenging the status thereby bringing in new status quo with alternatives. This dialectics is one earlier propounded by Marx and Lenin in their conflict theories regarding the suppression of groups and their simultaneous revolt of the existing status quo. In the case of the river basin, these riparian countries see themselves as having asymmetrical power relations with Egypt, and because Egypt's consistent dominance in both economic and hegemonic political relations in the sub region, there is an attempt to contest existing status quo as seen in the earlier water treaties and allocation of resources in the Nile basin.

Based on the accusations and counter accusations on the allocation of water resources along the Nile, Ethiopia like Egypt have both galvanized for support in terms of international diplomacy and legitimacy over the use of resources in the Nile. While Egypt continues to maintain its legitimacy based of the earlier water agreements and proclamations that exclusively gave Egypt dominance with right to veto any development projects, Ethiopia has taken its stands to engage Egypt on talks to renegotiate Ethiopia's position of the Nile resources. When it comes to international funding on the Nile river basin, the IMF and the World Bank has withhold funds for development along the Nile because of the looming tension between the riparian countries and has promised not to get itself tangled on the water crisis along the Nile river basin.³¹

“Water sharing” or “benefit sharing”

The debate as to whether “water sharing” or “benefit sharing” has dominated many scholarly discourse on the Nile issue. According to Teshome, benefit sharing is “the distribution of benefits through cooperation” and argues furthermore that “benefit sharing gives riparian states the chance to share the benefits derived from the use of water rather than the physical distribution of water itself³².” Teshome’s analysis regarding benefit sharing through cooperation sounds a laudable alternative to riparian countries capacity to cooperate in order to tap water resources, but this argument is idealistic given the power relations along the Nile, and the asymmetrical flow of water resources in the upstream and downstream countries could be difficult to ascertain. I offer the following reason to buttress my argument.

Most significantly, the lack of political will to cooperate by riparian countries is the number one reason benefit sharing could be difficult to achieve. Several water agreement have been launched since the 1929 Anglo Egyptian water agreement that gave Egypt the exclusive power to monitor development activities along the Nile. The lack of political will is clearly demonstrated by Ethiopia’s “apparent consent” to many water treaties that has been passed. The most recent treaty the Nile Basin Cooperative Frame Work Agreement launched in (1997-2007) shows the nature of participation by riparian countries to cooperate to achieving common goals and the allocation of water resources. This lack of political will is also consistent with Teshome argument that the lack of political leadership has exacerbated the situation to the extent that at present there is no international treaty or agreement that binds riparian countries together. Although the many cooperative agreements between upstream and downstream riparian have sidelined issues bordering benefit sharing in their agenda³³.

In addition, problem in benefit sharing cooperative agreement is the fact that many riparian countries comes from different political and socio-cultural backgrounds and are therefore prone to series of political and civil upheavals that will endanger any attempt by riparian countries to cooperate for mutual benefit sharing. The most significant one is the Ethiopia Eritrea conflict that has rocked the region for several years, also the Somalia civil conflicts, the Rwanda Burundi and many others in Sudan has worked to prevent many cooperative agreement to realize its potential. Although mutual benefit is essential its implementation to a full potential is unattainable.

This argument is also supported by Cascao when she argued that cooperative agreement can be a “battle ground for opposing tendencies” (p24) Not only that but, also Egypt’s power and international diplomacy over the region. It is indeed important to acknowledge the role of Egypt’s diplomatic relations in the past that has ushered its dominance over the Nile. The strategic position of Egypt on the Suez Canal has been a strategic location for British

involvement in Egypt and for British access to India through the canal. This important location of Egypt was advanced by British interest in India³⁴. Benefit sharing or cooperative agreement by upstream and downstream countries have been in opposing terms for quite some time now. The recent National Basin Initiative (NBI) has been used as a platform by Ethiopia to get the 1959 water agreement between Egypt and Sudan annulled, since Ethiopia was excluded, and for that matter the other seven riparian countries in order to enact a comprehensive water policy that will promote the advancement of cooperative water sharing without hostilities.

Also, significant factor that hampers any cooperative agreement on benefit sharing is Egypt's diplomatic influence on the region. If all riparian countries agree to benefit share these cooperative agreement maybe lopsided and for that matter benefit Egypt more than the other riparian because of Egypt diplomacy with Britain and US, and the international organizations including the Arab league. This point is argued in Teshome when he said "Egypt has been pressuring international institutions to desist from assisting Ethiopia in carrying out development projects in the Nile basin ...it has used its influence to persuade the Arab world not to provide Ethiopia with any loans or grants for Nile water development."

My final alternative is that several water sharing agreements have been adopted by riparian countries at least since the 1959 between Sudan and Egypt in terms of allocation of water resources. This allocation which earmarked 18 BCM to Sudan and 55BCM to Egypt is seen by Sudan as an unfair deal and have since pushed forward for renegotiation on the allocation of water resources that has given Egypt an unfair proportional distribution of resources and for development projects on the Nile. This last alternative could be dangerous in if physical allocation of water resources are to be shared among riparian countries through demarcation, this is because land demarcation and allocation of resources have been one of the dangerous recipe for conflicts currently ongoing on the continent, to physically allocate resources is nothing but to add more insult to injuries. With emerging hydro-political powers in the region, Ethiopia and Egypt could dominate other countries and for that matter wage physical wars in order to control water resources.

On the basis of the above discussions, it can be safely concluded that the nature of tension in North Eastern Africa most, especially the Nile riparian countries are on a brink of conflict over the control and use of Nile water resources. As already pointed out, and by extension Collier-Hoeffler's economic analysis of conflicts in Africa did not cite the potential trigger of conflict as a result of the Nile, what is significant about his model is the paradigmatic nature upon which his theory of analysis are based. And since water is a vital part of the economic resources of Africa, this papers concludes that the water resources just as any other economic resource has a full potential of tension and conflict over the Nile river basin by riparian states.

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❖ Doha Youth Conference Tackles Key Global Issues

Mercy Corps, a global aid agency, is currently holding the Global Citizen Corps International Youth Gathering for activists and organisers from around the world at Georgetown University – Qatar, in partnership with Reach Out To Asia.

Around 20 youth leaders, aged 16 to 25, from several countries, including Qatar, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Palestine, the US, and the UK, will take part in activities designed to stimulate learning and cross-cultural sharing.

Participants will engage in dialogue on five key issues that are central to the Global Citizen Corps curriculum: environment and climate change, education, food security and hunger, health, and peace and conflict. The participants will talk about how these issues are present at a global level, how they affect their communities and what is being done to tackle these challenges.

A highlight of the week will be a “Town Hall” event featuring Sheikh Sultan Sooud al-Qassemi, a renowned columnist and commentator from the United Arab Emirates who was recently ranked by Forbes Middle East as the top “Tweeter” in the region, with more than 70,000 followers on the popular social networking site Twitter.

Sheikh Sultan will be joined on stage by Shadi Hamid, director of Research at Brookings Doha Centre and a fellow at the Saban Centre for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution. The discussion will be moderated by Andrea Koppel, a longtime journalist and media professional who recently joined Mercy Corps as vice-president of Global Engagement and Policy. Audiences in Washington DC, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Portland, Oregon will join the conversation via videoconference.

In addition, participants will strengthen their skills in areas such as the use of film and photography to support self-expression and community work, and the use of advocacy and social media to promote positive community change. Participants will visit important cultural sites in Doha and take part in service activities that give back to the local communities.

Speaking at the opening of the gathering, Sarah Warren, director of the Global Citizen Corps at Mercy Corps, said: “Normally we work with these youth in their own home countries and then we connect them with each other using online dialogue and video conferencing, and every now and then we’re lucky enough to be able to bring together a small number of them in person, and that’s what this gathering is. This is a particularly good time to do it as this is the International Year of Youth, as recognised by the United Nations, so this is a celebration of that year and young people’s contribution and leadership. Also, obviously, because of the events that have been happening in the region, it’s a nice time to be able to stop and explore and reflect on young people’s leadership.”

She gave an example of the kind of work that these youth activists do in countries around the world, as one group has already successfully completed a water shortage assessment in Iraq. The activists gathered experts and brought recommendations to the government to build a dam and solve the problem.

Firdha Ussy Nurul, an Indonesian student who will begin university this fall, said that in her home country she worked to highlight the gap between urban dwellers in Jakarta and rural populations, as many people continue to “live under hostilities”.

She also participated in environmental and economic development training sessions for residents of undeveloped islands, providing them with skills to improve their economic status. The project also helped build connections between urban and island youth allowing them to exchange cultural knowledge. She hopes the conference will provide her with valuable experience to help her with future projects in Indonesia, in an exchange of ideas from other activists, while learning new skills in the training and education sessions.

“Doha Youth Conference Tackles Key Global Issues”, 25/07/2011, online at: http://www.gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu_no=2&item_no=448658&version=1&template_id=36&parent_id=16

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* Kashmir: The Road to Peace

“Political resistance movement is always the pulling and equally a pushing process, planned towards an achievable goal, rather a social advancement —the pragmatic thinking embedded with conviction—ending with the implementation of democratic norms and accomplishment of commitments.”

Kashmir dispute is entangled in the definitions of sovereignty and the right to self-determination—and purposely a greater term comprise of several sub-regions, each with varying and different cultures. As a result Kashmir is to be understood in the broader perspective by people of Jammu and Kashmir in general and world community in particular . The solution of this vexed issue should be tried in terms of choices not the pedagogies , sought by two warring nations (India-Pakistan)—principle parties to the dispute but Kashmiris being the prime party rather sine quo nine towards the solution . Several resolutions have been passed in United Nations Security Council , which are the bedrocks for defining the disputed nature of Kashmir and it is India who took the matter to United Nations but naïve Kashmiris [people of Jammu and Kashmir]— had always been and are still the first causality to the oldest existing dispute in South Asia, which has pushed India and Pakistan to three conventional and similar number of non- conventional wars , including high altitude war of Kargil .Thus making UN Charter more applicable in Kashmir under Chapter I, Article 1 , clause 2, 3 and 4 vis-à-vis tripartite talks .

Otherwise solution to disputed Kashmir is just like a needle in the haystack.

India on 11th May 1998, Monday detonated three nuclear bombs at Pokhran[II] , declaring herself as the nuclear capable state , which was treated as serious threat by its immediate neighbour [Pakistan].In response Pakistan on Thursday ,28th May 1998 exploded five nuclear bombs much powerful than India at Chegai [Baluchistan], thus commenced a new arms race in South Asia , posing a potential threat to Asia— the most densely inhabited and largest continent of world , covering 8.62% of total earth’s surface and having 29.9% land—43,810,582 Sq. Kms— contributes 60% of the total world human population—4,48,30,59,150—by 2011 estimation . The unique feature of Asia is plurality of cultures , environments , historical ties and above all government systems , having 47 states .

Of course, societies in Asia have rich cultural tradition of expressing unity by transcending the ego of creative growth through human solidarity and a harmony with nature . In bringing these aspects of their culture to bear in facing contemporary challenges , the people of Asia could bring a new consciousness and institutions to the global market mechanism. In doing so, definitely Asia can together take the 21st century world on to a new trajectory of sustainable development and above all human security ,hence it can be the Asian century that can enrich human civilization. All epochs of economic and cultural achievements are associated with a critique of the received wisdom and

rediscovery of a universal humanity that lies at root of specific ideological and religious traditions , can bring end to Palestine, Kashmir, Iraq and Afghanistan bedlams ,which are the major stumbling blocks for the progress and prosperity of Asia at present –it faces the prospect of a leadership role. By 2020 , the giant Asia could move to a higher level of economic development . As growth continues , however , it may become increasingly difficult to reach those , who remain excluded from its benefits . Disparities could widen within and between developed , developing and under-developed countries , along with mounting costs, could begin to threaten sustainability of their development.

Yet , Asia cannot sustain by economic growth alone. Human life is threatened with the environmental crisis and conflict arising from culture of greed , from endemic poverty and egoistic projections of military supremacy , most importantly some countries in Asian continent have entered into the rat race of voracity to take control over the resources by expressing power paradigm. Still some major problems are looming in terms of Poverty, Malnutrition , poor access to Tertiary Education , HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis ,Environmental and Water Management ,as demand for Freshwater is soaring, the supply is becoming more uncertain , which is the biggest worry for Asian Countries .

Presently, one out of six people—more than a billion—do not have adequate access to safe water . The United Nations projects that by 2025 , half of the countries world wide will face water stress and outright shortages, to end those serious issues togetherness is the only mode. New opportunities have been created that if fully explored , could help in solving the problems of Asian countries , if supported and encouraged through the mode of Asian continental cooperation , which could help to sustain and accelerate economic development , end to trust deficit . Moreover the long-term strategic framework will open new paths for Asia to exercise its strength and potential , if all the political disputes in Asia are put to end by adopting a collective approach .

Water related problems are particularly acute in Asia . Although Asia has Freshwater—3,920 cubic meters per person per year— than any continent other than Antarctica. Hence, a massive awareness for importance of water as a means of security at multiple levels in Asia is required . Governments in Asia should ensure that water management organizations have direct communication with defence agencies and develop integrated water management and conflict prevention capacities.

Similarly through the collective efforts of Asian countries will help to alleviate the health and unemployment related problems in the whole region and equal share of development to all . Protecting forests and wildlife of Asia for our children's future will require bold and also strategic conservation , efforts in every state of Asia and fortunately , a vision for conserving forests and wildlife now exists but still requires a massive pragmatic approach .

Therefore , Asia in dialogue is the only way forward to address all the problems in the region, and its leadership role can be guaranteed if all will collectively come up with the solutions of Palestine , Kashmir , Afghanistan and Iraq.

One has to look for a change in policy paradigm of nation states, from competition to cooperation , from production of weapons as the emblem of state power to nurturing of a new sensibility that can sustain life on Asian continent, especially in South Asian region , which has been engulfed by the disputes of Kashmir and Afghanistan .

Kashmir, if again, is kept in limbo, can erupt like a sleeping volcano , which can engulf whole of South Asia ,with its horrible countenances —destruction and disaster.

Nowadays , the market is being apotheosized as the mythical space in which the individual can be free and yet provided with plenty by hidden hand of market , thus affecting the very basic norm and doctrine of human society , inherent to capitalist accumulation process , is the systematic inculcation of an insatiable desire to possess goods . The subliminal language of advertisement does not represent goods but rather fantasizes them such that they appear to us not in terms of their material attributes but magical receptacles of such qualities as beauty efficiency and power , thus the qualities , which we actually possess as human being are transported into goods and the individual gets locked into an endless pursuit of acquisition , for that matter the best move to broaden the horizons of mental thinking and develop sensible approach. Thus borders have literally become irrelevant .

Now the citizenship concept of a particular state has changed –part of new world order— presently everyone is a global citizen— entrenched in mesh and marsh of neo-globalization and neo-liberalization , so we have to behave in accordance with the change ,explore the traits, to exist as a nation on the map of the world but not at the expense of ones identity .

It is an admitted fact that stated positions do not offer any solution and to come with intellectual baggage to the dialogue proffers vent to inertia within the resistance movement . Thus Civil Society can play an active role in the resolution of any protracted conflict. But reality is that Kashmiris want solution not the concessions , to work on peace making rather than peace keeping in Kashmir . Both India and Pakistan must come to the understanding for closing agency role in Jammu and Kashmir with immediate demilitarization on either side of LoC, revoking of draconian laws like AFSPA and unconditional release of all political detainees in Kashmir , who are languishing in different Indian jails..

And people of Jammu & Kashmir should be encouraged for peaceful co-existence, which is most important at this stage.

As a consequence , political leadership of Jammu and Kashmir should strive for new pursuits about the honourable, respectable and dignified solution of Kashmir which should not give its people a sense of defeat but somewhat it should address their sentiments , desires and above all the aspirations.

Conclusion : Peace is a conscious and legitimate process to end mistrust or cessation of hostilities for ensuring positive , dynamic and pragmatic approach—to encourage meaningful and result-oriented

dialogue for resolution of the conflict in the spirit of mutual understanding with the element of cooperation . Peace is never a farsighted opportunism but purely a humanistic maxim , sometimes an involuntary action .

“Kashmir: The Road to Peace”, 30/07/2011, online at:

<http://kashmirwatch.com/opinions.php/2011/07/30/kashmir-the-road-to-peace.html>

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❖ Oman Desalination Makes Modern Water ‘Strong Buy’ at Nomura

[Modern Water Plc \(MWG\)](#), a British developer of desalination technology, was rated a “strong buy” by Nomura Code Securities analysts, who said the company has proved its forward osmosis method is commercially viable.

Ken Rumph, an analyst at Nomura, said the Guildford-based company with a market value of 22 million pounds (\$35 million) is well financed and undervalued at the current price of 38.5 pence per share. His target price is 180 pence.

Modern Water opened a 500,000 pound (\$800,000) commercial desalination plant in [Oman](#) last month, the world’s first to use forward osmosis technology, which is 30 percent cheaper than conventional reverse osmosis, according to the company. The [Middle East](#) will be spend more than \$50 billion a year on water treatment by 2016 compared with \$30 billion in 2009, according to Global Water Intelligence, an industry analyst.

“The potential market is huge and they’ve proven that it works on a commercial basis,” Rumph said by phone today. “They have plenty of cash on the balance sheet and they’ve got a better product than everybody else.”

Oman Desalination Makes Modern Water ‘Strong Buy’ at Nomura, Ben Edwards, 28/07/2011, online at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-07-28/oman-desalination-makes-modern-water-strong-buy-at-nomura.html>

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❖ World Bank Plans more than \$500 million in Rapid Response to Drought Emergency in Horn of Africa

Press Release No:2011/039/AFR

Projects targeted to focus on short-term recovery and long-term drought resilience

WASHINGTON, July 25, 2011 – On the eve of the international emergency summit on the unfolding tragedy in the Horn of Africa, the World Bank today announced it is providing more than \$500 million to assist drought victims, in addition to \$12 million in immediate assistance to help those worst hit by the crisis.

More than 11 million people in the region have been hit by one of the worst droughts in 60 years, resulting in widespread hunger, deaths, and the loss of subsistence crops and livestock. Rising food prices and deteriorating livestock prices have exacerbated the situation, and the UN is warning of worsening conditions in the coming months.

“Immediate relief and recovery is the first priority, and it is important to act fast to reduce human suffering,” said **World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick**. “But we also have an eye on the long term solutions of economic recovery and drought resilience that are key to re-establishing livelihoods and ensuring that droughts don’t take such a heavy human toll in the future.”

The International Development Association (IDA) which serves as the World Bank's Fund for the Poorest, and the donor-funded Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) are making these funds available with more than \$500 million coming from restructuring of existing projects and immediate reallocation and fast track processing of new projects, including with funding from IDA's new Crisis Response Window, subject to approval by the Board of Executive Directors. This funding could support the following activities: (a) a regional Enhanced Drought Resilience and Livestock Recovery Program to restore livelihood in all countries in the region; (b) scale up - through additional financing - of the Ethiopia Pastoralist Community Development Project; and the Productive Safety Net Program; (c) a possible new agriculture operation in Ethiopia; and (d) a

possible operation in Djibouti. Another \$12 million will be immediately available in GFDRR financing to rehabilitate rural livelihoods; build drought resilience; assist farmers to resume planting in time for the next harvest through cash transfers, seeds, fertilizer, and farming tools. In Somalia, the support program will be implemented building on previous rapid response operations and partnership with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and on their presence and ability to deliver in Somalia's most affected areas, where circumstances permit.

The GFDRR funds are also immediately available to support regional drought resilience planning based on a regional needs assessment and developing regional capacity in Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience.

Following decades of recurring droughts in the Horn of Africa, several World Bank-financed projects have established contingency and risk financing mechanisms that will be used to immediately scale up response to drought affected communities.

“The recurring nature of drought and growing risk it poses to social and economic gains in this region calls not only for immediate relief from the current situation, but also for building long term drought resilience,” said **Obiageli Ezekwesili, World Bank Vice President for the Africa Region.**

This World Bank support builds on strong collaboration with national governments, international agencies, regional and non-governmental organizations. This support includes drought impact assessment in collaboration with the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and early livelihood recovery in partnership with the FAO. The World Bank is also supporting countries to develop early warning systems and strengthen drought management agencies that help plan crisis response.

A Wake-Up Call for Agriculture in a Changing Climate

“This food crisis in Eastern Africa is another startling example of why international partners need to put food first,” said **Zoellick**. “Agriculture is one-third of GDP and three-quarters of employment in

Sub-Saharan Africa. When a crisis like this hits, millions of people suffer. Agriculture is more vulnerable to climate change than any other sector. We need a major international effort to address this challenge now. Climate-smart agriculture, including scaled-up research on drought resistant seeds, and cross-border strategies for drought risk reduction are essential over the medium and long term.”

In the longer term, it is important for countries in the Horn of Africa to prepare for recurring droughts that climate change will make more intense. An integrated approach to food security, poverty, and climate change is needed. The World Bank announced in April 2011 that rising food prices have pushed 44 million people into poverty since June 2010. Another 10 percent rise in the food price index could push 10 million more people into poverty. Global action is critical and international partners could help by supporting small holder farmers with seeds, fertilizer, better weather forecasting, and monitoring crop production; creating better ways to get produce to markets; providing food and effective social safety nets for the most vulnerable.

The World Bank Group is boosting agriculture and agriculture-related investment to \$6 - \$8 billion a year from \$4.1 billion in 2008. The past two years of implementation of the Africa Region’s agricultural strategy achieved more than a doubling of finance to the sector, from about \$0.5 billion per year in 2008 to \$1.2 billion annually averaged over 2009-2010. The World Bank’s Agriculture Action Plan emphasizes increased support in five areas: raising agricultural productivity; linking farmers to markets; reducing risk and vulnerability; improving nonfarm rural employment; and making agriculture more environmentally sustainable, as well as a source of positive environmental services.

“World Bank Plans more than \$500 million in Rapid Response to Drought Emergency in Horn of Africa”, World Bank, online at:

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