# О "INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION 'WATER FOR LIFE' 2005-2015"

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND STEPS FURTHER FOR CENTRAL ASIA

**After 10 years, we have finally reached the end of the UN Decade for Water 2005-2015, and now it is time for reviewing,sifting, collating and editing 10 years of action on water into a form where we can analyze its achievements, particularly for Central Asia,and think about future actions.**

There has been much progress in the last decade. Having clear and traceable objectives to spread the benefits ofglobalization to the world's poorest citizens (guided by the Millennium Development Goals) has contributed substantiallyto this. There have also been major milestones that have given impetus to the implementation of the global agenda. Thisincludes the 2008 International Year of Sanitation, 2010 Resolution on Water as a Human Right and the 2013 InternationalYear of Water Cooperation.

In December 2003, theUN General Assembly proclaimed the period 2005-2015 would be the International Decade for Action'Water for Life'. The Decade began officially on March 22, 2005, World Water Day.

Historicallythis is the second Decade that water issues have been highlighted as part of UN Decade. First UN Decade on water issues was The International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade 1981-1990, to provide safe drinking water and

5057 m3 /person in the Central Asia according to GWP, 2008) the region cannot be considered as a water-shortage region, the water resources distribution is territory-wise unequal and is prone to considerable seasonal fluctuations.

At the same time, the problems to provide quality potable water and sustainable sanitation are of extreme relevance and importance.

All countries of the region face common problems and unaddressed tasks in the sphere of water supply and sanitation, namely:

- High rate degradation of the water supply systems and sewage treatment plants;
- High water loss rate;
- Insufficient level of accessibility of the potable water, especially in the rural settlements, incl. high rates of interruptions in the water supply;
- Low tariffs for potable water and low collection rate of the water fees, not covering the cost of operation and maintenance of the water supplyand sanitation systems;
- Inadequate equipment of consumers with water-meters (basically, in the households) that have a negative impact on the actual metering of supplied and consumed water, as well as on the water fee collection rate;
- Inadequate governance of the water supply and sanitation systems, low qualification level of the specialists, especially in the remote areas and territorial subdivisions;
- Considerable difficulties with provision of potable water of the required quality;
- Low technical equipment level of the WSS sector;
- Incomplete legal and regulatory framework;
- Low awareness level and poor culture of the water use, undeveloped information database;
- Use of water for irrigation for household purposes in urban areas.

Facing all of the above-mentioned threats, Central Asian states were playing active role in implementing Water for Life Decade.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan being the initiator of the Decade has taken a number of measures at national, regional and global levels for its successful implementation. With this view the Government of Tajikistan in cooperation with the UN and other international organizations organized the following important international water events:

- International Conference on Regional Cooperation in Trans-Boundary River Basins on 30 May – 1 June, 2005, Dushanbe;
- International Conference on Water Related Disasters Reduction on 27-29 June 2008, Dushanbe;
- High-Level International Conference on midterm

## DECADE'S MILESTONES

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| | | *23 December* 2003: Resolution A/RES/58/217 proclaiming 2005-2015 **International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015.** |
| 2005 | *2 March* | Start of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015 as established in Resolution A/RES/58/217. |
| | *11-22 April* | 13th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. Report on the thirteenth session (E/2005/29) |
| | *25 July* | Report of the UN Secretary-General on Actions taken in organising the activities of the International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015(A/60/158) |
| 2006 | *20 December* | Declaration of 2008 'International Year of Sanitation' (A/RES/61/192). |

adequate sanitation systems for all people by 1991. The United Nations International decades are proclaimed by the General Assembly requires long-term action and sustained attention at the national level, regional and international level around the world.

The main goal of the Water for Life Decade has been to promote all the possible efforts to fulfill international commitments in the watersphere by 2015. The profile of water in the global agenda has been raised, and the world's attention on thegroundbreaking, lifesaving, empowering work done by those implementing water programs and projects was in focus. The Decade has played the role of a bridge, to activate further cooperation between governments and other stakeholders, between nations and diverse communities,between economic interests and the needs of ecosystems and the poor. All the effortswere promoted to ensure theparticipation of women in water and sanitation. All of that was done to achieve the water goals of the Millennium Declaration, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summitfor Sustainable Development and Agenda 21. Ten years.

There has been much progress in providing a political process for maintaining attention, efforts, and for taking stock and regularly evaluating results – analyzing the actions that have been effective specifically in promoting water cooperation and IWRM. The table 1 shows the main events organized as a political platform during the Decade.

But the main questions for usare: what has changed in Central Asia? Could we confirm our commitments to the international trends in water and sanitation priorities?

Despite of the fact that by the formation volume of the surface water resources (on average

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| 2007 | August | |
| | October | Opening of the United Nations Office to support the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015/ UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication (UNW-DPAC) |
| 2008 | January-December | International Year of Sanitation. |
| | December | Status of Implementation of CSD-13 Policy Actions on Water and Sanitation. |
| 2009 | 21 December | Resolution calling for a Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action 'Water for life' 2005-2015 (A/RES/64/198). This UNGA decision announced the meeting in Tajikistan and requested information on the progress of the Decade. |
| | 22 March | High-Level Interactive Dialogue on the implementation of the International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005- 2015. UN Headquarters, New York. |
| 2010 | 8-9 June | High-level International Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015. Dushanbe, Tajikistan. |
| | 22 June | Dushanbe Declaration on Water (A/65/88). This 'nonnegotiated text' lists a number of focal areas for the remainder of the Decade. |
| | 28 July | UN Resolution recognizing access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitationas a human right (A/RES/64/292). |
| | 16 August | Report of the UN Secretary-General on the Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015 (A/65/297). |
| 2011 | 11 February | 'Sustainable sanitation: the five-year drive to 2015'. Follow-up of the International Year of Sanitation, 2008 (A/RES/65/153). |
| | 11 February | Declaration of 2013 'International Year of Water Cooperation' (A/RES/65/154). |
| | 21 June | Launch of UN Campaign "Sustainable sanitation: the five year drive to 2015". |
| 2012 | 20-22 June | Rio+20. The Rio+20 Outcome Document highlights the commitment to the 2005-2015 International Decade for Action "Water for Life". |
| 2013 | January-December | International Year of Water Cooperation. |
| | 24 July | UN Resolution A/RES/67/291 designates 19 November as World Toilet Day in the context of Sanitation for All. |
| 2014 | September | UN Deputy Secretary-General's Call to Action on Sanitation. |
| | 19 November | 1st UN celebration of World Toilet Day. |
| | 18-19 February | UN General Assembly thematic debate on Water, Sanitation and Sustainable Energy in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. |
| | 11 March | Special Event "Taking Stock of the International Year of Water Cooperation and Advancing the Global Water Agenda Post-2015". |
| | 19 July | UN Open Working Group adopts its final proposal for Sustainable Development Goals. |
| | 17 August | The 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (UN Watercourse Convention) enters into force. |
| | 6 November | UN Human Rights Council appoints Léo Heller as 2nd Special Rapporteur on the human right to water and sanitation. |
| | 4 December | UN Secretary-General presents advanced version Synthesis Report on Post-2015 Agenda. |
| | 19 December | UN General Assembly adopts resolution on International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015, and further efforts to achieve the sustainable development of water resources (A/RES/69/215). |
| 2015 | 30 March | High-level Interactive Dialogue 'The International Decade for Action: Progress achieved and lessons learned relevant to the achievement of sustainable development'. |
| | 9-11 June | High Level International Conference on the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. |
| | 13-16 July | 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. |
| | 25-27 September | United Nations Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda. |
| | 30 November | 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 11th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP21/CMP11) |
| | 11 December | |

comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015 on 8-10 June 2010, Dushanbe;

- High Level International Conference on Water Cooperation on 27-29 August 2013, Dushanbe;
- High Level International Conference on the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015 on 9-11 June 2015, Dushanbe.

Looking back at the results, we can say that there has been much progress in the last decade.

The Decade took place everywhere around the world with as many actors as possible involved – no matter whether individuals or organizations. All the ideas, activities and initiatives were welcomed and needed as part of the Water for Life Decade family.

Since 2005, the Decade had been supporting all kind of activities organized in the spirit of the 'Water for Life' Decade. Between 2005 and 2015 the 'Water for Life' Decade had been requested to support around 180 different types of initiatives and projects from a diverse range of stakeholders around the world.

But despite all of that there are still plenty to do for Central Asian states in issues of covering population with clean water and providing sanitation for all, in developing cooperation and in promoting gender perspectives in water sphere. All of us, working in the environmental and political sphere, should keep working. Central Asia should add its voice to the global activities and discussions. We should keep acting, thinking, researching, sharing ideas that can make Central Asia more sustainable place, and thus a better place to live.

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