

THE NEW DELHI DECLARATION

The XIIth World Water Congress, on the theme “Water for Sustainable Development: Towards Innovative Solutions” organized by the International Water Resources Association (IWRA) in association with the Indian Regional Committee of IWRA and the Central Board of Irrigation and Power (CBIP) of India has been held from 22 to 25 of November, 2005 in the City of New Delhi, India. The Congress was attended by some five hundred participants from fifty countries and twenty international organizations, whereby some two hundred scientific papers were presented and discussed.

Noting that the Congress raised attention related to the implementation of integrated water resources management, focussed in particular on the aspects of water efficiency, the importance of stakeholder participation, and small-scale adapted solutions in water resources management, provision of water for ecosystem services, and identifying the value of sharing the benefits from interstate and international basins;

Noting also that case studies highlighted the emerging as well as established initiatives ranging from the Euphrates-Tigris and Nile River Basins to the Aral Sea and the Great Lakes of North America;

Considering that researchers from around the world have highlighted the central importance of environmentally sound water infrastructures for storage and the emerging new technologies in this respect along with their economics and financing models;

Observing that innovative solutions were presented for both urban and rural water management, risk management, combating draught and flood and enhancing water security especially in areas prone to frequent natural disasters;

Considering that a number of case studies of national actions on water development were extensively presented for major water stressed and water dependent economies of India, China, Egypt, Central Asian Republics, and the Arab Countries region;

Noting that a fostered spirit of cooperation at all levels was seen central to the success for regions of all sizes;

Confirming that there is an urgent need to increase investments in water resources development to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and reverse the widening gap between the rich and the poor countries;

Observing that a holistic framework is essential that would bring together the many different sectors, aspects, stakeholders, and modalities with a sound philosophy and adequate pragmatism in implementation;

Noting that it was emphasized that new frameworks such as IWRM must be incorporated in National Planning and implementation processes;

Noting that the full spectrum of private and public financing models should be considered for the combination that is most applicable to local conditions, with proper provisions for the poor;

Observing that capacity building is recognized as a priority issue and there is a need not only for more water managers but also for water managers that are able to address the different dimensions of water management;

Taking stock of the targets of the MDGs for poverty reduction in developing countries and resolution of UN Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the European Experience in water management, the role of the United Nations-Water, the activities and the processes for participation in the Fourth World Water Forum planned for Mexico in 2006;

Noting the changing water scenarios on account of changes in climate, population, trade, and technology, among others, and having challenged the prevailing wisdom and assessed the value of new paradigm in water at the global level, past experience and failure to meet previously established global targets and plans.

Therefore,

The XIIth World Water Congress of IWRA

Declares that

Water is the engine of economic growth, a pillar of sustainable development, an unquestioned fundamental requirement to alleviate poverty, and a basic need for every form of life on the planet that should be conserved, protected and developed for the benefit of all, making sure that the voices of the underprivileged and the underrepresented are heard.

All national policies should reflect this overarching consideration.

We call upon the world leaders to place water infrastructure development on the top of the agenda to address and reverse the trends of decades of decline in financial allocation by governments and financial institutions for such development.

November 25, 2005, New Delhi, India.