

Agreed Minutes

Seventh Governing Board Meeting Regional Centre on Urban Water Management- Tehran

(under the auspices of UNESCO)

Tehran-Iran, 05 May 2010 (09:00-13:00)

The Seventh Governing Board meeting was held in Tehran, 5 May 2010. The meeting was attended by the following honourable members:

Member States:

- **Iran**
H.E. Mr. Majid Namjoo, Chairman of the GB and Minister of Energy
Mr. Mohammadreza Attarzadeh, Deputy Minister of Energy for Water and Wastewater Affairs
Dr. Homayoun Motiee, Director of RCUWM-Tehran
- **Oman**
H.E. Mr. Abdullah bin Salim bin Amer Al Rawas, Minister of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources
- H.E. Ali bin Mohammed Al Abri, Undersecretary For Water Resources Affairs, Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources
- **Afghanistan**
H.E. Mr. Al-Haj Mohammad Ismael, Minister of Energy and Water
- **India**
H.E. Mr. Sanjay Singh, Indian Ambassador in Tehran
- **Kuwait**
Mr. Mashan Al Otaibi, Representative of Ministry of Electricity and Water
- **Tajikistan**
Mr. Makhmasaid Isoev, Representative of Ministry of Water Economy and Land Reclamation
- **Syria**
Mr. Kamal Al Shaykha, Representative of Ministry of Housing and Construction
- **Bangladesh**
H.E. Mr. Khandkar Abdus Sattar, Bangladesh Ambassador in Tehran
- **Lebanon**
H.E. Mr. Zein Al-Moussawi, Lebanon Ambassador in Tehran
- **Bahrain**
Mr. Adnan Mohamed Abdulrahman Fakhroo, Representative of Ministry of Electricity and Water Affairs

- **Iraq**
Mr. Salar Koshnow, Representative of Ministry of Water Resources
- **Zimbabwe**
Representative from Zimbabwean Embassy in Tehran

Organisations:

- **UNESCO**
Mr. Qunli Han, Representative
- **UNESCO-IHE**
Mr. Meine Pieter Van Dijk, Representative
- **UNW-DPC**
Mr. Reza Ardakanian, Director
- **UN-HABITAT**
Mr. Debashish Bhattacharjee, Representative
- **CHRS**

Special Guests

- **Iranian National Commission for UNESCO**
Mr. Mohammadreza Saeedabadi, General Secretary
- **Iraq**
Mr. Amer Khalil Ismael, Representative of Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works
- **Ministry of Energy, I.R. Iran**
Mr. Behzad, Deputy Minister of Energy in Power and Energy Affairs
Mr. Mahsouli, Vice Minister in International Affairs
Mr. Alireza Almasvandi, Managing Director, Iranian Water Resources Management Company
Mr. Ghasemi Afshar, Head of Ministerial Office
Mr. Aminian, Head of Security Office

The representatives of Egypt, Germany, Pakistan, and Yemen as well as The International Water Academy (TIWA), the Inter-Islamic Network on Water Resources Development and Management (INWRDAM), International Water Association (IWA) and Wageningen University apologised for not being able to participate in the meeting.

1- OPENING:

After reciting Holy Quran and I.R. Iran national anthem, the following speeches were delivered:

The Director of the Centre, Mr. Homayoun Motiee welcomed the participants to the 7th Governing Board Meeting of the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM-Tehran). He hoped to observe effective decisions to be made during the board meeting which will lead towards promoting the Centre's performance.

Mr. Qunli Han as the Representative of UNESCO delivered UNESCO's remarks. The following issues were highlighted in his speech:

- a) Water resources challenges, conflicts and priorities in the MENA region.
- b) Future plans of the 7th phase of the International Hydrological Programme.
- c) UNESCO's preparedness in collaborating with RCUWM-Tehran in its activities and projects.
- d) New proposals and ideas required from the Category II Centres for promoting regional cooperation.
- e) The importance of the new initiative proposed by the Centre as the International Drought Initiative (IDI) was raised.
- f) Efficient transboundary water management, issues to be worked on.
- g) Contribution of the regional countries with the world water assessment program, due to water scarcity issues in the region.

The meeting was officially opened by H.E. Mr. Majid Namjoo, Minister of Energy, Islamic Republic of Iran and the Chairperson of RCUWM-Tehran Governing Board. He highlighted several issues in his speech some of which were as follows:

- A) A warm welcome to the new candidates of RCUWM GB Membership: Iraq, Bahrain, Zimbabwe and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and the Center for Hydrometeorology and Remote Sensing (CHRS).
- B) Promoting regional and international cooperation among RCUWM member states and organizations.
- C) Special attention given to Climate Change and its impacts on water resources.
- D) Capacity building and training as an important component.
- E) High importance of structural and non-structural aspects for better management of water resources.
- F) Developing new technologies such as cloud seeding, rainwater harvesting, etc.
- H) Special attention given to promoting scientific collaboration to decrease the cost of sea water desalination.
- I) Developing capacities for recycling and reusing returned water, industrial and agricultural wastewater.
- J) Joint cooperation in the field of implementing technical training of human resources.

2- Adoption of the Agenda

The draft agenda was put on the floor and it was unanimously adopted as follows:

- *Opening*

- *Director's report on implemented activities between the 6th and 7th GBM, budget and work plan of 2010, new memberships*
- *Short film on RCUWM – Tehran activities*
- *Comments and Approvals on the Director's Report, members contribution towards the Centre's activities, status of inactive members, Country Reports*
- *New memberships in RCUWM Governing Board*
- *Date and Venue of the 8th Governing Board Meeting*
- *New memberships in the RCUWM Executive Committee*
- *Other Issues*
- *Closing (by the Chair)*

3- Director's Report

The Director of the Centre presented a brief report on the activities and achievements carried out in between the period of the 6th and 7th Governing Board (November 2008 – May 2010) as well as the budget allocated to the projects implemented by the Centre which included UNESCO's and other member states / organizations shares. The training events held in different countries such as Malaysia, Uzbekistan, Oman and Iran were described. He also addressed the participants on the work plan and budget of the Centre in 2010.

He also came up with new proposals for jointly being carried out by the Centre and its members during 2010 and the coming year. The proposals were as follows:

- Towards sustainable water management in line with SWITCH-in-Asia project (SWITCH is fully explained in page 26 and annex XI of the compendium).
- Impacts of Climate Change and drought on Water Resources Management (Urban and Rural)
- Water Demand Management in Mega Cities
- Application of RS and GIS in Water Resources Management
- Irrigation Water Management and its impacts on Urban Water
- The Centre's contribution in establishing the OIC Water Council

4- Video Film on RCUWM Performance

A short video film on the activities and achievements of the Centre since its establishment in 2002 was demonstrated which was highly received by the members of the board meeting. Worth noting that this film has been prepared in Farsi, English, Russian and Arabic during 2009 and a copy of it has been distributed among the participants.

5- Comments by GB Members and Approvals of the Meeting

All distinguished members of the GB presented their viewpoints on the Director's report, contribution toward the Centre's activities and their countries' and organisations' policies and strategies in water management issues.

The following remarks were made by the Centre's member states / organizations:

OMAN: H.E. Mr. Al Rawas thanked the Ministry of Energy, I.R. Iran and the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management- Tehran for hosting the 7th Governing Board Meeting. The following issues were presented by the Minister:

- a) RCUWM plays a vital role in the region.
- b) Oman is prepared to host two events as "Application of RS and GIS in Water Resources Management" and "Impacts of Drought on Water Resources" during late 2010 and 2011, respectively.
- c) Regional cooperation is required for facing water challenges.
- d) Water security should be one of the top priorities of the Centre's activities.
- e) The Centre should work harder so that information exchange among its member states and organisations is effectively carried out.
- f) Special focus on desalination techniques and information exchange on new technologies.

AFGHANISTAN: H.E. Mr. Ismael Khan after thanking the Centre for organizing this event, briefed the participants on Afghanistan's situation in concern with water resources and the total population having access to water, security, health, etc. He also pointed out the new water and environmental laws which he deemed very vital for his country.

No considerable project in the water section has been carried out, as stated by H.E. the Minister. Afghanistan has been mainly focusing in the field of Capacity Building and Training in the water sector. He also called for financial support towards the National IHP Committee of Afghanistan and required support from I.R. Iran for reconstruction projects in the field of water in his country.

SYRIA: The representative of Syria thanked the Ministry of Energy, I.R. Iran and RCUWM for hosting this event. He pointed out the nitrate problem in drinking water and called for support toward establishing wastewater treatment plants by I.R. Iran in Syria.

BAHRAIN: The representative of Bahrain expressed his sincere appreciations to the Ministry of Energy, I.R. Iran and RCUWM for hosting this event. The representative stated that Bahrain is ready to learn from Iran and co-organize joint events in this concern. Bahrain is a poor country in respect to water resources and it mainly depends on groundwater which is also very low. Another challenge is the real price of water which is not received from the subscribers.

INDIA: The representative from the Indian Embassy in Tehran delivered the apologies of Minister of Water Resources, for not being able to attend the meeting. He promised to deliver the outcomes of this meeting to the Minister,

in due time. The representative also wished to observe promotion in the two countries relation in the field of water resources management.

LEBANON: The representative from Lebanon Embassy in Tehran addressed the severe problems of Lebanon in the water sector and the efforts carried out for finding solutions. He also called for developing water relations between the two countries.

BANGLADESH: The representative from the Embassy wished success for the Centre's activities and promised to deliver the results of this meeting to his government.

ZIMBABWE: The representative from the Embassy stated that due to climate change impacts on the country's water resources, the country is changing into deserts and global contribution is required in this concern.

KUWAIT: The representative delivered his thanks to the Centre for hosting the 7th Governing Board Meeting in Tehran. He also expressed Kuwait's preparedness in carrying out joint projects with the Centre. The representative of Kuwait also stated that close cooperation is required for solving water problems in the region and Kuwait is quite prepared to collaborate with Iran in this concern.

TAJIKISTAN: The representative stated that Tajikistan has plenty water and has good capacities for hydropower plants and it is ready to collaborate with the Centre on this issue. He also stated that the International Conference on the mid-term comprehensive review of the implementation of international decade for action "water for life" 2005 - 2015 will take place in Tajikistan, 8-10 June 2010 and invited all the participants to attend this event.

IRAQ: The representative from Iraq thanked the Ministry of Energy and the Centre for effectively holding the 7th Governing Board and stated that Iraq has confronted severe problems in potable water due to climate change impacts on water resources. The representative also stated that efforts have been carried out for equal dissemination of water in their country. The Ministry of Water Resources called for training events to be held for Iraqi experts and required support from I.R. Iran for reconstruction projects in the field of water in his country. Worth noting that the representatives of the Ministry of Water Resources and the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works were present during the board meeting.

UNW-DPC: The representative thanked RCUWM and its wonderful team for holding the 7th Board Meeting. He also explained about the indirect relation of Agricultural water to urban water issues, and the logic of having the Centre's activities extended to issues indirectly related to urban water.

He also stated that title of the World Water Day for the year 2011 would be "Water and Urbanisation" and it is a good opportunity for the Centre to effectively be involved in activities related to the world water day (22 March 2011).

As expressed an International Conference on Water Transboundary Management for Promoting Cooperation in Afghanistan will be held in Bonn in near future and all participants were invited to attend this event.

UNW-DPC also expressed its willingness to support joint activities with the Centre at regional level.

UNESCO-IHE: The representative of UNESCO-IHE delivered the rector's sincere thanks to the Ministry of Energy and RCUWM authorities for hosting the meeting. He stated that UNESCO-IHE is quite prepared to hold joint online and short-term courses for the GB member states.

He also pointed out that research projects are lacking from the Centre's activities. One of the important projects being carried out by UNESCO-IHE is integrated water management in the Asian cities with the aim of maximising the use of water by treating and reusing it and the Centre is invited to be involved.

As stated, separating gray and brown water and desalination are amongst other issues IHE is interested to jointly work with RCUWM. UNESCO-IHE is also prepared to jointly work on the SWITCH project with the Centre.

UN-HABITAT: The representative of UN-HABITAT stated that this Centre mainly works on Capacity Building and Training activities and it looks forward to jointly carrying out a project on water and sanitation under disaster situation with RCUWM.

IRANIAN NATCOM: The representative of Iranian Natcom, as an observer focused on capacity building and awareness activities as referred in RCUWM mandate and raised the importance of including water issues in the schools and universities curriculum.

As stated, training of trainers activities on different issues related to urban water management should be amongst the activities carried out by the Centre. He also mentioned that the new proposal prepared by RCUWM as the International Drought Initiative (IDI) is under investigation by UNESCO and it will be presented during the IHP Intergovernmental Council in Paris, July 2010.

H.E. Mr. Attarzadeh thanked all the participants for their participation. He stated that the importance of Climate Change and the need for better contacts between the countries as well as transferring water to neighbouring countries to mitigate negative impacts of drought on their water resources should be considered. He also provided brief information on the capabilities of the I.R. Iran in the field of Dam Construction and irrigation networks.

He also mentioned that a regional commission on climate change in Iran covering all regional countries should be established for research and

information exchange on this specific issue. He also pointed out the importance of virtual meetings and video conferences for regular contacts between the Centre's members.

6- New Memberships in RCUWM Governing Board

The membership of Bahrain, Iraq, Zimbabwe and the two international organizations as UN-HABITAT and CHRS was approved by the GB Members. Worth noting that the representative of CHRS was not able to attend the meeting and this Center was presented by RCUWM director. The activities of CHRS were briefly described and as stated this Center has the ability to carry out meteorological anticipations for specific periods with the use of satellites. The Center is also a strong database in concern with climatic information. Both entities were welcomed to RCUWM Governing Board family.

7- Date and Venue of the 8th Governing Board Meeting

The director of the Centre invited the member states to host the 8th GB meeting. After having it proposed by the Director of UNW-DPC, Afghanistan representative accepted to host the 8th Governing Board Meeting of the Centre in Afghanistan during Spring 2011. The exact date and venue will be announced in near future.

8- New Memberships in RCUWM Executive Committee (EC)

As stated by the chair, the Executive Committee of the Centre is the acting body of the Governing Board. This Committee follows up the decisions made during the board meeting.

The chair called for further members in the Centre's EC in addition to Iran, Germany and Oman as well as UNW-DPC, UNESCO and TIWA. No feedbacks were received in this concern. The Centre will follow the procedure of receiving the countries' and organizations' interest in becoming a member of the Centre's Executive Committee.

9- Other issues

- RCUWM director asked for further motivation by all GB members.
- The chair of the meeting stated efforts are being carried out for changing the Centre into an international entity for extending its GB members and activities.
- A proposal on water prize was announced by H.E. Mr. Namjoo as the chair for the best work carried out in the field of work. A concept paper will be prepared by the Center to be disseminated to all GB members for their feedbacks. The next GB will then approve the proposal for being put into action.
- H.E. Mr. Attarzadeh, Deputy Minister of Energy for Water and Wastewater Affairs announced the preparedness of the Ministry of Energy, I.R. Iran to host 5-10 participants from the Governing Board to visit Iran each year with the purpose of being familiarized with the

capabilities of the I.R. Iran in the field of water. The Centre will follow up this issue.

- The chair also invited the countries to become a member of the International Centre on Qanats and Historic Hydraulic Structures which is another Category II Centre, under the auspices of UNESCO, based in Yazd.
- The chair also stated that the possibility of having the ECO Regional Centre on Water being established in Tehran with the support of RCUWM is under investigation. The progress report will be delivered to the GB members, after being finalized.
- As stated the first meeting of the Advisory Panel on OIC Water Vision will be held in Dubai, Emirates, 25-26 May 2010. The panel is being established as a follow up to the recommendations of the meeting of Ministers responsible for Water from OIC member states which was held in conjunction with the 5th World Water Forum, 20 March 2009 in Istanbul, Turkey. The main objective of this meeting is to work out the strategies of establishing an OIC Council on Water. RCUWM director will be participating in this meeting

10- Closing Remarks:

- The closing remarks were presented by the chair, by briefing the participants on the proposals presented by each of the GB attendees during the meeting.

All members attending the Seventh Governing Board Meeting expressed their appreciation for attending the board meeting and further expressed their gratitude for the hospitality shown during their stay in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

All members of the GB meeting visited the Water and Wastewater exhibition held in the Ministry.