



BRIDGING  
DIVIDES  
FOR WATER

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **5th WORLD WATER FORUM BRINGS THE BLACK SEA COUNTRIES TOGETHER FOR WATER**

The latest edition of the 'In and around Turkey' regional process preparatory meetings in the run-up to the 5th World Water Forum is being held over 8-9 November in Istanbul's Marmara Hotel. Under the theme of "Protecting and Managing Water Resources Considering Humanitarian and Environmental Needs; Financial Issues", Black Sea countries discussed the protection, management and finance of water resources.

**Istanbul, November, 10, 2008** – Although the world's water resources are increasingly under threat, the 5th World Water Forum is not daunted by the challenge ahead. Through the organization of a series of regional preparatory meetings, the meeting participants are combining their voices and efforts to put a stop to these threats.

The sixth meeting within the 5th World Water Forum's 'In and Around Turkey' regional process is being held in Istanbul. Under the theme of "Protecting and Managing Water Resources Considering Humanitarian and Environmental Needs; Financing Issues", more than 200 specialists from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, Ukraine and Turkey are in attendance to discuss water resource management issues important in their region.

#### **Turkey's leadership on water**

The meeting is being hosted by the 5th World Water Forum. The conference was opened by **Prof. Dr. Oktay Tabasaran**, Secretary General of the 5th World Water Forum, **Mr. Orlando Jaimes Martinez** Former Executive Director of 4th World Water Forum and **Prof. Dr. Hasan Zuhuri Sarikaya**, Undersecretary of Minister of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Turkey. In his speech, Prof. Tabasaran said that there was a lot of experience to be shared in these meetings, adding, "The most important problems of Black Sea region are the pollution of the Danube River and seashore erosion. The aim of this meeting is to share national and regional solutions to the key water issues of this region. By the end of this meeting, the current main water problems of Black Sea Region will be prioritized, potential solutions will be presented and the key messages to be introduced during the discussions at 5th World Water Forum will be defined. We are pleased to host this important meeting in Istanbul. The image of Turkey is increasing through our leadership on bringing the relevant actors to the table to help this region's shared water issues." The 5th World Water Forum aims at "Bridging Divides for Water" and will be held from 16-22 March, 2009.

#### **EU is a neighbour on the Black Sea**

**Prof. Dr. Hasan Zururi Sarikaya** mentioned in his opening speech that the 5th World Water Forum has been bringing attention to water issues around the world and added: "For the past 2 years, we have focused attention on water issues to a broad audience during the preparatory process of the upcoming Forum. The 5th World Water Forum is a cost-effective way to find solutions – the participants share their knowledge and experience with all countries, together at one table. Learning these methods alone by trial and error is much more expensive and takes time. During this Black Sea regional meeting, we discussed the pollution of the Danube River knowing that with the expansion in 2007, the European Union became a neighbour in the Black Sea region; Black Sea issues are EU issues."

### **Water issues are high on the international agenda**

**Mr. Orlando Jaimes Martinez** shared his experiences with the meeting participants, saying “Nearly 3 years ago we had 4th World Water Forum in Mexico. Our learning experience was significant because at our Forum, with participation from more than 100 countries, more than 600 local actions were shared. We had good results in the end of the Forum. The budget for national water service works were highest in the year following the Forum in Mexico, and the experience of the international experts was used to help create our new National Water Plan. With more funds and a new plan in place, more water services are being provided. I am sure that this forum will also provide similar advantages to Turkey.”

### **Water problems and needs in the Black Sea**

“Managing and Protecting Water Resources and Their Supply Systems to Meet Human and Environmental Needs; Financial Issues” is being achieved via roundtable discussions. The ideas and suggestions for managing and protecting water resources in this meeting is a key step on the road to Istanbul and the 5th World Water Forum. It is one of the few times that discussions about solving regional water problems have taken place with the participation countries of Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, Ukraine and Turkey since the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

### **On the side: Historical importance of water structures**

“Water as the historical scene for the alliance of civilization” is being discussed in a roundtable discussion. The discussions will form the basis for a side event dealing with the rich global heritage of historical water structures and their role in the creation of modern societies, which is planned to take place during the 5th World Water Forum.

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### **About the World Water Forum**

The World Water Forum is biggest meeting on water issues where the world comes together to share concrete solutions for water problems. It is organized every three years by the World Water Council and the government of the host country, and is the result of more than two years of preparation involving people from all regions, sectors and backgrounds. After previous Fora held in Morocco (1997), the Netherlands (2000), Japan (2003) and Mexico (2006), the 5th World Water Forum will be held in Istanbul, Turkey in March 2009. For more information on the World Water Forum and the World Water Council, please visit [www.worldwatercouncil.org](http://www.worldwatercouncil.org).

### **About the 5th World Water Forum**

The overall theme for the 5th World Water Forum, “Bridging Divides for Water”, describes the aim to bring together contrasting viewpoints, supply and demand, rich and poor and developed and developing worlds. For more information on the 5th World Water Forum and its Regional Processes, please visit [www.worldwaterforum5.org](http://www.worldwaterforum5.org).

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