

In the name of God, the compatient, the merciful

“We have created everything from water”

(Holy Quran, Sureh: Al-Anbia ,Versus: 30)

On behalf of the delegation of Islamic Republic of Iran (I.R. Iran), I would like to thank to the organizers of this International event. Iran is located in the arid and semi-arid region of the world. Water demand increases at the upstream as well as discharge reduction in transboundary basins have caused several problems for water supply in parts of Iran.

Considering the climatology of Iran, our fathers valued water very much and thus put every effort to protect the resource. They invented Qanats to abstract groundwater in a sustainable manner. About three hundred ages ago, an Iranian scientist named Shiekh Bahaiee provided a legislation for water allocation and management for the time.

Several river basin development schemes have been designed and constructed in Iran since victory of Islamic revolution in 1979. In the light of these experiences, Iranian engineering companies have recently played a significant role in study, design and construction of water infrastructures in the MENA region. As a part of Iran's aid to Afghanistan and Iraq, their water infrastructures have been reconstructed after the civil wars.

Iran has transboundary and common water resources with its fifteen neighbors. These spans the Caspian Sea at the north and Persian Gulf as well as Oman sea at the south of the country. Considering operation and management of the transboundary water resources, several problems have emerged in Iran such as:

- ***Drying Hamoun wetlands***
- ***Water depletion in Urmia Lake***
- ***Drying HorAlazim wetland***

Iran has been very active in increasing co-operations with its neighbors in a water related context. For instance, Doosti (friendship) dam has been constructed by Iran and Turkmenistan which will be presented in detail tomorrow. Furthermore, transboundary water commissions have been expanded in recent years.

Iran has participated actively in international water-related organizations. It has initiated the following centers jointly with UNESCO:

Speech of Mr. Mohammad Reza Attarzadeh, Deputy Minister of Energy for Water and Waste Water Affairs, I.R.Iran, at first session of Europe-Asia Transboundary Water Cooperation

- ***Regional Center for Urban Water Management (RCUWM)***
- ***International Center on Qanats and Historic Hydraulic Structures(ICQHS)***

In the past three years, Iran has had a fruitful co-operations with UNECE regarding transboundary Rivers, lakes and ground waters.

As you might probably be aware, our region faces several challenges regarding transboundary water consumption and environmental protection. Therefore, the I.R. Iran proposes the following actions to achieve optimal use and best management for transboundary basins:

- ***Sustainable development of water supply infrastructures***
- ***Increasing water use efficiency***
- ***Benefit sharing among stakeholders***
- ***International customary laws for equitable water use***
- ***Application of GIS and RS***
- ***Disaster risk reduction***
- ***Institutional capacity building***
- ***Creation of database for information exchange***
- ***Organization of seminars and training workshops***

Last but not the least, I wish every success for this conference.