

Declaration of principles for co-operation among the core parties on water-related matters and new and additional water resources

As part of the Programme adopted by the *Multilateral Working Group on water Resources* (MWGWR) of the *Middle East Peace Process*, the Government of Norway has sponsored certain activities of the agenda.

Within this context comparative studies on *water Legislation, Institutions and Pricing of the Core Parties* were commissioned and executed.

As an outcome of these studies the Parties, facilitated by the Government of Norway and the *Office of Gave/holder*, have identified common denominators in their water resources management systems and proclaimed this Declaration on Principles for Co-operation among the Core parties on Water-related Matters and New and Additional Water Resources. Although the Core Parties in the Middle East Peace Process are considered to be Jordan, Syria, Israel, Lebanon, and the PLO for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority, for the purposes of this Declaration, the term the *Core Parties* means those Core Parties who are signatories to this Declaration.

The Core Parties agree that this Declaration and the co-operation thereunder will not affect or alter in any form or manner any of the bilateral or other agreements or undertakings among them, nor does it prohibit or constrain any bilateral arrangements, understandings or agreements aimed at enhancing co-operation in water-related matters.

The Core Parties view this Declaration as an expression of:

- The role of the multilateral talks in promoting co-operation and confidence-building in the field of water resources and in the importance of co-operation for the promotion of matters of mutual interest;
- A joint resolve to co-operate among them in the development of New and Additional Water Resources;
- The importance of water resources management on the basis of locally-compatible legal, economic and institutional frameworks and principles;

- The recognition that co-operative efforts among them will facilitate the development of New and Additional Water Resources for their joint benefit; and
- The ability to co-operate on the basis of the common denominators identified within their respective water management systems.

The Core Parties proclaim as objectives of their co-operation:

- identifying the needs for New and Additional Water Resources;
- identifying potential New and Additional Water Resources and the development thereof;
- combining their co-operative efforts in the development of New and Additional Water Resources; and
- enhancing their water supply, and increasing the efficiency of its use.

The Declaration consists of three parts, namely: *Common Denominators, Principles of Co-operation on New and Additional 'Water Resources, and Co-operation on Other 'Water-related Matters.*

I

Common Denominators

The Core Parties identified and agreed to the following common denominators in their water legislation as a basis for co-operation among themselves:

1. Water Resources in Legislation

Their respective water legislations apply to all types of water resources including wastewater and desalinated water.

2. Ownership and Administration of Water Resources

All water resources of each party are publicly owned and/ or centrally controlled. They are used for the benefit of their respective societies. The Core Parties promote public participation in water resources management. Well-drilling, water production and supply are allowed only by permit or license. A Central Water Authority/ Government Agency exists in each of the Core parties, and exercises effective control over water resources.

3. Allocation

Domestic uses occupy the first priority in the allocation of water resources.

4. Drought Measures

The Core Parties will take appropriate measures in periods of drought and water scarcity.

5. Water Quality and Protection

Water quality standards for various water uses have been adopted by each of the Core Parties; water preservation is an overriding concern, and enforcement powers exist in the hands of competent authorities to prevent water pollution, and to mitigate any negative environmental impacts on them at the expense of the polluters.

6. Data and Record Keeping

Obligations exist, pursuant to the legislation of each Core Party, to measure, monitor and keep proper record of all water production, supplies and consumption.

7. Compliance and Enforcement

Proper sanctions against non-compliance are explicit in the respective legislation of each of the Core Parties. Enforcement of the water legislation is the norm.

8. Water Charges

Water is not supplied free of charge in any of the Core Parties. Tariff structures, taking into account different extents of cost recovery, apply to domestic, industrial and agricultural sectors. These tariffs are periodically reviewed and adjusted.

II

Principles of Co-operation on New and Additional Water Resources

1. Definitions

For the purpose of this Declaration:

- 1.1 *New and Additional water Resources* are only those potential water resources which are not *Existing water Resources*, and which are not part of new and additional water resources developed pursuant to bilateral agreements.

- 1.2 *Existing water Resources* are the individual resources of each of the respective parties' renewable, non-renewable and waste water resources.
- 1.3 *Co-operating Parties* are those of the Core Parties, signatories to this Declaration, which actively participate in the development of any specific Project relating to new and additional water resources.
- 1.4 *A New and Additional water Resource Project*, hereinafter the *Project*, means a project among Co-operating Parties to develop New and Additional Water Resources by specific agreement.

2. General Principles

- 2.1 The development of New and Additional Water Resources will not adversely affect the development or utilization of Existing Water Resources.
- 2.2 All arrangements with respect to New and Additional Water Resources will be limited in time and subject to periodic mutual review.

3. Mechanisms of Co-operation

- 3.1 Co-operation among the Core Parties will be carried out by their respective water institutions through joint bodies on a ministerial and managerial level to be established, as appropriate, for each respective Party.
- 3.2 Each Project requires the consensus of all the Co-operating Parties for implementation.

4. Ownership and Utilization

- 4.1 New and Additional Water Resources, developed in joint effort by the Core Parties for the benefit of some or all of them, will be considered as part of their own water resources only to the extent of the share allocated to them.
- 4.2 Details concerning the utilization and ownership will be the subject of separate agreements for each Project.
- 4.3 Each Core Party can apply its legislation, within its respective jurisdiction, on the share allocated to it by each Project.

5. Technical, Economic and Financial Issues

- 5.1 Projects will be technically, economically, and financially sustainable.
- 5.2 The Co-operating Parties will carry their respective share of the project financing including the costs of operation, maintenance, and amortization of the Project. Due regard will be given to less developed Co-operating Parties, and joint efforts will be made to assist in the obtaining of financing

on favorable terms, provided that no such efforts affect any of the bilateral door/recipients arrangements or protocols.

- 5.3 The Co-operating Parties agree to participate jointly in the raising of the funds needed for the Project implementation and to secure the funds needed for the operation and maintenance of the new water system.
- 5.4 The cost to each of the Co-operating Parties of water derived from New and Additional Resources will be based upon the cost of production, operation, maintenance and amortization.
- 5.5 Water derived from the New and Additional Resources will not be subject to levies on account of conveyance, storage, treatment, or protection in excess of levies which the owner of the project would normally incur.
- 5.6 Co-operating Parties may, by mutual consent, trade the use of their respective shares of the waters from New and Additional Resources, provided that such trading does not cause harm to the shares allocated to any other Co-operating Parties.

6. Environmental Management

- 6.1 All Projects will be based on environmentally-sound principles.
- 6.2 The Co-operating Parties give preference to those Projects which utilize advanced technological water usage methods.
- 6.3 Each Co-operating Party is responsible for the protection of the Project against environmental pollution originating within its jurisdiction.

Water Protection

- 6.4 Each Co-operating Party is responsible for the prevention of harm to those parts of the Projects under its jurisdiction.
- 6.5 Such responsibility includes *inter alia* the preservation of water quality and the prevention of unauthorized withdrawals.

7. Operation and Maintenance

The Co-operating Parties will set the standards for the operation and maintenance of the Projects.

8. Areas of Co-operation

It is understood that the following potential areas of co-operation in the development of New and Additional Water Resources for the Co-operating Parties will be further studied in order to determine their feasibility:

- 8.1 acquisition and import of water including the possibility of carrying such waters through existing or new supply systems (wheeling);
- 8.2 development of desalination plants;
- 8.3 rainfall enhancement; and
- 8.4 Any other relevant area of co-operation.

III

Co-operation On Other Water-related Matters

Co-operation on other water-related matters, although originating among the Core Parties, will be open to regional and extra-regional parties of the Multilateral working Group on Water Resources.

I. Co-operation in Specific Sectors

The Parties express their desire to co-operate among themselves and with other interested Parties on the following *Other Water-related Matters*.

- 1.1 weather forecasting, climatology, weather modification, and meteorology;
- 1.2 environmental conservation;
- 1.3 sustainable water-related natural resources management and desertification control;
- 1.4 enhancement of public awareness and participation; and
- 1.5 Human resources development.

2. Proposed Areas of Co-operation

The Core Parties will in due time explore possible co-operation among themselves and with other interested parties in the following areas:

- 2.1 collection, filing, processing, transmission and exchange of water data and related information;
- 2.2 preparation of plans for flood-protection and utilization; with emphasis on development of *Early warning Systems*,
- 2.3 development of norms, standards and specifications for water devices, equipment and infrastructure,
- 2.4 transfer and adoption of advanced technology throughout the chains of water storage, conveyance and application, including automation and controls of water systems; particularly related to

reduction of crop water requirements;

2.5 water-energy interactions, with emphasis on desalination;

2.6 establishment of a Regional Research Centre; and

2.7 Identification of ways to achieve optimal use of water in the agricultural sector.

3. Mechanism of Co-operation

3.1 The Co-operating Parties will decide on the mechanism of their co-operation on other water-related matters set out in this section.

3.2 All decisions with respect to co-operation on Other Water-Related Matters will be adopted by consensus.

4. Specific Co-operation

4.1 The Core Parties agree to hold Regional Seminars on various water-related matters.

4.2 The Core Parties agree to publish the results of their co-operation in a Regional Publication.

5. Extended Co-operation

The Co-operating Parties may by consensus agree to include additional water-related matters in their co-operation.