



## Press Release

On March 19<sup>th</sup> in Kyoto, during the Third World Water Forum, a “citizen’s commitment for the right to water” was announced by around forty individuals from all continents, who were meeting for the first time as the World Assembly of Water Wisdom. The citizen’s commitment was brought before the Ministerial Conference in Kyoto by Michail Gorbatschow.

The text of the commitment constitutes the culmination of a willingness to act formulated two years ago. It comes as a result of the discussion of the principles and experiences of several networks of international organizations and NGOs throughout the world.

This preparatory measure constitutes the start of an action whose aim is to clarify and improve the Millennium Development Goals and the agreements struck in Johannesburg on sanitation. The project was launched on the initiative of the International Secretariat for Water with the participation of Green Cross, ALMAE and Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council.

### **In this citizen’s commitment, the World Assembly of Water Wisdom states the following principles:**

- It hails the recognition of the right to water as a basic and undeniable human right, as recently adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the United Nations at its meeting on November 28<sup>th</sup> in Geneva. It appears urgent that this right be guaranteed by international law and that States strive to implement it.
- It states that the citizens and the members of local communities are entitled to make decisions, the right to education and information, in particular in order to fight against corruption, a right to financing and the right of appeal.

### **The World Assembly of Water Wisdom has set several objectives in order to influence governments and donors:**

- It is asking for a global water agreement to be signed.
- It is demanding the implementation of an international monitoring network implying all concerned parties, from international organizations to civil society. A tool for checking and alerting, it would watch over the security of the poorest interests and the promotion of cheap alternative solutions that would respect the environment.
- It offers to designate in each country a water mediator (water ombudsperson).
- It will regularly publish a report, which somewhat like those by Amnesty International, will denounce where necessary any deviation from the rules defined in Kyoto.

Kyoto, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2003

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The full text of the citizen’s commitment for the right to access to water is available on [www.planets-voice.com](http://www.planets-voice.com).

