



# Hydrodiplomacy and climate Change for Peace in the Middle- East: Case of the Nile Basin

**Luxembourg Palace - salle  
Clémenceau  
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(14:00-18:30)**



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## Concept note

During the past two years, two successful symposiums have been hosted by the Palace of Luxembourg at the French Senate, respectively on "Hydrodiplomacy and Climate Change for Peace in the Near East: Case of the Orontes Basin (2015)" and "Hydrodiplomacy and Climate Change for Peace in the Middle East: Case of the Jordan Basin (2016)" that brought together a large number of politicians and experts to exchange views on these topics.

The events were an initiative of **H.E Mr. Olivier Cadic**, Senator representing the French nationals overseas and **Dr. Fadi Comair**, Honorary President of MENBO<sup>1</sup>, the initiator of the concept of Hydrodiplomacy.

As a result of these symposiums the concept of hydrodiplomacy has been considerably reinforced to become a tool for peace and sustainability for public actors in the management of transboundary basins and for the safety and security of water resources.

Following their success, it was decided to organize a **third symposium for the Nile Basin** that will tackle the following subjects:

- **Geopolitics of the Nile Basin: political process for the reduction of hotspots and the impacts of global changes.**
- **Hydrodiplomacy of the Nile Basin: securing water resources for future generations.**

The objective of the symposium is to reflect on geopolitical, environmental and security

This new approach requires the application of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)<sup>2</sup> and the implementation of the Paris agreement and Paris Pact at the transboundary level by the riparian countries with the aim to create a **Regional Basin Organization**. Such an initiative is essential to establish political cooperation programs between riparian Nations.

Therefore, this symposium will analyze the geopolitical situation of the Nile basin, the impact of climate change on the supply and demand of water resources, with the aim of proposing a new configuration in the context of an active hydrodiplomacy approach, leading to a "win-win" collaboration among the riparian countries in question, and therefore allowing for the development of Nile sustainable geopolitics.

Based on the gained experience from other basins in the world and from the two symposiums mentioned above (Orontes, Jordan) it would be useful to create a "road map" for adaptation, protection and management policies for the Nile River Basin resources.

To this purpose, we need the participation of policy makers, experts, public and private sectors and the goodwill of everyone, in order to ensure the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 2,6,7<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> MENBO: Mediterranean Network of Basin Organizations

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<sup>2</sup> Integrated Water Resources Management

<sup>3</sup> Sustainable Development Goals



The completion of this project would be feasible through the establishment of a progressive political process supported by donors and financial institutions (World Bank, European Union, Islamic Bank, The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development) in order to promote the implementation of new hydraulic infrastructure projects and the rational use of water resources through the application of innovative technologies, with the objective of securing this resource for future generations and to consider a growing demand in the coming years.

The purpose of the colloquium is to clarify, highlight and emphasize the importance of cooperation between decision-makers, experts and politicians in order to launch a constructive dialogue for the peaceful resolution of tensions in the Nile basin.

### **The Nile: a Human Security Issue.**

The transboundary basins on the south-eastern shore of the Mediterranean constitute a hotspot of tension, of conflict between nations, but also a space for cooperation between people regardless of their ethnicity and religion.

Today, more than ever, the scarcity of water, the most essential resource for the survival of humans, is a factor of tension and conflict. Moreover, global warming is at the heart of the debates and the states are confronted with security and strategic issues linked to the scarcity of resources.

The number of climatic and political refugees is increasing and their displacement is causing an economic, political and environmental shock all over the world and especially in the Mediterranean region.

The Middle East - an integral part of the Mediterranean - is already heavily penalized by environmental degradation coupled with high population growth, an urban

concentration in sensitive coastal areas and a displacement of populations (refugees) as a result of political conflicts. This situation results in water scarcity, which is becoming an important issue because it can be a source of violent conflict.

Located between the eastern shore of the Mediterranean and the African continent, the Nile lies at the heart of major geopolitical stakes, both regional and international. The concerned countries are confronted to security and strategic problems that hinder their development, causing tensions between the different basin countries. Indeed, the Nile represents a source of political and economic power for riparian states, particularly Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, each claiming a sovereign hydro-political position on the river.

The regional geopolitical situation of the Nile basin has been repeatedly shaken by politico-military conflicts. The Nile became a source for cross-border and interstate issues; therefore the projections on the future of the region are mixed.

The Nile is formed with the confluence of the White Nile, which originates in Burundi and Rwanda, and the Blue Nile where the Lake of Tana is located and which forms the Blue Nile region from Ethiopia's side and which supplies about 86% of the basin's water resources.

This river, has an annual average volume estimated at 84 billion m<sup>3</sup> with a significant inter-annual irregularity, travels 6695 kilometers and crosses eleven countries: Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Congo, Burundi, Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, south of Sudan and Sudan and reaches the Mediterranean Sea through Egypt.

The experts confirmed that the management of this basin has always been a subject of dispute



between many riparian countries that are among the poorest areas in the world, making their populations vulnerable to hunger and diseases.

It is a region strongly affected by high population growth, environmental degradation and instability as a result of tensions in the countries bordering the Mediterranean and in the countries of East Africa especially that this river meets hydraulic needs, agricultural irrigation, and boosts the economy of these countries: domestic and commercial navigation, tourism, electricity production and industries.

For this reason, the Nile River represents a particularly important human security issue.

Moreover, water infrastructure projects (canals, dams) are part of the social and economic development of each one of the riparian countries, whose population growth means increased water needs, particularly for agriculture and irrigated crops.

**What configuration is possible for the resolution of disputes around the Nile basin?**

The question of the redistribution of the Nile water resources falls within the framework of the bilateral agreement between Egypt and Sudan of 1959 and also of the diplomatic relations between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. Nevertheless, fragmented management of this resource is increasingly compromising the socio-economic development of the riparian countries, which is the case of Ethiopia for instance (located in the upstream and finalizing actually the "Great Renaissance" dam project with a unilateral action and without prior consultation with downstream basin countries).

**Will this reservoir be a project generating benefits for the downstream countries or will it create tensions about its legitimacy?**

The construction of the Ethiopian dam raises questions about the impact of the dam on the flow of the river, hence the need to discuss, in order to avoid any potential confrontation.

This new condition pushed Egypt to opt for

an active hydrodiplomacy and for a dialogue initiative with the upstream states of the basin, which are the successor states of the British colonies, and therefore are bounded by the administrative decisions taken before their independence, in particular the promise not to undertake any hydraulic works without prior agreement.

This scenario got more and more complicated with the independence of the Republic of South Sudan and it raises once again the question of sharing the Nile resources between this country and the original Sudan. Inter-State and internal conflicts, like the Inter-Sudan conflict, raise problems regarding the stability of diplomatic relations.

Thus, the Nile is at the heart of major regional and geostrategic stakes; it represents a source of political and economic power which increases periodic tensions between riparian states. Will the unreasonable management create a "hydro-conflictual" situation that weighs heavily on the diplomacy of the concerned countries?

Following this logic, in this regional, geopolitically complicated context, will the Egyptian diplomacy -working hard for peaceful solutions - lead to a long term sustainable consensus for the equitable sharing of the transboundary waters?

International cooperation on water issues is of paramount importance to the Middle East due to its numerous but limited water resources. The importance of Hydrodiplomacy in promoting this cooperation is gradually being recognized in the world and in the Mediterranean Region in particular, where the scarcity of natural water is exacerbated by rapid climate change and where a series of sub-regional tensions



involving water problems directly or indirectly, coexist.

### **The Hydrodiplomacy : a cooperation tool between Nations.**

Hydrodiplomacy for the prevention and resolution of conflicts between competing parties should be framed and encouraged under a "water for peace" approach, abandoning the views and speeches of "war for water". It should be facilitated by the adherence and use of appropriate institutional and international frameworks in conjunction with dialogue and cooperation based on equitable sharing and reasonable use of water at transboundary basin level.

Active hydrodiplomacy is the only way to guarantee adequate sharing of the Nile and to achieve a reasonable use of its resources.

This new step towards cooperation, requires the application of an IWRM approach at transboundary basins level, which will lead to a "win-win" situation between the riparian states.

It is important to ensure food, energy and human security in these countries through an equitable sharing of the Nile resources. A joint, participatory, integrated and sustainable management of water resources supported and implemented by these countries should therefore be taken into account.

The acceptance and use of the Nexus concept "Water-Energy-Food" in the

international agenda widens the scope and potential of Hydrodiplomacy, since the Nexus encapsulates the interdependence between many important aspects of life and the economics of societies and countries.

Similarly, Hydrodiplomacy could contribute to balanced agreements involving all components of the Nexus.

Hydrodiplomacy allows the establishment of a new governance in order to address the challenge of water policies, in particular drinking water, agriculture and sanitation policies, by adopting innovative techniques within the framework of integrated management, while preserving socio-economic impacts.

This governance brings together all the involved actors, notably through the Public Private Partnership (PPP). The fight against global warming affects the entire world population; citizens, private and public actors should be mobilized to effectively face the adverse consequences of climate change.

In conclusion the hydrodiplomacy based on the concepts mentioned above creates a dynamic of economic development, at the level of cross-border basins allowing riparian countries to take advantage of funding programs intended for the development of economic sectors.

This process depends on the socio-economic benefits as well as cooperation opportunities, promoting the sustainable development of countries sharing the same basin, and avoiding in this way



political conflicts while establishing a sustainable peace.

Hydrodiplomacy and the Pact of Paris should promote information exchange between riparian countries and the concretization of transboundary infrastructure projects in order to create a **regional basin organization**.

**Will this symposium identify once again Egypt as the gift of the Nile while keeping its sustainability in the region?**

**Fadi Georges Comair**



## Program

### 14:00-14:15 Reception and animation of the conference

- **Mr. Olivier Cadic**, Senator representing French citizens abroad.
- **Mr. Fadi Comair**, Honorary President of MENBO.

### 14:15–14:40 Opening

- **Senator Ms. Catherine Morin–Desailly**, President of the France-Egypt friendship group
- **Mr. Loïc Fauchon**, President of the World Water Council and President of the Society of Waters of Marseille.

### 14:40–15:30 Interventions of Ministers

#### Moderator

**Mr. Brice Lalonde**, President of the Water Academy.

- **H.E.Mr. Cesar Abi Khalil**, Lebanese Minister of Energy and Water, Lebanon.

#### Main speaker

- **H.E.Mr. Mohammed Abdel Ati**, Egyptian Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation
  
- **H.E.Mr. Hasan Al–Janabi**, Minister of Water Resources , Iraq  
Announcement of the 4rd Edition of the conference entitled:  
**Hydrodiplomacy and Climate Change for Peace in the Middle East:Case of Tigris and Euphrates Basin**

15 :30-16 :30

**Session1 : Geopolitics of the Nile Basin : Political process for the reduction of tensions hotspots and the impacts of global changes**

The impact of the expected global changes on the Nile Basin countries would have adverse consequences on water resources, both quantitatively and qualitatively, as well as on water requirements and the efficiency of resources' use for the different purposes.

The objective of this session is to identify tensions' hotspots involving riparian countries and to suggest the adoption of the hydrodiplomacy concept on this basin. This could change the nature of diplomatic relations between riparian countries, allowing disputes to be resolved through cooperation, thereby reducing the risk of conflicts in favor of economic development, food security and energy self-sufficiency.

**Moderator**      **Mr. Pierre GENY, Perpetual Secretary of « l'Académie des Sciences d'Outre-Mer ».**

**Mr. Fadi Comair, Honorary President of MENBO**

**Main Speaker**      **Mr. Pierre-Yves Collombat, Senator, President of the France-Ethiopian friendship group**

**Speakers:**

- **Nile Basin initiative (NBI) : Cooperation approach in the context of water security**

H.E.Mr. Mahmoud Abou Zeid, President of Arab Water Council (AWC).

- **Arab Water Council: transboundary basin related initiatives**

H.E Prof. Hussein El-Atfy, Secretary General, Arab Water Council (AWC)

- **The role of Sudan in enhancing regional cooperation on the Nile Basin.**

H.E. Prof. Seif El Din Hamad Abdullah, Former Minister of Water Resources in Sudan.

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- **Scenarios for the first filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, and the downstream implications.**

Prof. Yasir A. Mohamed (HRC-Sudan/IHE-Delft).

- **Pact of Paris: applicability to the Nile Basin.**

Mr. Jean-François Donzier, Secretary General of INBO and Director General of OIEau.

**16 :30-17 :10**

**Round table animated by Ms. Marie-France Chatin RFI.**

**The Nile Basin:**

**The Future of Cooperation between the Riparian Countries**

- **Prof. Michael Scoullos, Chairman of GWP-Med.**
- **Mr. Jean-Louis Guigou, President of « IPEMED ».**
- **H.E.Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos, Former Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs.**

**17 :10-17 :20**

**Coffee Break**



## Technical Round Table

17:20-18:30 Session 2 – Hydrodiplomacy of the Nile Basin: Securing Water Resources for Future Generations.

Water has become the major challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, especially when it comes to the conditions of its accessibility to citizens and its equitable sharing in transboundary basins.

The uneven distribution of Nile flows and the impacts of climate change are already being felt in the region. So far, the socio-economic situation of the basin countries remains very difficult.

This need, which is directly linked to population growth in the Nile basin, is the essential element of the negotiations on the sharing of the river's waters.

The phenomenon of hydro-conflictuality affects international and transboundary watercourses and becomes a major concern. Needs are rising while resources are limited.

This is even more evident in the Nile region where sectorial approaches to water management are still applied in many of the riparian countries and are not able to meet the current needs for sustainable resources management; hence the value of securing the supply of water in the riparian countries in quantitative and qualitative terms for future generations.

PPPs could also be used as a means to assist and finalize financial arrangements for water projects in different sectors of use.

The objective of this session is to ensure that the entire water cycle that incorporates environmental, social and economic parameters is taken into account and the need for an integrated approach is currently essential to ensure an adequate supply of water, in order to preserve it and to satisfy the demand of the citizens for this resource.

For this reason, the creation of a **Regional Basin Organization** is a must in order to strengthen the application of the concept of hydrodiplomacy and the Pact of Paris on the Nile basin.



## Moderator

**Ms. Blanca Jimenez, Director**, Division of Water Sciences and Secretary, International Hydrological program (IHP, UNESCO).

**Mr. Pierre Roussel**, President of OIEau

## Speakers:

- **Hydrodiplomacy Approach to face tension hotspots in the Nile Basin.**

Mr. Pierre Berthelot, Associate researcher at Institute for Strategic Analysis.

- **Prospective reflection on water management by watershed**

Mr. Jean-Louis Oliver, Secretary General of the Water Academy, France.

- **Climate Change Initiative in the Arab Region: RICCAR<sup>4</sup> « Objectives and Implementation Mechanisms ».**

Ms. Rola Majdalani, Director, Sustainable Development and Productivity Division, ESCWA .

- **Water and Adaptation to climate change for transboundary basins: decision support tools.**

Prof. Daene McKinney, University of Texas –Austin.

- **The Nile Basin: process of securing Hydraulic Infrastructures.**

Mr. Franck Galland, Director of 'Environmental Emergency & Security Services', (ES) <sup>2</sup>, a consulting firm specializing in urban resilience and a researcher associated with the

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<sup>4</sup> The Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region



## Compte-rendu

Foundation for Strategic Research (FRS)

- **Observatory for sustainable development: Platform of Dialogue for the Nile river basin.**

Mr. Ilan Juran, NYU, (Mr. Bruno Nguyen, W-SMART,  
Mr. Fadi Comair, Honorary President of MENBO)

### Conclusion and Thanks

- **Mr. Fadi Comair**, Honorary President of MENBO
- **Mr. Olivier Cadic**, Senator representing French citizens abroad.

**18:30 : cocktail will be served at Salon Coty .**



As a result of the symposium which was held in the Senate on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2016, around the theme "Hydrodiplomacy and Climate Change for Peace in the Middle-East on the Jordan basin", a new Conference was held at the initiative of the Senator Olivier Cadic, Senator representing the French Citizens established abroad, with Dr. Fadi Comair, Director General of Hydraulic and Electric Resources, representing H.E. Mr. César Abi Khalil, Minister of Energy and Water in Lebanon, to examine this time the problems that arise for the Nile Basin.

After the opening speeches and the interventions of the Ministers, H.E. Mr. Hasan Janabi, Minister of Water Resources in Iraq announced the 4th edition of the Symposium on the basin of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

The Symposium is organized in two sessions: the geopolitics of the Nile basin: political process for reduction of tension hotspots and the impacts of global changes; Hydrodiplomacy of the Nile Basin: Securing Water Resources for Future Generations.



## Report

### Reception and animation of the conference

**Mr. Olivier Cadic, Senator representing French citizens abroad**

**Sir Nicholas, Prince of Montenegro,**

**Presidents,**

**Ministers, Excellences,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I have the honor to welcome you today, in my capacity as Senator representative of the French citizens abroad, for the third edition of this annual symposium entitled "hydrodiplomacy and climate change for peace in the Middle East: case of the Nile basin".

I extend my sincere thanks to H.E. Mr. Mohammed Abdel Ati, Minister of water resources and irrigation of Egypt, and H.E. Mr. Hasan Al Janabi, Minister of water resources of Iraq, for their participation today. I thank also my fellow senators, Ms. Catherine Morin Desailly, Chair of the Group of Friendship France-Egypt, and Mr. Pierre - Yves Collombat, Deputy Chairman of the France-Ethiopia Friendship Group, for having responded positively to my invitation to this event.

Finally, I warmly thank Dr. Fadi Comair, President of MEDURABLE and Director General of Hydraulic and Electric Resources Manager of Lebanon, with whom I am pleased each year to work in the Organization of this Conference. I thank also all who by their contributions manage to keep the hydrodiplomacy alive. We had the opportunity in 2015 to address issues specific to the management of the Orontes River. I was touched by the imperative to take into account the new technological tools, to define the needs of planning books in order to better know the resources and master their use.

The edition of 2016 on the case of the basin of the Jordan River was part of the continuity of the COP 21 and 22 and raised the question of adaptation policies that could result.



The edition of 2018 scheduled for the next year edition will be dedicated to the Tigris and the Euphrates. I thank Mr. Hasan Al Janabi, Minister of water resources of Iraq, for his participation. We welcome the announcement of Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al Abadi of the fall of the Islamic State and the resumption of the Turkish-Syrian border control.

However, the recent Turkish decisions threaten the Iraq water supply, what justifies our choice of the next edition of this Conference that will be centered on the Tigris and the Euphrates.

This third event, due to the quality of its programming, promises to be a real success. I thank the stakeholders and experts for their participation in this high-level Symposium. This year, 10 countries are at the forefront of which Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, are concerned by the issues raised by the management of the Nile waters.

More than 6000 kilometers long, the Nile joins through by Egypt, the Mediterranean Sea, our common sea and the cradle of our civilization, because it is our common destiny, on both sides of the Mediterranean, that we are trying to describe today.

Scarcity of resources, the geopolitical issues affecting the management of the Nile, the demographic and urban pressure on the environment and the demand for water are threats to security and to the development in the region. In this transnational context, this instability called an immediate and collective reaction from our side.

This Conference has for mission to participate in the construction of a dialogue between border States to ensure a safe and sustainable water supply for all. Recognized by international organizations as one of the first guarantee of peace and cooperation, this imperative requires above all a balanced and reasonable use of water resources. The new formula adopted from our first Conference to address issues of hydrodiplomacy in a transversal way, through scientific, economic, and security approaches. This diversity of points of view allows us to consider the resolution of conflicts related to the management of water under a new angle, holding promises for future generations.

You will have the opportunity, on this day, to discuss a number of fundamental issues to ensure economic development, food security and energy self-sufficiency in the region. 80% of the flow of the Nile could be picked up during the next 4 years to fill the dam of the Renaissance. Could this be an obstacle to the development of downstream countries? This challenge and many others are depending on us today and call for a collective and ambitious response.



I wish you fruitful exchanges and I give the floor to Dr. Fadi Comair, to who we owe the remarkable concept of hydrodiplomacy.

**Dr. Fadi Comair**, Director General of Hydraulic and Electric Resources at the Ministry of Energy and Water in Lebanon, Member of the Academy of Sciences Overseas, President of MEDURABLE and honorary President of MENBO

Thank you Dear Senator,  
Ms. Senator,  
Presidents,  
Ministers,  
Excellences,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Dear colleagues,

I am very happy to open this international event with the Senator Olivier Cadic, to whom I extend my warmest thanks for giving us the opportunity to organize this Conference in the Palace of Luxembourg annually. I also wish to welcome all the participants to this important conference which allows, for the third consecutive year, to approach the Mediterranean experience in the field of the hydrodiplomacy. In 2015, it was the Orontes, in 2016, the Jordan basin, today the Nile, and tomorrow, in 2018, the Tigris and the Euphrates, and all under one roof, the Palace of Luxembourg, universal witness which supports and let us hear the Mediterranean voice at every possible opportunity.

Let me take the opportunity offered to me today to thank also all the Ministers who are present at the event, for their cooperation, their commitment and their participation in this Conference, and I would like to welcome at this occasion the presence of H.E. Mr. Mohammed Abdel Ati, the Egyptian Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation and H.E. Mr. Hassan Al Janabi, Minister of water Resources in Iraq, as well as the Former Ministers of France, Spain, Egypt, Sudan and the State of Palestine, who were willing to take part in this event.

I also welcome and I warmly thank the presence of our colleagues presidents of the Academy of Sciences overseas, the World Water Council, of the INBO, the International Office of Water, the Water Academy, the GWPMed, the Directors of the UN agencies, UNESCO and ESCWA. Thank you in advance to everyone who will



keep us in suspense this afternoon and who will enlighten us through their interventions and their expertise on the applicability of the Hydrodiplomacy on the Nile basin.

Today, ladies and gentlemen, only Hydrodiplomacy opens up new perspectives, new doors, and allows the sustainable and equitable management of transboundary waters in an efficient way. Based on this, the Hydrodiplomacy offers a cooperative governance carved to the size of each country and the characteristics of each basin. I would like on this occasion to mention three elements. Three elements particularly striking to us in the context of the Nile basin.

The first finding is that we need to consider in addressing this Conference is the population growth that characterizes the countries of the basin of the Blue Nile, namely Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, and its link to the management of the demand for the years to come, and that in the contexts of global changes and climate change. For this purpose, anything related directly or indirectly to the flow of the Nile along its path is critical for each of the crossed countries.

The second finding, ladies and gentlemen, it's that the Nile is a geostrategic and a power issue. For countries that lie on its course, in particular Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. With two hydrological systems; Egypt and Sudan, which have very low annual rainfall, the Nile is the unique provider of consumed water in these two countries. On the other hand, the hydrology of Ethiopia is significantly different, with a rainfall among the highest in Africa, specifically in the Highlands.

The functionality of the Nile is that the Nile provides the population needs in water for irrigation and for the fertilization of the land for agriculture, the production of electricity and the development of the industries. The Nile is both the heart and the lung of Egypt and the Sudan. Without this river, nothing would be possible, its good management is therefore a major challenge for the Governments that follow one another since antiquity. When it comes to the use of the Blue Nile, Ethiopia has to do with the good will of its two northern neighbors, each of its two dam projects to collect water drought, and it is greeted with reluctance. Projects of deductions of Ethiopia could be a source of tension between the three countries.



The third finding is that the Nile is also a source of cooperation, and this is where we enter the heart of the matter. This cooperation began in 1999 as part of the Nile Basin Initiative, which was also built by UNDP, the objective being to ensure a sustainable and equitable management of the Nile and to strengthen the links between the signatory countries of this initiative. The non-Arab countries require better sharing and a possibility to use the Nile at their convenience through water tanks.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that in this meeting, our respective reflections will allow us to chart a new path, the path of diplomacy on the Nile, and that with our involvement, Senator Cadic, myself, the Senate and all the experts who are present with us, we will be able to tip the balance in favor of sustainable development and human well-being. Expectations are extremely high, however, they require will, courage, tenacity to implement new governance based on the construction of the general interest of the countries that share this basin.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you success, I again thank the Senator Olivier Cadic for this initiative which we launched three years ago in the Senate, and I say to you that we have to learn water and to avoid learning it by thirst.

**Catherine Morin-Desailly**, Senator, President of the friendship group France-Egypt.

Ministers,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Ambassadors,  
Presidents,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honor for all of us to receive you today at this Symposium on the basin of the Nile approached by an innovative theme on the Hydrodiplomacy and the climate change for peace in the Middle East. Firstly, I would like to thank my colleague Olivier Cadic for this wonderful initiative and work that he conducts on this subject and that he shares with us, his colleagues, for many years with Mr. Fadi Comair, President of honor of the Mediterranean Network of Basin organizations. You are, Sir, at the origin of this promising concept of Hydrodiplomacy. What I remember is that it is a must to make a dialogue among States on the management of international rivers, a tool in the service of peace and sustainable development.



Ministers, Excellences, Mr. the President of the World Water Council, President of the Academy of water, your presence here today testifies to the importance of this encounter and suggests the level of the exciting debate which will take place after the discussions that we're having this afternoon. Allow me also to extend a very special greeting to our colleague Pierre Yves Collombat, who visited several times as Deputy Chairman of the Group of friendship France - country of the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia and will talk to you about the fact-finding mission in which he participated in July 2013 on the dam of the Renaissance. I also apologize on the behalf of our colleague, Christian Cambon, president of the Commission of Foreign Affairs of Defense and Armed Forces who was supposed to close this Conference but he was held this week at the United Nations.

These topics are also a matter of specialists and technicians, so I would also welcome the presence of the Global Water Partnership, of the Institute of economic forecasting of the Mediterranean world, of the French Institute of strategic, of the French Academy of water, the International network of basin organizations and finally the Arab Water Council which I think very recently held the 4th forum of water in the Arab countries. The chosen title "Sharing water, sharing destiny" so share water, share the fate pretty much sums up the topic. I find the preferred approach for cooperation at the regional level for a win-win strategy as it is exercised in the case of the Nile Basin initiative very interesting. We'll talk in particular during the first round table devoted to the political process of implementation in the Nile basin to reduce tensions related to the problems of management of water between the riparian countries.

The Nile basin is the 3rd largest watershed of the world after the Amazon and the Congo, and the 2nd of Africa. It covers an area of more than 3 million km<sup>2</sup> or 10% of the continent and spans on 11 countries. The Nile runs through Burundi, Egypt, Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan and Tanzania and also borders the Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya while its tributary the Tekezē is flowing in Eritrea. The Nile River, with a length of approximately 6700 km emerges from the meeting in Khartoum of the White Nile and the Blue Nile and flows of its delta in Egypt into the Mediterranean. The White Nile has its source at the Lake Victoria between Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, while the Blue Nile is issued from the Lake Tana in Ethiopia. The Blue Nile, which originates in Ethiopia provides about 90% of the water resources of the basin, this annual average volume being valued at 84 billion m<sup>3</sup>.



Historically, there is a clear correlation between the emergence of the riparian civilizations of the river and its floods. This statement is especially true in Egypt as the Nile is inseparable from the civilization and the Egyptian identity. It is also what led Herodotus to represent Egypt as "a gift of the Nile", a mention also currently appearing in the preamble to the constitution of 2014.

On the economic front, Egypt depends mainly on the Nile for its water supply and must face the ever-growing needs especially because of the very strong population growth. Also, as has already been mentioned in the introduction, the question of the distribution of waters of the Nile is a crucial issue, vital to Egypt as well as to the other countries in the region. So in this case, the riparian countries made several agreements whose findings are sometimes divergent. Egypt and Sudan are based on the 1959 agreement that provides for the sharing of waters between the two countries: 55.5 billion m<sup>3</sup> for Egypt and 18.5 billion m<sup>3</sup> for Sudan. The Treaty also gives Egypt a veto on any project on the Nile. The implementation of the Initiative of the Nile basin in 1999 assembling the 10 Nilotic States let emerge the need for wider consultation and cooperation on the management of the river.

In 2010, six countries in the upstream: Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia signed an agreement aiming to question Egypt's right to veto and its historical hegemony over the basin and requesting a more balanced distribution of the Nile. At the second round table, all the ways allowing to prioritize the dialogue and to develop cooperation between riparian countries, will be considered. The idea of a permanent consultation mediation will be examined so that any project likely to have an impact for the other riparian countries could be studied in the light of the regional interest in the basin.

Finally, regarding the development of cooperation projects on the basin, the strengthening of the role of the World Bank could be one of the tracks being considered with a greater mobilization of donors. In this regard, you know, France traditionally always defended a strict neutrality between the riparian countries focusing on the ways to promote dialogue and cooperation at the regional level. The Hydrodiplomacy gives a name to the position consistently defended by France of a continuous dialogue and enhanced economic cooperation.

The goal being at the short and medium term to promote what is so important: peace as well as prosperity for each of the basin countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, keeping in mind that double-goal so important that is both



noble and ambitious.

I wish you successful and excellent work throughout this afternoon.

**Mr. Loïc Fauchon**, Honorary President of the World Water Council and President of the Marseille Water Association.

Senator, thank you for the renewed organization of this event, dear Fadi thank you for always pushing this concept that we had evoked together in a university in the North of Beirut 20 years ago: Hydrodiplomacy.

Ladies and gentlemen, ministers,  
Ambassadors and parliamentarians,

Dear water friends ,

If we are here recurrently, it is because the world knows crises after crises: diplomatic crises; we can see some of them at the moment, military crises, political crises, but also climatic, military, energy, hydraulic, sanitary and, of course, food crises and others.

Many billions of people on our planet suffer intensely from these crises, they suffer especially as the interdependence of economies is increasingly strong, the galloping population that has been mentioned is a matter of concern that we will have to put one day on the table of international cooperation because we cannot run constantly behind the demographic growth, especially for essential public services and its corollary urbanization with megacities which expansion cannot be controlled anymore. Without forgetting also the aspiration to a better standard of living which, in our field of water is considered highly consumer of hydraulic resources. All this makes the suffering of these billions of people I spoke of even more intense and at the same time it generates a demand for peace, dignity, prosperity. And this peace, this prosperity, this duty, this demand for dignity must be accompanied by the duration because we cannot project ourselves into immediate work on the next day but over the long term. They demand access to development and this is relatively new in our civilization, they require at the same time respect for nature.

Thirty years ago we were still only concerned about the need to bring water for development and especially economic development. Today we realize an error; it is necessary to bring water to the conservation of nature and respect for biodiversity.



Water is one of those essential resources of which I spoke, it has become rare in quantity and quality in many places of our planet because its use that we all know, domestic, industrial and agricultural but also its ecological use swallows here and there the water of the rivers and streams of the boreholes, the dams, the reservoirs, as was mentioned by the Senator. So the demand is increasing without controlling it at the scale of the planet but also regionally and water stagnates and in some cases it decreases globally and locally.

To dispose of water is to authorize life, not to ensure the availability of it is to condemn the entire population to be kept out of development and basic rights so that's our political, economic, social and cultural responsibility.

Our responsibility is to ensure the security of water today, tomorrow everywhere for all and by all. Which gives us each of the important duties because securing the use of water is first of all securing the resource and this is what is our priority, as responsible for international organizations, political leaders, and economic entities. For a century and a half, we have been prioritizing the need to be able to control and amplify water resources. What will occupy us in the discussion on the Nile another priority, the need for a balance between securing the resource and securing its use, and that's a relatively new concept in politics everywhere.

To secure is to find additional water resources at the request and the requirement of this balance; to secure the resource is to be able to master or even develop the conventional resources, this is the case in the discussion that we are going to have on the Nile and on the other rivers; it is also the capacity that we have to develop in a very significant way unconventional resources, I will only mention 2 that you all know and which represent a very important field which is desalination.

Today, who knows? 80 countries in the world are building or managing desalination where you think that a few years ago it was reserved for some very rich countries. And then another very important deposit, the reuse of wastewater: "reused water.

I was last year in Mexico, at the General Assembly of Water of Mexico, the theme was the reuse of wastewater. Amazing progress has been made in recent years. We all know today that we can consume water at the end of a well-regulated treatment plant but that cultural, social and regulatory difficulties prevent us from going beyond the use of the parks, gardens and a little for agriculture.



But there is a tremendous reservoir of freshwater that will have to be added to conventional resources, and then there is what we need to do, not what we can do but what we need to do about the mastery of water. The use of water is at the heart of the subject in the Middle East, Africa, at least in this part of the Nile basin because we have the duty to ensure better management of the resource.

It is no insult to say that today in the Nile basin we can do better and we can do better for example on the use of water from the Nile for agriculture not only in Egypt, which, let us remember, still accounts for 86% of these water rights, then there are the behavioral changes that will be very important, on which there has already been a very significant evolution in a large number of countries: consume less , consume better so you do not have to use as many water resources and so we are at the heart of this topic, the topic you have chosen from these 11 countries bordering the Nils because it must be said so when we have been in this region and we saw the flows of the Blue Nile and the famous dams but it's not the only one, we must not summarize the Nile question to the Renaissance Dam problem, first there are others dams in Ethiopia and then there are also dams in Egypt and there are other dam projects.

For being in 2010, between 2010 and 2012 as President of the World Water Council at the heart of negotiations with my friend, my predecessor, Mr. Abu Zeid whom I would like to greet on the Nile Basin initiative, what you have called Mrs. NBI, the dialogue was on the way but it was unfortunately interrupted; Let's not look here why, let's look to the future.

Today on this issue of the Nile, it must be said that we have not, the international community and some countries, we did not want to see grow 9 of the 11 countries. Ethiopia will soon have 150 million inhabitants, Uganda has 50 million inhabitants and I will not continue with the litany of the countries that makes up the Nile.

These countries need domestic water, need agricultural water, need industrial water and that is why we need to look for responsibilities which in any case can only be the role of those riparian countries.

The World Water Council looks towards the future to see how we can revive the debate, the reconciliation between the concerned countries. We have already done so, I would like to recall, for the Tigris and the Euphrates; in 2006 in Mexico we launched an initiative between Turkey, Syria and Iraq, it took us four years for Turkey to agree to open the faucets - maybe not enough, there is still a lot to do - but it is the very principle of an initiative of dialogue.



I will be at the end of next week on the Renaissance Dam with the Ethiopian Minister of Water because the World Water Council offered its services quite modestly and I will be in January with my Egyptian friends in Cairo for the organization of the Mediterranean Water Forum and these topics will be at the heart of our discussions.

I would like to add one thing about Hydrodiplomacy, the future of which is dear to us on the basis of geopolitics, there is a Hydrodiplomacy of everyday life, there is a Hydrodiplomacy of management I will almost say of maintenance. I was once in both in Israel and Palestine and we talked about it with the minister, In the same day we had a meeting with the Israeli minister, with the Palestinian minister and what did we speak about? Great political problems? Surely not that's not our role. What did we talk about? Recent decisions? They were not taken and that is not our role. We talked about counting, we talked about resealing leaks, we talked about the creation of agencies, water operators organizations in the West Bank, we talked about the very everyday problems that few people know, including Israeli and Palestinian speeches every day, every week, every month, and fortunately on this point, there is a minimum of cooperation.

So the Hydrodiplomacy that we cherish is an international concept, it is often the issue of large water basins and we could cite many others but it is also the meeting at any level of those who wish to advance in cooperation. There is a form of hydrodiplomacy that is not exclusive to diplomats and governments.

It is something that could be called "Everyday Business" and so I would like to echo your words dear Fadi and say that we must encourage this form of dialogue because the dialogue is a better knowledge, the dialogue is the respect, consideration and when there is respect and consideration, trust can be born, and only in confidence we can find action.



**H.E. Mr. Mohammed Abdel Ati**  
**Egyptian Minister of Hydraulic Resources and Irrigation**

Good afternoon  
Ministers,  
Colleagues,  
Your Excellences,  
Colleagues from the Senate, parliament members,  
All participants,

Allow me to go to the subject directly, today is an honor to me actually to talk to you about the water issues in Egypt and in the Nile. I have prepared a statement; if we talk about Egypt, Egypt is 95% desert relies and depends on water that originates outside its borders about 97% including both ground and surface water. Also Egypt is vulnerable to climate change from both sides either from water resources issues or sea level rise, sea level rise makes Delta vulnerable to inundation that would result in migration of more than 4 million person, it is the driest or almost the driest country in the world, it is highly affected by any changes in the Nile flows for example if we say the reduction in the Nile flow is of 2%, 2% sums up almost 1 billion cubic meter which means that about 200 farmers will lose their income, this means about 1 million person will be without income so imagine what would be the impact on the social unrest that would happen in Egypt.

We are also recycling, reusing water that sums up about 25% of our usage is reused several times, this means our water use efficiency exceeds 85% and we are not satisfied with this percentage and we are working to increase water use efficiency and we will talk about the steps we are following to achieve this in the next slides that I am committed to present. So the water use efficiency is one of the highest in the world cause of the reuse, productivity, the water productivity is the highest in Africa, in the production of wheat we are number one in the world according to FAO Egypt is the highest wheat producer in the world per drop of water. Despite that and due to water scarcity, we import virtual water that sums up to 34 billion cubic meter.

We are the highest importer of wheat, we import about 12 million tons of wheat every year. This means that Egypt could control the stock market of wheat in the world because of the high consumption and the importation of wheat. In addition to that we import oils, we import beans, we import several crops, we import meat from the neighboring countries from Ethiopia, from Sudan, we import tea from Kenya



knowing that we are the biggest importer of tea. So we are working towards making some on the ground regional integration through trade because we import what we are lacking from the neighboring countries and this for us is a high priority for coordinating or cooperating with our partners in the Nile Basin. So this in brief the situation, if we talk about water footprint it is more than 114 billion m<sup>3</sup> out of this we import virtual water that sums up 34 billion cubic meter, we recycle 20 billion cubic meter, this means our water deficiency from the renewable water resources exceeds 90%, this 90% is covered with virtual water as well as with recycling around 25% of our current consumption.

This puts a lot of pressure on us because with the future development of the Nile because the quality of the water is vulnerable and highly affected by all the impacts and improving water quality puts extra burden on us. Now we have cooperation in the Nile, we started this cooperation in 1999 and in 2008 actually Egypt has sent and precisely Dr. Abu Zeid has sent a letter to the World Bank requesting on the behalf of the eastern Nile countries to finance the detailed feasibility study for the first dam on the blue Nile. Why we are conducting these studies?

Our colleagues in Ethiopia declared the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance dam, during that time the debate was about the dam and whether the studies are enough or not, that is why our ministers agreed to form an international tripartite panel of experts that concluded that there are some changes and some measures that should be taken in the dam design and in addition to that there are two studies to be completed in order to look at the impacts of the dam on the downstream countries. Actually if the Renaissance dam will start to be filled without collaboration with Egypt and Sudan, this will create a lot of problems on Egypt either on the hydropower production or on the available water resources, actually this will cause a severe issue in Egypt. What would be the impact of the sea level rise and the inundation of the Delta and the lower part of the Delta map shows that these are the vulnerable areas to be inundated and the populations have to be resettled or moved. In addition to that, the rate of the increase of the population, this increase is not only in Egypt but also in the Nile Basin countries.

We have to consider that today our population is estimated at 104 million and that in 2050 it will exceed 170 million and this also puts another burden on the nation to deal with population increase, to deal with the issues of upstream in case of uncoordinated activities in terms of development and put burden on sea level rise and the Delta area, these all are challenges that we are facing, but despite that we see these challenges as opportunities and remember when I told you that if the reduction of 2% on the available water would affect us and will leave 1 million Egyptian without income, this will have a major impact on the illegal migration. The region is



affected by climate change as well (20 million person affected) and that creates regional issues in Nigeria, Tchad and surrounding areas.

Europe is already suffering from illegal migration and if social unrest will be in Egypt this would result in some impacts on Europe and the neighboring countries and jobless people will be easily hunted and brainwashed by terrorist groups and that would create social unrest in Europe and all surrounding countries. We have to diagnose the issue very well, it is not a matter of unilateral development, it is a matter of regional development and regional peace and stability.

We see actually that the cooperation cost is much cheaper than any other method or any other way; regional cooperation, regional integration and regional understanding of each other issues. I worked in the Nile Basin and in Ethiopia, I stayed in Ethiopia for 3 years and they used to call me the Ethiopian Minister in the Egyptian Government because I understand the issues there, the development issues, the poverty issues, the power shortage and I transfer this to my government and in the same time I changed the perception among many Egyptians. Since water is very important to Egypt, another perception should be transferred also to our colleagues in the neighboring countries and I wish that could be an Egyptian minister in the Ethiopian government and other Nile Basin governments in order to consider these issues that rely mainly on water and are dependent on it.

So what did we do in Egypt? We have a national strategy for water resources that has 4 pillars, this is the 2050 strategy: first pillar is water quality, I call it water quality, we recycle water so it is very important for us to invest in water quality development and this will require billions of dollars, so water quality is high priority for us to treat sewage water, to treat industrial water to be reused, our system is mainly relying on reusing water and will continue relying on it.

Rationalization of water use through improving water use efficiency

They say our water use efficiency is one of the highest in the world but it is not sufficient for us and we have to work to improve it more through improving irrigation systems, introducing modern irrigation as well as conducting research for salt tolerant crops and crops that use less water and it is our interest actually to share this kind of experience and research outcomes to our partners in the Nile Basin.

The third pillar is the development of water resources and this is a strategic position in Egypt; all the development in the North cost and on the Red Sea..will be based on desalination because we don't have any room more to avail water to the developments of these areas and moving towards that; we are investing billions of dollars to avail this kind of water availability and Sharm El Sheikh actually is one of



the symbols of desalinating water; 100% in desalinating water either sea water or groundwater and the used water is retreated again to be used in the landscape or other uses. We are trying our best to improve water use efficiency, adding to that water resources development, we are developing a number of rainwater harvesting dams. I would like to mention that the yield of the Nile Water is about 5% of the total rainfall on the Nile Basin but it is about less than 1.5% of the total rainfall on the Nile Basin countries and this shows the potentiality of improving and having rain water harvesting within the Nile Basin to avail water for different uses so we can have more water that is sufficient to all of us but we need to have cooperation I mean among all of us.

The forth pillar is creating the enabling environment and this through public awareness, public campaigns changing the teaching curriculum in schools and universities.

### **H.E. Mr. Hasan Al Janabi, Minister of Water Resources , Iraq**

Good afternoon everybody,

I would like to say thank you to the Senator Olivier Cadic, to Fadi, to my friend the minister Abdel Ati and to all the presidents, formal ministers ,ambassadors, senators and colleagues present here today.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I don't want to draw the attention away from the Nil Basin, I would like to express my full solidarity with the position of Egypt, with the position of my friends the Egyptian ministers who expressed their concern and their approach, that's very cooperative and that's very open towards sustainable use of shared water.

I seize this opportunity to announce thanks to Fadi and his team that the next year a similar event is going to be focused on the Tigris and Euphrates, knowing that we are facing a situation that resembles that of our Egyptian friends as a downstream and therefore we suffer from a very big pressure on our hydraulic resources.

I would like to take few minutes to present few slides in order to give you an idea about this matter, we have 12 months to think about our contribution next year and to enhance what is presented right now.



The Tigris and the Euphrates as you see is shared between many countries; particularly Turkey, Syria and Iran. As you see, on the upper slide and at the left corner of my presentation figure some statistics regarding the water distribution between riparian countries, in addition to the average annual flow of the Tigris and Euphrates that is historically of 50 billion during the last 25 years.

Today, we have around 30 billion, which means that we lost 20 billion during the past two decades.

We find a similar situation on the Euphrates where we were using historically on average 30 billion and now we receive barely 16 billion.

I would like to show you now an image that is very close to my heart and to the heart of people from UNESCO; it is a satellite image that was taken in 1970 in Iraq and was registered on the list of global heritage last year: the green zone represents water and the red zone represents deep water. We see clearly a huge quantity of water that covers 15000 to 20000km and that is almost the double of the Lebanese zone. Thus, the Tigris and Euphrates meet in the South of the Iraq and form the Shatt el-Arab waterway, it is a very unique water, a very unique hydrological formation in the ecosystem plan and is the largest in Western Asia and It's just on the border of the empty quarter, it is a water world where the first human civilization has been created and it is formed by the confluence of four rivers.

After 2003, we managed to restore much of the Tigris and the Euphrates and we were able to identify this world heritage site, so now it belongs to the world and not only to the Iraqis, that is why we need to ensure the water needed quantity for the sustainability of this system.

I represent some features of the hydrology in our country: between March and June, 70% of the water occurs and when the demand is at its maximum for irrigation between July and September, we get only 10% of this water and 20% between October and February.

We have a seasonal high flow and this is the reason why Iraq has developed an infrastructural control structure long before neighboring countries.

Indeed, in the last 20 or 30 years there was a fall in the average annual flow and we should mention here that the infrastructure of the Tigris and Euphrates which is not developed in comparison with those of the neighboring countries.



When it comes to shared water resources we talk about competition versus cooperation.

Water resources development projects are very intense and everything is controlled these days and the Tigris will be also controlled starting March 2018 knowing that the Turkish authorities informed us during a high-level meeting, guided by the Prime Minister Mr. Haidar Abadi of the changes taking place and we might find ourselves without water.

The construction of this dam will deprive us of the biodiversity and the social and economic opportunities and this is very dramatic, especially when it comes to large dams. Large dams have many negative impacts on the river system.

I talked about the competition versus the cooperation, we can't talk about competition when it comes to water, ladies and gentlemen; competition raises the question of "who comes before the other?" as in sport, racing for example... When we talk about water ladies and gentlemen, we don't talk about a competition, but we are cooperating. We don't win at the expense of our neighbors and that it is a very important concept; I always hear this word 'competition' when it comes to shared resources between riparian countries and I think that it shouldn't be this way. This word should not be used in this context knowing that we must be against the competition and encourage cooperation.

We need the cooperation for the development of water resources and for the promotion of water projects in the riparian countries.

Daesh entered to Iraq in 2014 and has held water infrastructure using water as a weapon.

On this slide, we see a clear example of this use; it is the dam of Ramadi. This dam is located on the Euphrates River, is a very pretty dam to control water and which has been built since the 1950s and that worked perfectly since this period until it was destroyed by Daesh as seen on this picture.

As matter of fact, I have a lot of photos that show the destruction of water infrastructure in Iraq knowing that we estimate our loss at the level of the Euphrates of 600 million dollars that we need in order to repair damages on this scale.

Obviously, the international community is now committed but this case is not easy and we'll be able -by using our own resources- to take over and repair these



structures and many others such as the dam of Falujah that will work once again but of course with a reduced efficiency.

We will benefit from this opportunity and from the assistance of the World Bank and donor countries in order to rehabilitate all these buildings and structures.

The hydrodiplomacy; this year a bigger attention has been attributed to water with neighboring countries; our relationship with Turkey is a little different than the one with Iran.

During my last visit with the Prime Minister to Turkey, water was placed first among the issues studied by the two countries, over there we were informed of the filling of the dam of Ilisu in March. Our goal is to try to delay the filling of 2 or 3 months in order to complete our dam otherwise it will lead to a tragedy in our country.

The second photo shows the visit of our delegation to Tehran where we discussed water in different environments; of course the relationship between Iran and Iraq is very strong; we are friendly countries who are fighting terrorism but we put emphasis on our position towards the Iran, based on the 1975 Agreement, the issue of water is perhaps not a priority for Iran but is a priority for us and we have to do a great job, this is the reason why we continually work in this field in order to make the very good relationship between Iraq, Iran and Turkey productive when it comes to the use and the management of resources on the long term.

Of course, we are facing a lot of difficulties at this level but we are very well integrated and we work for the good of our people and that of the riparian countries.

We are determined to establish peace and stability in our country and this is the way that our Government follows.

Thank you



## Session 1 : Geopolitics of the Nile Basin

### **Mr. Pierre Gény, Perpetual Secretary of the Academy of Sciences Overseas**

Thank you dear Fadi for allowing me to open this session that will tackle today the studied subject « the Nile and the hydrodiplomacy » that should be developed in order to permit to the riparian countries to find the best solution to cooperate so that the “feeder” River really play its role for everyone. In other words, it is important to bear in mind not only the countries that are the most dependent on the beneficial effects of the River, we think of course of Egypt and Sudan, but also those who at the upstream bring by the support they enjoy the quantity of water needed for the development.

We should not also forget that the upstream countries should also have in a certain way benefits of the river. I think that here, there is probably, between the White Nile and the Blue Nile, things to balance to the benefit of all of the downstream. It is possible, according to my idea that the White Nile, which currently is very moderate in what it provides, since it is 15 to 16% of the flow, with respect to the 85 percent of the other side, that the technique can bring to the hydrodiplomacy of the elements that we have perhaps not re declined right now and somehow, by mobilization of the upstream countries, bring supplies and allow to partially address the problem posed by the dam of the Renaissance, which still is the great novelty of the downstream.

On the other side, that technology can bring to the targeting of the elements that it has perhaps not thought right now and somehow, by mobilization of the upstream countries, bring fix also supplies and allow to answer part of the problem as we put the grand dam of the Renaissance, which is still the big news regarding the downstream.

On the other side, the technology can bring to the hydrodiplomacy the elements that it has perhaps not thought right now and somehow, by the mobilization of the upstream countries, bringing supplies and allowing to answer part of the problem as



we put the grand dam of the Renaissance, which is still the big news regarding the downstream.

As I see it, ladies and gentlemen, I think we must move in this direction here. I believe that we must think that the Hydrodiplomacy can also rely somewhat on hydrological and technical thinking that might help to find a solution, and no matter how it involves, working together is already a first step towards hydrodiplomacy.

That's simply what I wanted to say in the opening.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Collombat**, Senator and President-delegate for France, Ethiopia friendship group.

Ministers,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Excellences,  
Presidents,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Firstly, I would like to thank my colleague Olivier Cadic for this Conference initiative and for inviting me. To make things clear, I was named keynote speaker in this session but I am not an expert of the Hydrodiplomacy, the only quality that I claim is that of a witness, honest if possible.

While water is a major issue for the countries crossed by the Nile, as you said, we perceived it well during the movement of our inter-parliamentary group, particularly during our mission which has led us to the Northwest of Ethiopia to 15 km from the border of Sudan at the scene of the construction of the dam of the Great Renaissance. It was in September 2013, but the construction of the dam started in May 2013.

A few words before our arrival: scheduled for July 2017, the completion of the construction should not intervene and in the best of cases by the end of 2018. In August 2017, as was confirmed by the President of the Ethiopian Power Corporation, who was also Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of communication and technology... more than 60% of the work was already carried out in the fall, so you see it isn't yet at the end: 145 m high, 1800 m long, a capacity of 6450MW, and a pool of 74 billion m<sup>3</sup>. Nine thousand workers are working day and night on the site piloted by the Italian company Salinri and Gilo.



Once finished, the dam will be the largest hydroelectric dam in Africa in any case until the construction of the dam of Grand Tinga on the Congo expected to produce 40000MW, finally we are not there yet. The total cost of the dam "Grande Renaissance" will range between 4 billion six hundred thousand dollars and 6 billion, funded - I want to insist on this - almost exclusively by Ethiopia without outside help. On our trip, we found that it was indeed a great national project bringing together the Ethiopians and not only a State project. The name itself given to the dam Great Renaissance speaks for itself.

The ambition of Ethiopia is primarily providing electricity for all Ethiopia including the remotest areas in quadrupling the capacity of power generation of the country by increasing it from 4300MW to 17300 MW by 2020 and above. It will be the most important part of the broader program called "light for all" as it was made clear by the Prime Minister to make electricity available to all Ethiopians knowing that currently only half and essentially urban population has access to electrical energy.

Beyond this local and national ambition, the ambition of Ethiopia is to export part of this power of hydraulic origin to the countries of the region: Egypt, Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen, and even beyond to Turkey, the East of Spain; This entails the realization of an interconnected network. The expected revenues are up to 730 million euros per year.

So you understand that the dam is a promise of prosperity for this country whose population growth is very important, a rate of 2.5% per year. The horizon is not far where Ethiopia will have 150 million inhabitants while the number is of about 100 million currently. The first time I've been to the responsibility of the group we were at 85 million so it gives you an idea of the growth.

Besides, I think that without having the numbers, it is the problem of Egypt: a growth of the huge population that poses a problem. As the Prime Minister noted: "you know our country Ethiopia is engaged in a race between its population growth and that of its development. Aware of the problems that the subject aroused before going to Ethiopia, our delegation had wanted to talk with the Egyptian Ambassador in Paris, we met him again on the way back to share with him the answers of the Ethiopian authorities to our common questions and conclusions.

We welcome these exchanges. How can one ignore the importance of the Nile for a country that sees itself as a gift from the Nile?

We wanted to inform him of our mission and to hear Egypt's concerns about the dam, the main concern, of course, the period of filling of the reservoir is a period during which the water of the river diverted and partly retained would result in a reduction



of the flow in the downstream.

In this case, the adjustment variable is the duration of the filling; the range of negotiations is loose since it goes from 4 to 15 years, too long filling period will not be acceptable by Ethiopia that is trying to collect the benefits of its investment as quickly as possible and conversely Egypt wouldn't accept a too short refueling period that could affect the water level and the production capacity of the Aswan High Dam (my predecessors recalled the problems it will pose to Egypt), another risk : the increase of the salinity of water used for irrigation, it is on this question that the tensions between Egypt and Ethiopia are concentrated.

For its part, during our exchanges, the Ethiopian side pointed out the virtuous effects of the dam, which should make it possible to reduce the risk of flooding in Sudan, regulate the river flow by reducing evaporation during the dry season and limit floods during the rainy season. This point of view is also the subject of other experts from different countries, according to the information that I was able to gather: the last tripartite ministerial meeting between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan held in Cairo on November 11 and 12 has not yet reached consensus. One of the objects of disagreement relates to the conclusions of joint technical studies of the French firms Artelia and BRL, the parties do not agree neither on the conclusion about the impact of the filling and the operation of the dam on the flow of the Nile in Egypt nor on the scope that must be given to these conclusions. The Ethiopians believe that the consultants have not respected the specifications and request a review of studies while the Egyptians are of a completely opposite opinion.

Since the signing of the agreement of principles between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan in March 2015, the threat of a military intervention from Egypt to stop the works of the dam has been put to sleep, the fact that the stakeholders meet regularly is another sign of the desire to reach an agreement. If my information is accurate dear Ministers, there have been already at least seven meetings between the Ethiopian, Egyptian and Sudanese water ministers, that the negotiations drag on is not good, given the vital importance of this problem to Egypt, its public opinion is moved and the pressure on the authorities increases, the technical problem has become political and Egypt has asked its European partners including France to intervene with Ethiopia.

Beyond this renewed tension calling for a quick solution to the specific problems posed by the construction of the Great Renaissance Dam, the stakes are much more general. Being committed, I ask you to excuse me for being so direct or



to meddle with what does not concern me, I do not see how we will reach a lasting solution consolidating peace and widely opening the future of the region without a revision of the agreements that until now regulated the rights on the Nile. Ignoring the existence of Ethiopia could be understood at that time but it is becoming more difficult today. As already mentioned, the 1929 and 1959 agreements gave Egypt and Sudan exclusive rights over the use of the river; Egypt had a total of 55.5 billion m<sup>3</sup> and Sudan 18.5 billion m<sup>3</sup> or about 87% of the river's total flow.

Egypt also had a veto right on all projects concerning the Nile: result in 2010: 6 countries of the upstream of the river: Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia, of course, have signed an agreement effectively ending this right of veto and calling for a more balanced distribution of the waters of the Nile. I believe that it is certainly towards this diplomatic objective that we have to move. Concerning the management of international river basins in general terms: France, for its part, supports a concerted regional approach, as it has been recalled earlier since 1999, the dialogue between the riparian countries of the Nile is being carried out as part of the Nile Basin Initiative, which is well received.

The objective of this initiative, which is supported by ten international donors including the World Bank, UNDP, the European Commission, France, the Netherlands, Canada, is precisely to promote a shared vision of the Nile's water management.

The French Development Agency has already funded studies on a river water planning model, they have already shown that the water resources of the basin were sufficient to cover all the needs of the riparian countries. The continuation of the Egypt-Ethiopia-Sudan negotiations, this symposium gives us reasons to be optimistic about the opening of a dialogue on the management of the basin associating all the concerned countries aiming to a global vision shared by all the countries of their energy and water needs; everyone would gain, it is obvious and peace in the region which is the condition of development and prosperity of everyone would obviously be consolidated.

So that's the purpose of this conference and it gives me great pleasure to participate in trying to go in the same direction because the stakes are high.

**H.E. Mr. Hussein el-Atfy**, Secretary General, Arab Water Council of Water

Excellences,



Senators,  
Ambassadors,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me a great pleasure and honor to be, the Arab Council and myself a part of this unique and important event.

Thank you Dr. Fadi and Mr. senator for inviting me here, to those who don't know about the Arab Water Council, we are a regional entity, we are working with our partners from the UN organizations, Arab organizations, with the close cooperation, with League Arab States to have a commune vision for the Arab region to face for the water challenges in the region.

Excellences, Ladies and gentlemen, water crises are escalating and shared water is critical specially in the Arab region where water scarcity, economic growth, water quality deterioration, climate change socio-economic impacts, drought, floods, desertification, urbanization, humbled migration, forced displacement, 60% of our water in the Arab region originates from outside the borders of course about tourism specially for this structure, water structure as you have seen this morning and of course the major political changes that we have in the Arab region all of this calls for a new thinking we have to have a new thinking we have to have new mechanisms to foster the cooperation on the shared water, to reduce tension, to sustain shared water, to achieve water security and to the attainment of the SDGs goals.

I have said here that failure is not an option, we are all losers if we accept this.

My presentation will focus on what are the triggers for water conflicts and catalysts for the water cooperation are also ransom of the initiative either in the Arab region or outside of the Arab region, the success stories and meanwhile some others stills need more agreement and more work together.

I ended with what are the key messages and the lessons learned to foster the cooperation on the shared water.

Yet, history has been shown it that the nature of fresh water is the power full incentive for cooperation. This was organized mainly by the global community when Kofi Anan mentioned this in February 2002 if we are working together a secured and sustainable water future can be ours.

Meanwhile, the Arab Water Council in its 4<sup>th</sup> water forum this November and the slogan of sharing water sharing destiny and this is evident if we see that we have



about 263 international rivers, it is about 40% of the world population and 60% of the global fresh water.

History shows that since 1948 only 37 cases were of acute conflicts over water this is reported by UN water, so these are some triggers of water conflicts: international conditions, immigration growth, water scarcity, basin volume, multiple users, poverty, climate change impacts, food and energy variation in the prices vulnerability of downstream users to the upstream actions, economic instability, unsatisfactory of regional governments, lack of integrated vision and of course lack of political will.

Why there are catalysts for water cooperation? The similarity we have in the basins , the multiplicity of riparian states, upstream down streams positions, presence of the third party to catalyze cooperation, an essential capacity, economic integration, good diplomatic and political stability of course creation of a common interests within and around the river is the key success, here there are some success stories we have the Senegal river with 4 riparian countries and the facilitating closer condition beyond the water, agricultural sector, hydropower, and this with the cost sharing plan where our organization formed for the basin 1972.

Another case is the Mekong with the 6 riparian countries where are also they have reasonable and equitable use of water.

Their funding from international community and Mekong community also was established in 1957 while the Danube here with the 19 countries as a riparian countries and they can come with a convention signed in 1994 mainly for water quality issues.

Now this morning H.E. Dr. Hasan mentioned that next year it will be the Tigris and the Euphrates in Iraq and so far there is no agreement between the riparian countries, there is still no solid agreement. Even there isn't one solid agreement in the Arab Region regarding sharing water resources.

Now coming to the Nile, H.E. Dr. Abdel Aty mentioned that there is huge opportunity in the Nile. There is possible water saving that can be up to 30 billion cubic meter.

Another opportunity in the Nile Basin countries is the groundwater opportunity where there is shared groundwater aquifer between Egypt, Sudan, Chad and Libya



and this is a very unique example of success where they established an authority to maintain the aquifer and they started with accurate assessment for the potentiality of the groundwater aquifer, this is the third phase and we hope to continue with this spirit of cooperation.

Now there is another opportunity for the cooperation in the eastern Nile basin where you can have basin management, infrastructure, irrigated agriculture, database and all of these can be an opportunity for cooperation.

This is the initiative that is discussed this morning: the establishment of a navigational line between lake Victoria and the Mediterranean sea, this is the main object to achieve socio-economic integration, sustainable integrated multimodal transport system, enhance trade and tourism and poverty reduction; and the current status is still in the feasibility phase and we hope that it will continue with its second phase when the brief feasibility will be deliverable in the institutional and legal framework. Training needs assessment in terms of reference for feasibility study.

Another initiative here in the Arab region the Arab water strategy security strategy when they have 6 million pillars one of this 6 million pillars is protecting the Arab water rights and this is one of the pillars and also the Arab Water Council the main pillars also is working on how to implement integration between water integration, nexus approach to improve efficiency and sustainability, so I have to see that this is a suggested guide line.

I have to say that ESCWA is leading this initiative within close cooperation with league of Arab States and the partners Arab Water Council and other partners together try to come with the principals for cooperation on the shared water resources in the Arab region namely based on the principles of the international laws of the UN 1997 Convention and UNECE 1992 and the draft article of the law of transboundary aquifer, coming to the end of this presentation the key message and lessons learned that we have, yes for base and stability shared water issues should be a priority in developing strategies and planning.

Transboundary water issue is a long term political process as mentioned this morning and needs wisdom, patience, qualification and hydrodiplomacy and that is what we are here for.

Adequate knowledge, exchange of information, technology and science based solutions, collaborative regional governments is a necessity where we have



appropriate institutional legal structure.

I have to say solid comprehensive and self-enforced agreement and establishment of a strong governing body as the river basin organization or a commission to induce a new mechanism to maximize the benefits integrated approaches, integrated water, resources management, nexus approach, blue and green water, cost benefit sharing, benefits for all and economic integration is a key success, approved finance is needed of course and long term investments and soft parties is also important. In the civil society the media, the diplomacy should be there on board.

In the Arab region there is a need of the development for regional platform and a good news that's under way and here established there is a recommendation to establish an Arab water conflict facility and here we would as the Arab Water Council can play role in bringing the stake holders together to bridge the political and technical gaps in the region.

Lessons learned from success stories around the world should be ahead of us, the role of international and regional partners, the role of the global community should be there to enforce the laws. This is one of the areas we miss, of course on the top of all political will and a strong political support is needed , so at the end of the conclusion the challenges of transboundary shared water resources are alarming but so are the opportunities, there is no room to waste time anymore, it's our duty and obligation dictating from our people to work sincerely together to explore and find solutions, to overcome these challenges and to help our children have a better and prosperous future; this can be at achieve if, I say if and only if we are real believer in the great value of cooperation.

Thank you very much

**His Excellency Mr. Seif El Din Hamad Abdullah**, former Minister of the water resources of Sudan

Thank you very much

Your Excellences,  
Distinguished guests  
Ladies and gentlemen

Good evening or good morning,



Today I will speak only about Sudan, or the role of Sudan in the cooperation on the Nile.

I would like to say thank you to Dr. Fadi for giving me the opportunity by inviting me here today, to this distinguished gathering.

I would also like to thank dr. Mahmoud, who stressed the importance of the cooperation programs. So rather than talking about programs I will just talk about the role of Sudan in these programs. The most important one must be the program of the Nile basin, we call it Hydromed which essentially focuses on data collection and analysis for the six lakes in the equatorial region.

Sudan has launched this program with Egypt and the following three countries: Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Sudan was the Manager of the crop monitoring program, within the Hydromed cooperation, and at the end of the program the country has proposed to redefine the above mentioned program in order to make it more solid and understanding.

The role of Sudan in the second program of basin, which covers the period 1992-1999 and which focused on technical cooperation to develop and protect the Nile basin, predominantly played a role in the preparation of plans.

It suggested the preparation of a national plan that should be integrated into a large basin plan. NBI, which was established in 1999 and continues today has seen the effective commitment of Sudan in the preparation for its long-term vision, which highlights the profit sharing and the sharing of water and that is a unique vision of things. In addition to that, it also took part in technical Board committees and the Council of Ministers of the Nile basin.

Sudan has provided technical and political support to the NBI as an inclusive platform for cooperation, knowing that the other cooperation programs are not inclusive.

Also, Sudan proved that it was more inclined to recognize the interests offered by the NBI than other countries in the Nile basin. In addition, it came up and designed twelve agreements which were signed in Addis Ababa on the Eastern Nile, in order to unfreeze the activities of the Nile basin.



Through the NBI after its Frost by Egypt, Sudan got three commitments of Egypt in the Nile basin at different times. It was considered the champion for trying to convince Egypt and other countries of the basin to re-engage Egypt in the NBI.

In the framework agreement of cooperation which was prepared in 1997, Sudan was committed to participate fully in the three mechanisms for cooperation.

An expert panel was established from 1997 to 2000, the Transitional Committee from 2000 to 2002 and the Committee of negotiations from 2002 to 2007.

We affirm that Sudan fully participated in the recent negotiations, those of the Negotiating Committee, and reaffirm our agreement with the articles and principles of CFL and our support for the exclusivity of this framework.

The position of Sudan is fully coincided with that of Egypt in this process.

On the potential influence of the hydro politic on the Nile, Sudan supports the development and the neutralization of the Nile.

What else? Sudan has strategic interests in the alignment of the currents and the neutralization of the Nile.

The outcome of the development will bring benefits to Ethiopia and to Egypt as well. The role of Sudan is to support and disseminate a shared vision and a common approach for a shared resource conservation in order to avoid a repetition of the tragedy of the Commons.

The position of Sudan also affects transboundary relations in the basin. As you all know, the Nile has a complex hydrology, and Sudan must ensure a logistic approach in the development and management of this system.

The position of Sudan is just between Ecuador and the Sudan plateau and the country operates the junction between the two of them. Sudan acknowledges the interests and the needs of the upstream and downstream States and in this sense, relations of Sudan with Egypt in the field of water, keep in function the Standing Technical Committee of the Nile waters at all times, including during crises or tensions between the two countries.

A future development and investments for the production of water of Sudan are designed and developed in coordination with Egypt and in accordance with the agreement on the Nile in 1999 in order to make full use of the Sudanese part of the Nile.

Sudan also supports an approach to these political waters. The role of Sudan in the diplomacy of the Nile is normally based on attitude, perception and behavior of



politicians, media, technicians and negotiators, which is a consequence of the cultural context of the issue of the Nile.

We have developed a new approach to hydrodiplomacy, which comes from this 'cultural diplomacy' developed by the cultural diversity of the Sudanese people, as well as the official communication, understanding and vision; the shared perception of the Nile that is seen in their cultures.

Sudan understands and is aware of how the Nile is seen and perceived in the culture of its two neighbors, Ethiopia and Egypt.

The role of Sudan is in position and the perception of the negotiations, the agreements, collection and sharing of data, the posture of the negotiations and the way in which we understand them.

For example, I would like to talk about the perception of its cultural heritage, just to give some examples, in Sudan, the Nile is seen as a beautiful gift, a source of fun, happiness and joy. Most of our poems and songs deal with the Nile... it is a culture of moderation free of obsessions. And this is reflected in the moderate thinking among our politicians, technicians and negotiators. This is one advantage of the "main-stream thought."

In Egypt, in ancient history - not today, but history - old Nile was venerated before the arrival of Islam. The Sudanese were celebrating it before the flood and pushing the most beautiful young women in the country they called "Bride of the Nile" in order to have a good flood. In Ethiopian poetry, for example, the poet Houbias sees in the Nile River 'Terbid', which in some versions is translated by "a treacherous River," which leaves the people and the country to move towards other people, other places, leaving them poor and sad by leaving the country. Sudan takes advantage of its moderate culture pulled from the Nile to contact people, to meet its neighbors, Ethiopia and Egypt, and the other nine countries of the basin.

Regarding the trilateral process, Sudan, through diplomacy, was able to develop the benefits of the expansion of infrastructure and cooperation in order to address water scarcity and shortages in the region. Without cooperation, multilateral action can go in the wrong direction. So there is a need for Sudanese diplomacy to take a regional approach, across the basin.

Sudan is committed to its national policy of water, and cooperation policy cannot only maximize the benefits that all receive.



Therefore, since 2011, Sudan supports the reconciliation of each part in the trilateral discussions, which also includes high-level visits, and this since 2011.

Sudan has organized the main trilateral talks in Khartoum between 2013 and 2015. Sudan officially and explicitly supports the negotiations at the highest level; the president, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of water held personal meetings with the authorities of water from neighboring countries.

This policy culminated with the setting up of the international Committee of experts and the implementation of the Tripartite Committee. In 2013, Sudan has served as a mediator and support, has launched a diplomatic campaign as a result of Morsi statements about possible sabotage of the dam of the Renaissance at a conference. Famous president Morsi often received delegations of experts to hear recommendations on the current priorities.

Sudan stressed the central role of the continuation of diplomatic efforts to resolve this dispute in order to reduce the division between Egypt and Ethiopia.

Sudan has increasingly offered its good offices for the tripartite meetings looking for in-depth cooperation, and played a vital role as a State enjoying the confidence of all the negotiators. During August 2014 to September 2015 six trilateral meetings were held, including half that took place in Khartoum. The Sudanese success is embodied in the statement of principles signed by the heads of States involved in Khartoum in March 2015.

Sudan has also proposed the integration of the Eastern Nile leaders meeting in Sharm - el - Sheikh. This issue is still under development, formulation, and is closely followed by Foreign Ministers of the three countries of the Nile basin.

Also, Sudan has played a major role in the trade of agricultural commodities, it offers great opportunities for food security and trade with other countries of the basin.

We have more than 8 million ha of fertile land, of which 4 are in the perimeter of the Nile basin.



We have irrigation, herds and an airworthiness to high sustainability among others, and Sudan is the shipping lane to the States of the Nile basin. Sudan also has a role in port traffic in the 2006 Nile Basin Initiative.

Average export to Egypt in the next 25 years is expected to increase to 700 million US\$, saving us 680 million \$.

Sudan is therefore a corridor, and the trade to the South will develop also. Sudan also has a role in climate change and the preservation of the environment of the Nile basin.

We know that climate change will cause scarcity of water, the risk of increased flooding, energy, human risks, and the role of the Sudan is important to deal with these new challenges.

Sudan has supported the preparation of the environmental policies of the Nile Basin Initiative as well as safeguard of the environment and the ecosystem of the Nile basin. Sudan also has a role in the understanding of the Nile, which is currently limited to the basin. Sudan has invested its time and resources to better understand the Nile, for different futures. We unveiled the findings of the IBN...

My conclusion is that Sudan played a central role in the construction of the NBI which benefited the basin in its entirety and all of its States.

The Nile basin offers a huge potential in economic development, irrigation, river trade, navigation, local tourism and ecotourism. And if the opportunity to produce and trade is taken, the Sudan will be a central point.

The biggest threat facing the basin, in addition to climate change, is the lack or the slowness of cooperation and economic integration across the Nile basin.

The countries of the Nile basin are designed to think together, and develop thinking and inclusive policies.

My last word is that the hydrodiplomatic role of Sudan is vital in the development of the Nile basin cooperation policies.

**Mr. Jean Francois Donzier**, Secretary General of the International Network of Basin Organizations



I suspected that being the last speaker of the round table, I would be asked to conclude, even before having started, but I will try to go quickly enough to pass you a few messages.

It has been said that one of the major problems facing mankind is the increase of the population, which is reflected in the water sector by a significant increase in consumption, whether it is human consumption or industrial consumption, food and energy in particular. What we don't say much, even if we have talked a little bit about it, is that the effect of climate change on freshwater resources is already visible and will be extremely significant in a very short time; the end of the century basically, which is the maximum of the next two or three decades; and this climate change means that freshwater is one of the first victims and we risk hitting a wall, if we do not react very quickly to implement the adaptation measures that are needed.

We need to mobilize all our partners, not just governments or intergovernmental agencies, but people who are on the ground and who are themselves the users and consumers of water.

That is why the COP 21 was made up of alliances, an alliance of the signatories of the Paris Pact. Those alliances promote the management by basin but promote business as well, which includes private companies, not just water but manufacturing companies using water in their process, the mega city alliance, the big cities because the world's population is concentrating in these big cities and having heard this, there are huge problems both in terms of food but also of pollution and possibly destruction of ecosystems, and then there is an alliance of desalination because it is one of the possible alternatives to the problem we are facing. These alliances have signed an agreement with the COP 22 of Marrakesh to create the global alliances for water and climate that bring us all together with a common goal that is to mobilize our skills to try to help the project leaders and make them emerge faster and then also to identify and spread the best practices because it is useless to reinvent the wheel each time and when something works it is better to reuse it as quickly as possible.

Among the projects that we launched for two years now; most of them relate to information systems, this is a point that we have not talked about today for the moment but we are in the unknown about water management.



We know meteorology quite well, we know hydrology, but we do not know how things will evolve; it's not because the old engineers like me have used decennial or centennial flood statistics for decades that things will be like that again in the future with climate change and then we do not know or know very badly about consumption, pollution, water quality and of course the functioning of ecosystems.

So we are a little in the unknown, it's like we want to manage something we do not know. So today we are telling the multinational authorities, development banks, countries "put in place information systems on water because once again, we will have to be very precise in the design of the books and in the mode of management of the resource in particular".

A typical case is the Congo Basin, which is one of the ones we are working on, to see how we can use new satellite technologies in this area.

Today, there are 10 times fewer hydrological stations in the Congo Basin than at the end of the Belgian colonization; how do you want to manage a pool that is the 2nd largest basin in the world without having the slightest idea of what happens there? So beyond the incubation as we say today, new projects mounted by our alliances to support the countries, we have the COP 21 that called the signing of the Paris Pact for the management of water resources and the adaptation to climate change in basins: river basins, lake basins, aquifer basins. Let's not forget groundwater and of course face the effects of climate change, 360 global organizations from 94 countries around the world signed the pact and what does the pact say? It says that, as many of you this morning have already said, you have to manage water by basin, there is no mystery.

The water runs without knowing the borders or the administrative boundaries, it goes from inside the country as well as outside and when the resource flows from top to bottom, it is then necessary to put in place the management tools where the resource is in any context and especially in transboundary basins.

We also say that the main problem we face is not technical.

We know how to build dams we know how to build dikes, we have to progress, there is innovation of course, particularly in terms of desalination or reuse of wastewater and treated water for example, but most of the problems encountered are problems of governance, bad governance both in terms of institutional frameworks in which the majority of countries work but also misuse of water or malfunction of systems at the field level.



We need to build skills first, we need to create basin organizations, in particular transboundary basin organizations when we have to deal with this problem, and then we must obviously work with the populations, with the users to control the demand because today we say that we have problems, that we are more able to cope with the demand but the demand is implausible.

This is a demand in which city networks lose up to more than 50% of drinking water, it is a demand in which agricultural irrigation uses 3 times more water of what would be necessary for a better push of the industries and I only talk about these 2 topics among others. So the first concern is to see to what extent we can reduce the use of water so that it is more effective at all levels by relying once again on information systems that I mentioned earlier. At this point, to go very quickly, I have not forgotten either the use of what are now called the natural measures of water retention or solutions based on nature.

We have seen for decades or even for centuries how we destroyed the aquatic ecosystems for, no doubt, good reasons but today we realize that it creates disasters, it reinforces the floods, it reinforces the effects of drought and we need to know how to play with what is now called green engineering, using ecosystems and, of course, protecting ecosystems, you have to fight against pollution, you know that today - according to the United Nations figures - more than 85% of human waste is untreated in the natural environment. This is one of the major problems, I do not know how the UN will regulate it at the level of the objectives of sustainable development but for the moment we are still at the beginning of prehistory in the field of wastewater treatment of all kinds.

Africa, virtually all African rivers are transboundary with some small coastal rivers. I show you this map like this but also to tell you that practically all the African basins, which leave the Nile still a little late, have established treaties between the riparian countries and authorities' bodies called "authorities, commissions".

This will not be a subject for transboundary aquifer management. There are currently more than 600 transboundary aquifers in the world for which one has to have management agreements on the fingers of one hand, that gives you an idea.

Most of the water is not "above ground" but in "the basement"; I am talking about fresh water. So we must continue working in this direction but what I wanted to say to you to conclude, very quickly, is that we have tools.



First, there is an international legal framework that is quite developed with United Nations conventions or related texts. These texts are perfectly applicable in most cases and provide solutions and we never talk about its efficiency.

The European Union is the first group of 28 countries worldwide that has set up a common policy for surface and groundwater management. As you may know, we are in Europe the world champion of transboundary rivers for 36 good historical reasons that I let you guess. The new European legislation of 2000 requires Member States to jointly manage transboundary rivers, not only the internal transboundary rivers but also the external ones, we spoke very quickly about the Danube just now, for which a part of the riparian countries would not be a member of the European Union, asking to apply the same procedures to try to reach the same result, an integrated management of water resources and of course equitable sharing of resources. It takes shape in Europe but it's the same diagram that you've seen elsewhere.

You see that the basin authorities, which we have set up in Europe, are pretty much similar to all the ones that have been set up successfully around the world. Once again, as I said earlier, there is no need to be innovative in wanting to develop new modes of organization. There are currently models that work well knowing once again, that they work even better when we not only manage to associate the countries but to also associate the users of water on the ground in countries. Departments, local communities, municipalities and the different types of users, farmers, industrialists and others who contribute to the solution of the problems, it is worth it for the rivers, it is also valid for the lakes.

I give you the example of Lake Geneva. It's been 50 years since the French and Swiss governments collaborated to save Lake Geneva. It works without a particular story but with a good result as well as other European transboundary lakes that are saved today but what is interesting to say is that the countries of the Upper Nile Basin have all of them virtually signed agreements for shared management of the big lakes of the basin and today we have authority over Lake Victoria, Lake Tanganyika and so on. We talked about Senegal, it is an example that we do not quote often enough, I would like to remind you that in the 70s, the four countries of the basin were on the verge of war but a real war with real armies and rifles for the water sharing of the Senegal River and thank God they set up an organization that was very quickly mentioned earlier that is remarkable in that the principle adopted is actually the sharing of benefits, not the sharing of water, but also the establishment of common works the ownership of which does not belong to the riparian States but to the organization for the development of Senegal.



We have examples of situations that are not simple, that of the Nile is not much more complicated than other cases that we have on the ground and that work and it works because there was a political will on the long term to move from a national system to a system of transboundary basins. As Fadi said, when national governments agree to work together, we are almost sure of the results and these results are profitable for everyone in the future.

**Professor Michael Scoullos**, President of GWP-Med

Dear organizers,

I understand that we have little time, so my idea, my question here is: what will be the framework for cooperation? I think that in most cases it has been said already: common challenges and common opportunities are key to Hydrodiplomacy and the first thing, the best incentive for Hydrodiplomacy - I think - is presented by the efforts necessary to cope with major challenges, conserve natural resources and maintain the ecosystem. So climate change, and that is why Hydrodiplomacy and climate change for peace in the Middle East were set up today. Climate change is a major challenge that needs to be interconnected with the issue in question.

Everyone says we have to improve when we discuss the Nile. There are many experienced people here, there are two tendencies when you have to deal with diplomatic issues: the first is to reduce the number of negotiators and the other is to increase the number of negotiators and thus move from the national to the international. My thesis here is that we need to bring all countries together around the same table and expand even more.

How can we do it? The first thing is the content, we are talking about water, energy and food and so we reach the Nexus. The Nexus has four dimensions not three: water, energy, food and environment and it's very important to understand that from the beginning. This is the first extension and the second is - since we are talking about Hydrodiplomacy - the water cycle as a whole, not only the water cycle of the Nile but of all the countries that are involved in this negotiation.

From this point of view, I believe we need to engage in a discussion of equatorial lakes as it was said before, and we must in fact see that the reduction of ice caps in upstream countries is a major issue for them.

It is not directly and necessarily related to the balance of the Nile water, but it is a very important issue for them and is related to tourism and many other water resources.



In some cases, we have a 70% reduction in ice caps and that must be part of the question from my point of view in order to make them understand that they have something to learn from this discussion, thus increasing the share upstream, but also increasing their share downstream, because we have heard the problems of sea-level rise, but there are other problems in which all the Mediterranean countries are involved besides the migration and very important issues discussed already.

The reduced water level already allows a lower salinity of the Suez Canal at the end and this reinforces the rapid introduction of exotic species into the Mediterranean Sea. So this is something for which the fishing and ecosystem of the Mediterranean suffer and suffer more with the reduction of water in the Nile, this must be discussed and at the same time we have because of the higher concentration reduced water has a higher concentration of nutrients which is also an important point that changes the balance with other species that are of commercial interest in the region.

My thesis is that all this will bring countries together and make this question a more global one. This can help a lot in solving our difficulties right now. Let me tell you in my capacity as Team Leader for 2020 that some of the projects funded by the European Union and the European Investment Bank are really trying to help with the expansion of the treatment plan.

Suez and the reuse of water because at the end of the day as it was said by Mr. Fauchon this morning "the question of cooperation is not only in the distribution of water but also in the recovery of optimal solutions water reuse and that's part of the negotiation. "

**Mr. Jean-Louis Guigou, President of IPEMED**

My friend Fadi Comair who exploits me with a great friendship each time he makes a conference, asks me to speak, but as I am not an expert I come as a source of exhaustion. I have one or two messages to pass you as developer of the territory and having the responsibility to animate a "think tank" on the Mediterranean. Your theme is the future of cooperation between riparian countries: it is very vague knowing that there are two types of cooperation in general between riparian countries.

Is this cooperation between riparian states? Or is it cooperation between the citizens of the riparian countries? My skills in Hydrodiplomacy are starting to be "weak"; so the first idea is the pressure on the States; how to put pressure? Because in the same



way it's a bit like the conflict between Palestine and Israel, it can last 10, 15, 20 years, so for the Nile there are many potential conflicts -due to the geography- that can end with wars .

So I have an image, a memory, an idea to give you. It comes from far but I always quote it: it is a letter from Eisenhower to President Roosevelt in 1943 - 1944. Eisenhower was with the soldiers "the boys" trying to put order between the German duchies, Italian, English, French and he wrote to Roosevelt: I am tired of seeing American boys killed to try to limit these permanent conflicts between the duchies of Germany, France, Italy and Spain. It's absurd we already did the First World War and we do the second. The military leader rises "Mr. President do you have a solution?"

And Roosevelt tells him yes I have one, that's what we're going to do to try to put them in step with all these fratricidal Europeans, we'll offer them a huge plan, Marshal's plan on the condition that they manage it together, I planned the sum of 50 billion euros and he created commissions, it is the beginning of the OECD, German and French have been lightened to agree to manage this matter. I'm asking you as specialists, I'm a generalist, to make sure that the states of Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt agree.

Is this not the best method to defend all basins? Would it not be wise for the international community to agree to jointly manage the basins for the international community to implement a valid agriculture plan. If you agree on the water we will help you with agriculture. Whether it is the international monetary fund, the UN or the European Commission, but if there is no pressure, I think it can go as far as revolutions.

The second thing is on a second simple idea that was addressed by our friend Jean-François Donzier, it is the notion of basin.

I would like to come back to this because, as President Chirac said "The best of pedagogies is repetition". I found a quote when I was a delegate. We went to get a very nice quote from an architect-geometer named Leplet who followed Napoleon in his conquests in 1804 crossing the Danube, which goes to Russia and he says something like this: "It will take one day for the administrative and political divisions to become obsolete because they are absurd. The real division is the division into a basin because one day the problems of water will force men to be on one side or the other side of a basin, upstream or downstream the right political management is basin management.



Our Prime Minister at the time told me, "Mr. the Delegate, what is your program? ". I said: "it's simple Mr. Prime Minister, it's not to build roads or highways, it's to recompose the administrative divisions of France that are absurd because the central government has done everything to break communities and now we have to recompose them ...

Ladies and gentlemen, I stop, I said a lot of banalities because I am not competent in your field but certainty, a certainty it makes that the international community puts pressure by a project on the Member States which put themselves in the situation of basin agencies and the populations must be warned. If the heads of state do not make this effort, warn them to put themselves in a state of resilience because it will be very hard.

As a last word I will say, I come out of a communication on global warming in the Mediterranean and I am still afraid of the figures that have just been communicated to me, it will not last long, if the States do not organize by basin then we will have wars.

### **H.E. Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos, Former Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Thank you very much to the organizers, to the Senator Olivier Cadic, who gives us the privilege of entering to the French Senate. Thank you, my dear friend Fadi Comair, for inviting us again to talk about peace in the Middle East and to talk about this new concept of Hydrodiplomacy.

I do not think I am wrong in saying that I am the only diplomat who is going to speak, so I think I have the legitimacy to speak about this dimension of diplomacy as a Former Foreign Minister and a Former diplomat. I believe we are facing a new world; we have listened to it, we have studied it, we have felt the stakes that we are facing, and for that, we will have to adopt a different approach, and I must congratulate the organizers for tackling the Nile basin itself this time even if it seems a little paradoxical, it's at the right time, because geo-strategy is the political science that we are addressing in this round table now.

We are considering the new relations of Europe with the Mediterranean continent but also with the African continent and the Nile is the symbol my dear Jean Louis of your dear vertical: I thought you were going to talk about our vertical, of the African-Mediterranean-European vertical.



We cannot understand the issues that affect it and that were highlighted at the beginning of this session: emigration, refugees, all the issues, climate change, and terrorism. I do not understand the issues that arise in this long 700 km long river running from Lake Victoria to the Mediterranean.

If we do not find a political solution to the stakes of the Nile, my dear friends we will have serious problems, not only on water issues that are obviously fundamental, but on security, political, social and economic issues, that means the big geopolitical issues that will have an irreversible impact in the coming decades.

That's why we talked a lot about Hydrodiplomacy, a term that I like, that I support, but I have to make a few remarks: what kind of Hydrodiplomacy should we defend or apply? I was very happy to hear my friend Michael Scoullos, who framed the subject very well. He said there are two trends in diplomacy.

Some say that to succeed, one must continue with traditional diplomacy, confidentiality is possible, why not?

Others say "No, to solve the problem, you have to expand and go into the multilateral framework; the United Nations, international organizations, all actors, all leaders, we meet and resolve the issue. "

My dear friends, neither of them and especially if we start to decline this new concept "Hydrodiplomacy", I give you an advice , it is necessary to make a Hydrodiplomacy of the 21st century, not falling in the trap of making a Hydrodiplomacy of the 20th or 19th century, we are not in the colonial or post-colonial period, we are in 2017, and in 2017 there is a new diplomacy my dear friends, you do not believe me but we receive a lot of criticism on the current diplomacy, we cut the budgets of a US administration by 30%, we invest in military affairs, defense department, we do not want diplomacy.

“Diplomacy”, there are multiple articles that say it is decadent. I tell you it's quite the opposite, the world needs diplomacy today more than ever but a different kind of diplomacy that is not traditional diplomacy. I will give you an example, we had the last speakers on the Paris Pact and who showed the successes of the COP 21, let's set our eyes on the COP 21.

Why did it succeed? It is not only thanks to the talent and the know-how of a great friend, a great politician Foreign Minister of France, Mr. Fabius.

Mr. Fabius did a very good job as well as the Quai d'Orsay but it was not only thanks to him, there is also the French diplomacy, it was done because there was also the



multilateral, there was also the UN secretariat, there were also the NGOs that were in favor of a historic meeting, there was also a rallying of the whole civil society. There was also the media and there was also the private sector.

What does that mean? Diplomacy has evolved and we cannot just do diplomacy as we did in the 18th to the 19th and the 20th century.

Now we have to engage, my dear Michael, everyone, in a different way if we want to succeed, we need bilateral cooperation for the Nile Basin obviously, it is necessary that Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan and the countries from the lake get along but we will not reach a solution if we do not make a different approach and again Michael was quite right and visionary.

We cannot speak only about water my dear friends even if we are in Hydrodiplomacy, we must expand to Nexus Food-Energy-Water. What are the problems in the Nile basin? It is hunger, it is poverty, it is famine, and it is the need for an agriculture that is capable of rooting these populations. It's the energy, the dam "The Renaissance" what is it? Being able to give electricity throughout the African continent, I ask this question "who leads the negotiations?"

There have been I do not know 7 or 10 meetings of water ministers that I respect enormously you are the best connoisseurs. It was the same thing, when in Copenhagen, we wanted an agreement on climate change, foreign ministers kicked out environment ministers and wanted to negotiate alone, what happened?

They did not know how to negotiate, they did not know how to strike the deal nor how to get to an agreement; Mr. Fabius was able to negotiate and did an excellent diplomatic job, but he did an excellent diplomatic job because he had at the same time the support of the various actors.

So my dear Fadi, yes to Hydrodiplomacy, but let's do a new hydrodiplomacy that is not a vague concept, let it be repeated every year here in the Senate, diplomacy is an action, it's an obligation to act, we must get to work; it's not only making recommendations, no you have to set up Hydrodiplomacy: I propose that thanks to your conference, to your appeal to the people who are here, who are real experts, Mr. Fauchon the former president is someone who knows perfectly well, that it's necessary to create a commission of Hydrodiplomacy and to say, send a letter like a call for results of the colloquium from the Senate to all the States; we are ready to help you and this commission will be formed by water ministers, by diplomats who know how to negotiate, by scientists of the leaders of the United Nations, by environmental officials, by officials in charge of Agriculture.



What has the FAO done? We are waiting for people to start dying to say: we have to call the World Food Agency.

No, we need to work on prevention and that's why I propose that you start doing Hydrodiplomacy in action and that this symposium and the people participating in this conference can, under your leadership, begin negotiations.

The crisis of the Nile Basin is not over. It is very serious and in this sense, we should not wait until the situation escalates, we must act and we can modestly offer good offices to the authorities of the riparian countries, so say we are here, we will start to demonstrate that Hydrodiplomacy is not just talks ... it's a reality.

There it is ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your invitation.

## **Session 2: Hydrodiplomacy of the Nile Basin**

**Mrs. Blanca Jimenez-Cisneros**, Director, Division of Water Sciences,  
Secretary of the International Hydrological Program (IHP), UNESCO

This panel will bring a new dimension related to future generations and climate change. In this sense, UNESCO has worked a lot in the field of Hydrodiplomacy.

Moreover, these programs are programs that initiated the programs called "PCCP": from potential conflict to potential cooperation. It's been almost 20 years since we started with these topics, and at the moment we're working on it because we're seeing some very interesting things here, but we still need not only to go into the practical aspects but to start working on the principles. We should agree on values, on rights; at UNESCO we are pushing for rights to water security, we are starting, not just with water, sanitation and water supply, but in a more general context; we are also working on the aspect of water and ethics, if we agree on all these principles; to have water security, one must have the same water values among countries and culture. It would be much easier to work in the dimensions of Hydrodiplomacy because we would have a common ground.

**Mr. Pierre Roussel, President of the International Office for Water**

I am divided between hope and worry: hope because it's starting to move, hydrodiplomacy exists, brings results and it's picking up and then the worry in the



urgency; whether it is demography or climate change, they will not wait for us and in front of that there is a very technical work that will take years.

Jean François spoke earlier of the constitution but before having a usable chronological series, we will have to cross the two.

Let's hang in there and do not waste time.

**Mr. Pierre Berthelot**, Associate Researcher at the French Institute of Strategic Analysis (IFAS)

I apologize for I do not have a detailed presentation, but anyway the time is allotted to us, so I thank Fadi Comair for his invitation and all those present too. The geopolitical reflection that I wanted to address here is the following: I wanted to focus on points that have not necessarily been developed but that can be useful to feed the reflection.

Four ideas came to mind. First of all, when we talk about solving the problem of water crisis in the Nile basin, we see that a lot of things have been done for a number of years; we can see that there are also blockages. One may wonder why these blockages exist.

Well, they have also been present for decades for geopolitical reasons. Except that there is an evolution of the regional geopolitical situation as you know, for the worse and for the better.

The first reflection I have is that there is in fact what we call in political science the "linkage" that is to say that there is finally a link between this possibility of resolving this conflict or these strong tensions, and secondly other tensions that exist and are present especially for the Arab Republic of Egypt.

And as long as these questions are not definitively resolved, we will not advance on these issues, I think that Egypt, I'm not saying is not ready to make important and major advances, the Egyptians will have to make concessions, but at the same time it is also necessary that other files can evolve in parallel.

I am thinking, for example, of the question of these islands that are currently in negotiations with Saudi Arabia, which are at the entrance to the Strait of Tiran, which are coming to Jordan, the Gulf of Aqaba and Israel, and therefore these islands are currently a source, of internal tensions in Egypt since it seems that Egypt, which has



benefited from the help of Saudi Arabia in recent years, will, well, be ready to make a gesture in relation to these islands which are claimed for a very long time by Saudi Arabia.

So the question is today a source of internal tension since it is sometimes said that the Government would take 'the national heritage', the national sovereignty. We will then see, it is also a legal issue that has been brought by citizens before courts, before judicial and institutional organizations, but I think that as long as this question is not completely resolved, clarified, then it will be difficult for Egypt to make real progress on the Nile question, which is, as we know, the backbone of the country, and which is identified with national sovereignty. We should then, finally see what will be the outcome of these famous islands.

There is also a territory shared with Sudan, and is as well now a source of contentious and tensions, precisely with Sudan, so it would be necessary to see this border territory which is in the south of Egypt and thus in the north of Sudan, which also looks out over the Red Sea, we should see what the outcome of this territory will be, of the ongoing negotiations, because here we can imagine that Egypt should not be left in a position that public opinion would consider too unfavorable.

The positive point, however, is the geopolitical advance observed since the accession to power of President Sissi. It is finally a certain geopolitical skill or at least a modification of the traditional strategy of Egypt, since we see that it opened other channels of negotiations, or other channels of cooperation, with a marked return for example from Russia. We have therefore seen that the alignment with the position of the United States, has changed to a different position towards Syria, a position as different as its support that is Saudi Arabia in particular, so that shows a certain independence and that's important because it means that Egypt can also evolve on the Nile issue. And besides, we can only welcome, we French, this new geopolitical reality since we have seen that Egypt, to the surprise, bought many Rafale aircraft, fighter planes, and so it was for us the beginning of a trifecta if I can say. But in any case, it is a new geopolitical reality, which shows that Egypt is also capable of certain geopolitical inflections, and it is rather positive and optimistic about this question of the Nile.

The second geopolitical idea on which I wanted to come back, which was mentioned, is that around sovereignty, food security, since we are told, in particular, that the issue of virtual water that was developed by Tony Alan, would be a solution to reduce tensions, since he explains that tensions in the region would have



decreased indirectly through the purchase of cereals from other countries rather than producing them locally because they are very expensive in water. Certainly, but at the same time, if we go too far in this strategy of importing cereals, there is also the risk, precisely, of this loss of food sovereignty and food security. So I think that in spite of everything we have to be careful enough, it's my modest opinion on this issue, and not be in an overwhelming enthusiasm about this subject because we finally are dependent on other countries to ensure precisely its food security and food for its people.

The third geopolitical thought is that we see that Egypt, certainly, and we can understand its position since it tends to drag a little feet to resolve the issue of sharing agreements at the Nile. But at the same time geopolitics remind us that there are fundamental trends, long-term trends, and at the same time realities in the short or long term. And the long-term reality is, it was pointed out just now, the demographic reality. Indeed, Egypt, and it is also recalled - I allow myself to re-show Fadi Comair's book on hydrodipolomacy in the Middle East, it is recalled that here too the demography will no longer play in favor of Egypt . It is already overtaken by Ethiopia, and this trend will increase.

So finally, at a given moment, we will face a shock of the demographic reality and Egypt must integrate this parameter, which finally, in the long term, is a profound modification of the geopolitical reality in the Basin, with also another underlying trend: Ethiopia's economic affirmation. Ethiopia thirty years ago was famine, it is far from the case today, it is a country that is often cited as an example for its economic dynamism in Africa. And so we can think, with strong support from the Chinese or others, Ethiopia will continue to rise in economic and demographic power and therefore it will be accompanied by a necessary increase in its water withdrawal.

Finally, my last reflection, if we are often told that water is a source of wars, source of conflict, the reality is that despite effectively often vocal speeches from Egypt or threats thinly veiled there has never been a war or a conflict so far because the reality is that we know that a war for water is infinitely more expensive than a minimal or imperfect agreement on the question of water.

That too is a reality. Not to mention that the donors of course, WB or others, will quickly flee once a state has declared a war to preserve a share of its water resources. So that's also on a positive note that we have to finish.



My conclusion, since the time allotted is very short is that Egypt, has considered itself for a long time a hydro-hegemonic State, except that this hydro hegemony, is finally ending. Of course Egypt will remain a key player in the Nile basin and the Middle East, I do not return to the reasons, but nevertheless, this hydraulic supremacy in the Nile basin, it is today doomed to disappear or to abate and I do not doubt that the intelligence of the Egyptian leaders will be to understand this new reality to adapt to it, and to finally appear more as a force of proposal than a blocking force.

**Mr. Jean-Louis Oliver**, Secretary General of the Water Academy

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is an honor and a pleasure to intervene in this now traditional colloquium; but it is also a certain challenge to present a prospective reflection on the management of water by watershed.

Let's start with a bit of history to better understand the future in this area. Because as the saying goes "He who does not know where he comes from, does not know where he is going to" ...

The notion of hydrographic basin, commonly referred to as watershed, was in fact scientifically highlighted in France in the 17th century by Claude Perrault, doctor, physicist and architect, with multidisciplinary skills, brother of Charles Perrault, famous writer for his Tales for kids.

At that time already, thanks to the first locks, the Briar canal had allowed the waterway to cross the threshold between the Seine basin and the Loire basin, making it possible to considerably widen and strengthen the territories served by river navigation, which was then the main means of transporting people and goods. A few decades later, Paul Riquet had crossed the threshold of Naurouze to the Canal du Midi to connect the Mediterranean basin to that of the Atlantic, a grandiose project that had already been imagined by the Romans, then by Charlemagne.



It is also through river navigation - a very ancient and a very important activity on the Nile - that the first international agreements concerning transboundary rivers took place: the Treaties of Westphalia in 1648 for the Rhine, and the Treaty of Paris in 1856 for the Danube.

Browsers, explorers, traders or colonizers, have crossed the oceans and reassembled large rivers in all continents, from downstream to upstream, to discover new territories; and they were confronted with the geographical realities of the watersheds: this was the case for the Saint Lawrence, the Mississippi, the Amazon, Senegal, the Congo, the Indus, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, the Mekong etc ... It is also in the Overseas Public Works Department that the French Engineers of the Roads and Bridges, Mines or Rural Engineering, have taken the measure of this specific area of water.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the development of hydropower created new international difficulties in transboundary rivers.

In recent decades, pollution problems related to industrial civilization have appeared everywhere. It is precisely these engineers who returned from Africa or Indochina after independence, who inspired and implemented the law of 16 December 1964 establishing in France watershed institutions: basin committees and financial basin agencies, which have since become water agencies. In the water area, these institutions have received the remarkable ability to collect and redistribute royalties on raw water withdrawals and wastewater discharges; which gives them considerable incentive and efficiency.

In the Ruhr, by the end of the 19th century, then with the National Rhone Company and the Tennessee Valley Authority, in the 1930s, for the production of electricity, and finally with the River Authorities in England, after the Second World War some experiments have been introduced.

But it is especially with the French example of the 60s and 70s, presented in particular at the UN conference on water of Mar del Plata, in 1977, that the concept of watershed took a big international development, little by little, on the five continents; and in Aix les Bains, in 1992, at the initiative of Michel Barnier, was born the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO), animated with dynamism, for 25 years, by the International Office of Water, well known and appreciated by all, represented here by Jean-François Donzier.

The European Water Framework Directive of the year 2000, which promotes the integrated watershed approach, then had a considerable influence, well beyond the limits of the European Union. This Framework Directive is contemporary with the creation of the Euro; and we observe that most of the Eurozone countries, in



solidarity with their currency, are located in the major transboundary basins of Europe, and are thus also solidary on the water.

Since its creation more than 50 years ago, the French model of large river basin institutions, which has inspired the European Union and a number of countries on all continents, has itself progressively evolved:

- strengthened role of local authorities and associative movements,
- expansion of interventions to biodiversity,
- prevention, mitigation and adaptation to climate change (floods / droughts).

At the same time, some thirty Territorial Basin Public Establishments (EPTBs) were formed at the level of the sub-basins, in connection with the implementation of the Management of the Aquatic Environments and the Protection against Floods (GEMAPI) by the groups local authorities.

Over time, the last 50 years in particular, have undergone considerable evolutions, spectacular scientific, technical and technological progress, a real transformation of economic, commercial and social activities with globalization, the new information technologies and communication in the digital society, inducing profound changes in attitudes, behaviors and modes of governance, in the public, private and associative sectors.

Since the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century, this has resulted in serious changes in the functioning of the Earth's climate, and therefore in living conditions on the planet, including an increase in the frequency, variability and severity of extreme hydrometeorological phenomena: floods and inundations, droughts and low flows, tornadoes, etc ... with a rise in the level of the oceans and a very sensitive warming of the air and water, maritime or continental. The vast basin of the Nile does not escape it!

The great water cycle, at the heart of the planet's climate system, is therefore deeply disturbed, making the rational, balanced and sustainable management of this vital resource for everyone, even more complex and strategic.

In this changing context, taking into account the physical and human geography, that is to say, the specific water issues in the watersheds for surface waters and groundwater aquifers, remains indispensable at all levels, from the local level to the cross-border level.

But prevention, mitigation and adaptation to climate change also require raising the debate on a larger scale of a homogeneous set of basins surrounding a maritime or lake area, for example: the Mediterranean Sea with the UfM, Baltic Sea with Helcom, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Dead Sea, Adriatic Sea, Aegean Sea, or Lake Chad, Great Lakes of Central Africa and Great Lakes of North America, etc ... To effectively achieve this, international and multilateral co-operation in these fields



is bound to develop considerably: beyond the well-known contingencies of today, it is purely and simply a matter of collective survival!

The two parallel European Framework Directives concerning fresh and marine waters respectively are powerful tools in this general interest perspective, in Europe and elsewhere.

The two international conventions of 1992 and 1997 concerning transboundary rivers are also expected to have important beneficial effects in this respect:

- The 1992 Convention of the United Nations Commission for European Cooperation has been extended to transboundary watersheds on other continents, particularly in Africa,

- The UN Convention of 1997 was ratified in 2015 by the 35th country, Vietnam, which made it operational worldwide.

Finally, in 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which apply to all countries, regardless of their level of development, and which, for the first time, include a Target for Sustainable Development explicitly concerning water.

So the problem of water has gradually become a major concern at the global level!

In general, we must improve, at all levels, the always difficult relations between science and politics!

This is particularly the case for water resources located in watersheds or transboundary aquifers, shared between several countries, which can cause tensions, crises and even conflicts, not only concerning the quantitative distribution but also on the quality of the water.

In fact, not only quantitative but also qualitative questions concerning water resources, and consequently water intended for human consumption, are likely to become an even more worrying problem than they are today; because to the past classical, punctual or diffuse pollutions, far from being treated everywhere, are now added new contaminants linked to diffusion, little mastered, of new molecules, micropollutants, micro-plastics, nanoparticles, qualified of emerging risks whose effects on human health and other living species are still poorly understood.

It is thus that International water quality conventions have been applied to certain transboundary rivers, such as the Rhine and the Danube.

In addition, the need to save energy, especially of fossil origin, particularly in road and air transport, leads to the development of transport by waterway, not only maritime, but also fluvial; especially since most of the big cities are located on a river, or at its estuary or delta!

Given the medium and long-term effects of climate change on living conditions, it is even more necessary, and even indispensable, to further coordinate and plan together,



as closely as possible, planning and management, on the one hand water, and on the other hand territories, urban or rural, according to their resources and their economic, socio-cultural and environmental potential.

Significant and successful efforts have already been made in this direction, particularly with a view to ensuring prevention and protection against the increased risk of floods, which can be catastrophic.

The watershed and aquifer, for their respective waters and territories, remain therefore essential relevant spaces, evolving, as necessary, their institutions, governance and procedures towards:

- a more transversely approach,
- a more interdisciplinary approach,
- more subsidiarity,

Leading to more solidarity and resilience, thanks in particular to the astonishing possibilities offered by new technologies, current and future, of the 21st century. In conclusion, from the local level to the international and even the global scale, a precious and vital natural resource such as water must be the subject of effective quantitative and qualitative management, demanding in its objectives, pragmatic in its means: not only must the specific management of the various industrial, agricultural and urban uses be effective, but also between these various uses, a harmonious and evolving balance must be established, taking into account the environment, ecosystems, biodiversity especially humid areas whose previously unknown role is in fact quite essential!

In an ever-changing context, the realities of the watershed and the aquifer have a bright future ahead of them!

**Ms. Rola Majdalani**, Director, UN-ESCWA Sustainable Development Policy Department

I will speak about the regional initiative that facilitates the assessment of the impact on water resources and the vulnerability of key sectors that are affected by climate change. This initiative started with an assessment and with products that have helped member countries by providing the necessary information on adaptation, mitigation as well as capacity building of key stakeholders in the negotiation of the position up to the Paris agreement, and then in the implementation of the indices of this initiative.

We have 11 participating organizations and UNESCO is one of them. The importance of having these organizations is that we all speak with one voice. It is very important when you talk about climate change to say what are the regional challenges in this region.



The impact of climate change is a major challenge and more particularly vulnerability to climate change. Instead of looking at the mitigation aspects in a simplified and brief way, the framework we used is based on baseline comments and the regional climate model and helped us to establish an integrated process on climate change. impact of climate change on water resources. As I said, the vulnerability assessment of key sectors has contributed to the strengthening of processes, institutions and also awareness campaigns that go beyond the member countries.

In the impact analysis, which is a project took almost 9 years to complete, and it is important in this respect and probably it is relevant to ask "how can science inform policy makers?" I will talk about the importance of considering dynamics and how we can get the necessary information. This initiative has begun and is already in its last phase, is about to be completed and we are starting the second phase.

Therefore in the impact assessment, we developed regional climate models and regional hydrological models.

In the vulnerability assessment, we examined the 3 key components: exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity that is a major determinant of the vulnerability of key sectors and major population groups. We have developed the regional climate change model. In the general circulation model, you have different sub-regions in different regions and one of them is considered as an added value to this initiative. If we had looked at the Arab world as an integrated region, it is a region where shared waters are predominant and where water resources at the Nile Basin specifically require to target the impact of climate change.

The main conclusions about the Blue Nile:

- A significant rise in temperatures
- A reduction in expected precipitations

In terms of vulnerability: the main sectors that will be affected are agriculture, groundwater and public health.

We should not look at the importance, but we need to get together at the basin level to have a good understanding of the impact, one of the main messages is that we need to do more studies at the basin level .

I do not know the Tigris and the Euphrates, knowing that it will be the subject of a conference next year, but it is about the same in the Nile basin in terms of vulnerability. The main conclusions of the RICCAR project are: a higher temperature and a decrease of the precipitations but with variations, however when we speak of a higher temperature, it is necessary to specify that it is the extreme meteorological



phenomena and it is the number of consecutive days with very high temperature (40°C) that really affect climate change.

In terms of analysis again as I just mentioned, climate change has a major impact on shared water resources. As a result, the management of shared water resources becomes extremely difficult in terms of vulnerability assessment, given that the agricultural sector is one of the most vulnerable sectors. The adaptability is fixed-term in this process.

What are the political implications of the effects of climate change? I conclude with this slide. First of all, climate change is a reality even though we can say that most of the region is between moderate and very vulnerable, but that does not mean when we say it's moderately vulnerable that no action is necessary, action needs to be taken and climate change plans are part of national development plans and mapping of sustainable development plans, the second point emphasizes the importance of undertaking basin-level assessment for better understand the effect of climate change.

What is very important is to encourage work with member countries on national plans. We want to encourage researchers to engage more and use the results of these discoveries to develop research and articles in trade journals because that is the only way they will affect the way reports are presented and it is an important dimension through which we want to see the development of policies and Hydrodiplomacy.

**Professor Daene McKinney**, University of Texas- Austin

I think this the last speech here, I was asked to talk about water and adaptation in the context of decision support which is an important aspect of all of this and I was really glad to hear Jean François talk earlier about the UNECE report on what is the significance of adaptation on the transboundary basins and I think that several of the most important things to come up here, one of it is how to prevent the impacts of unilateral adaptation measures.

The transboundary agreements have to be flexible, once they are based on the absolute water volume they become problematic when you have lower or higher volumes, particularly lower. I am not going spend lots of time talking about decision support systems, they are very important for the purposes of gathering data, analyzing data, coming up with decisions that one might want to make in the basin, I think we all understand the middle eastern basins at this point; we are talking about the Nile Basin here which is one of the larger and more important basins in the area not the most important, none of them are the most important but certainly it is certainly one of the more important ones.



In the basin, obviously we have the 2 main branches the white Nile and the Blue Nile, focus on the Blue Nile here a moment because it provides so much of the downstream water in the basin and thinking about what our best efforts at modeling future climate are telling us in the basin; one of the things is telling us that the stream flow, the precipitation and the resulting stream flow in the basin is going to increase, ok this is the good news, the bad news is that the variability is also going to increase so the problem of managing this water becomes more stressed because you have higher flows and lower flows

**Mr. Ilan Juran, New York University**

Thank you

Good evening

First of all it is a pleasure to be here, I want to thank everybody here; the leaders of the civil society, the leaders of the industry and the organizations that we are all involved in how we can find solutions together to address the challenges of sustainable development and climate change impact.

I would like to thank particularly Professor Fadi Comair who invited the Academia and asked me to represent it tonight because yes it is my pleasure to be last but we believe in cycles and in the cycles to be last is the opening to the future and this is what we believe Academia should do. We believe that university role is to understand the challenges and to learn from the experts here in the room in order to prepare and educate the next generations that will take the lead in resolving the challenges that we all discuss tonight.

We believe also that Academia is the source that must work with all of u in order to be able to develop solutions, to drive innovation that we cannot get without your expertise, without your knowledge and without the opportunity to implement and to access the solutions. From this perspective university is all because it is a knowledge base, and I believe with Prof. Fadi Comair and our group in UNESCO-IHP with the leadership of Blanca Jimenez and other experts, we believe that the way to go is to develop a knowledge base that will be inspired and driven by what we call

Professor Scoullos mentioned tonight the need to share information as a way and a basic tool for hydrodiplomacy to be implemented. We believe and I don't, I will, because of time I will not show my slides, Mr. Chairman and Ms. Blanca, I want to show only one slide that will summarize it. Here we are looking at the establishing of knowledge databases at ECOMED Observatory. These observatories will have to be established with the leadership of the civil society and the local government in the countries that will be interested in becoming part of the program.

This is the UNESCO-IHP initiative that is today supported by operator such as SEA, by universities that I have the pleasure to represent tonight and by REMOB obviously and W-Smart that was mentioned before; the idea is to undertake costal ecosystem monitoring and to implement monitoring in order to assess the condition, the pollution and the risk and again we believe that this observatory has to bring together like Professor Fadi Comair brought tonight the industry, the leadership of the government, local government, Academia and this observatory will have to support not only experience sharing and monitoring of the pollution of the ecosystem and transboundary management and governance of the water resources but also will support university, will support Academia, research institute, hydrological institute to share information towards common growth and towards common sustainable development of all the communities in the region.

I would like to thank you and we look forward to work with all of you on this program and our intention, our intent is to organize June 2018 an international conference on the ECOMED Program for establishing observatories with pilot observatories in the interested local governments working with Academia and industries towards common goals of the regions.

Thank you very much for tonight.

### **Ambassador representing Egypt:**

I want to talk to you first of all about the importance of cooperation and reject all the assumptions of death in case of lack of water. We fully support cooperation, but unfortunately none of the events we attended mentioned how to cooperate, which is the basis of cooperation. It is essential and no one on earth disagrees with us when it comes to cooperation. We all agree on cooperation, but what are the bases for this cooperation? As the representative of Egypt, we believe that the basis of this cooperation should be international law. There is the principle of



international law governing the use of transboundary water resources, of which the prior notification is essential.

The third point is that Egypt should move, Egypt has moved and has started a lot of procedures to reach the right goals in the Nile Basin. We have put a proposal to move forward and to agree on the principle of cooperation and we are returning to the importance of working together and the importance of building trust but unfortunately these proposals have been rejected even before talking about it.

So if people want to talk about the Egyptian movement, we are not the only ones who should take this heavy burden on our shoulders to find solutions. We also presented different proposals and these were also rejected.

I heard about filling the dams. I must say on this subject that the filling of dams is decided within the declaration of principles. The statement of principles mentioned that the 3 countries that signed should agree on the first filling procedures and the rule of operation of the dam based on studies that are not yet finalized. The technical access road is facing a declaration among the 3 countries.

My last point concerns the dominance of downstream countries. I will speak on behalf of Egypt, I will not speak on behalf of any country but on behalf of Egypt. The legal framework of the Nile Basin, the same framework if you go back to the 1997 agreement, has given a role to the current agreement governing water sharing in the Nile Basin. It took into consideration and did not neglect this element at all and people can search and find the necessary information on the 1997 agreement and see the CFA. We have problems with the CFA; as a last downstream country we cannot accept the agreement that does not govern the project on shared water resources, there should be a mechanism taking into account, and I'm proud to say and I say that every time: Senegal's commission that is one of the most successful commissions on earth.

How does it govern its share?

1 - A clear procedure for a main and simple notification.

2 - Benefits sharing, so they have accepted it well and there are lessons learned that we need to take into consideration.



## Ambassador representing Ethiopia

Thank you very much,  
I am the chargé d'affaires at the Ethiopian embassy.

I would like to start by saying that, you know, talks in conferences of, you know issues relating to such a subject like the Nile cannot be undertaken without the involvement of Ethiopia which is the source of the Nile; 86% of the source of the Nile and I regret that we haven't been invited, we haven't been given the chance to present our case in this matter.

Just I would try to say only 2- 3 general things, I wouldn't go into the details because it will take much time and I don't want to take your time.

First of all, there have been some factual errors that have been presented by some of the presenters and they need to be rectified:

The first one relates to the 1959 agreement: the 1959 agreement between Egypt and Sudan; Ethiopia was not part of it; it was not party to this agreement and it cannot be abided by it; so if you are not a party to an agreement it's an international practice that you cannot be abided by it.

The second one relates to the colonial treaties- you know that some people make reference to- and these are not you know issues that we should raise here because they are dead story.

Let me go to my second point, the conference was about dialogue, it was about cooperation, that is what Ethiopia is saying all along starting from the initiative that it took to establish the international panel of experts by which Ethiopia was by any means obliged or forced to do it neither on the international law nor in customary practice;

So it took the initiative to establish this because it understands, it believes firmly in the value of dialogue, in the value of cooperation.

Not only that it has made open all the sources that it has with regards to the Renaissance dam so we have been working very cooperatively from the start up to now, so everybody knows after the establishment of the international panel of experts there was the NTC the national technical committees and they have been making dialogue, negotiations throughout, there have been around 17 meetings and this is not something easy to disregard.

So we are in the spirit of cooperation, in the spirit of dialogue and we need to



continue with that and I don't agree with the things that I feel from this forum that there has been a tension, that there is a crisis.

There is no crisis in the Nile, there is a source and a potential for cooperation. Nile cannot be source of tension but cooperation.

As the famous Egyptian (son of Nukruma) said we have an interwoven destinies, the people of Ethiopia and the people of Egypt, it's not only about Ethiopia and Egypt, it's about Ethiopia and Sudan and it's about Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia and every one of us, so we work, I want to highlight and underline the fact that we are working in the spirit of cooperation and we continue with that and we don't see any political or whatever problem in that regard and every issue that we raise with regards to the Nile should pass through what has been provided already, through the technical mechanisms, they are there and they have proven efficient.

There might be some you know, here and there, there might be some points of disagreement that is quite natural in every negotiation and dialogue so what we need to do is to stick firm to the mechanism which has been established : the technical mechanism, the ministerial mechanism so we have the form and we need to exploit that and we need to rush.

I agree totally with all of you who have presented that we need to rush, for example we are talking about the Nile Basin, the Nile Basin Initiative is there since 1999; why doesn't it go further to become a commission or an authority?

Why not? We need that and we are working towards that in that sense. Unfortunately I don't want to pinpoint Egypt or whatever but I have to cite it here that Egypt has been trying to block funds that we get, the Nile international basin gets from some sources; this is quite, it's not useful for Egypt, it's not useful for anybody so we need to work in the spirit of cooperation, in the spirit of regional governance, so I think, I'm afraid that, am sorry if I have taken much of your time because I haven't got this chance I was looking for it, so, maybe in the near future I mean in the future when there are these kind of events, these kind of forums, I think, we need to, you know that is the spirit of the dialogue inclusive, we need to be inclusive, we need to hear the other side of the story.

Thank you.

**Dr. Fadi Comair, President of MEDURABLE and Honorary President of MENBO**

Dear Colleagues,

I realized, throughout the interventions, that a number of barriers and obstacles needs to be surpassed in order not only to secure water but also to secure water usage in the Nile basin and to think about future generations and how to secure their alimentation.

I think the organization of the conference constitutes the indispensable inauguration of the Nile basin cooperation. All the stakeholders have talked about the cooperation on the Nile basin and here we are at negotiations that have been launched a number of years ago confirming our implication in the process of Hydrodiplomacy in all the transboundary basins in the Middle East. I would like to go back to what H.E. Mr. Moratinos has proposed; he proposed that our future, the future of other generations relies on a new diplomacy, one that implicates first and foremost the political will but also all of society's components, non-governmental organizations, scientists and experts in order to create a school of Hydrodiplomacy and that this school becomes a platform to find concrete solutions to our problems.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I only have to thank Senator Olivier Cadic who gave us the opportunity this year to launch this initiative in the Senate and we are waiting for you in 2018 on Hydrodiplomacy on the Euphrates with Iraq being the honorary country.

**Mr. Olivier Cadic, Senator representing French Citizens abroad**

Since it is up to me to conclude, I first would like to thank the Egyptian Minister H.E. Mr. Mohammad Abdel Ati for his intervention. It is effectively the Nile and evidently as we said from the beginning it crosses 10 countries with a global approach to tackle the subject, and you didn't seek privileging one side over the other but you have tried to invite each to take conscience of global character of the Nile question.



Statements like these come back to me, some of what has been said by stakeholders “we must not compete on water”, “you cannot win at the expense of your neighbor” it is our minister that has said it, “sharing water is sharing our destiny” “sink together in the absence of cooperation or swim together” and I think that all of this, these statements that come and others that I can also cite, have let us hear the echoes of the proposition of H.E. Mr. Moratinos “passing effectively to action”.

How do we pass from a conference to an initiative? That is Fadi, a man of action and I think that the impromptu arrival of these two people that have wished to intervene at the end of the day, shows that there is a need now, at the end, to possibly create this small group that will come at the end of the jointure and allows us to continue because when we are people of good composition we want to find solutions and that is where diplomacy takes all its meaning.

I will share with you the vision of the entrepreneur, a vision that realizes that the best way to deal with a problem is avoiding that it emerges and that is the beauty of politics, of the diplomat...the beauty is then not the fact of getting out of a conflict, it is rather avoiding its emergence.

So there it is, water shouldn't be a source of conflict because it is a source of life; better preserve than cure; that is the doctrine of Fadi, it is his conviction, it is also mine and I hope that thanks to you this conference will contribute to that.



## **Declaration**

In Paris, at the Senate on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December, a conference has been organized following the initiative of Mr. Olivier Cadic, Senator representing French Citizens abroad and Dr. Fadi Comair, Director General of Hydraulic and Electric Resources to analyze the problems of the Nile basin.

The participants of the conference adopted the following points:

The issues of water will occupy a prominent place at the forefront in the Middle East and remain a major challenge for most countries, especially the reality of access to hydraulic resources in the Mediterranean.



Since always, water has been one of the most important issues in the Middle East. It is today even more than an issue given that the states of the three hydrographic basins (Euphrates, Jordan and Nile) have reached the maximum exploitation of available water and a high rate of demographic growth that weighs heavily on these countries, has a large impact on their economic, social and political development and threatens security in the region.

In this transnational context, this instability calls for an immediate and collective response, hence the urgent need to resort to Hydrodiplomacy, a concept that opens new perspectives and doors and permits the sustainable and equitable management of transboundary water efficiently, while offering cooperative governance, sculpted according to the size of each country and the characteristics of the basins. Therefore, Hydrodiplomacy gives a name to the position constantly defended by France, of a continuous dialogue and a reinforced economic cooperation.

Accordingly, it is important to know that the access to water is first and foremost a governance problem and not of availability. We have to initiate a dialogue between the concerned states when it comes to the question of water management.

The Nile, subject of this conference, goes through 11 states: Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Congo, Burundi, Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan linking it to the Mediterranean through Egypt, and knows a new dimension thanks to the construction of the Ethiopian “Grand Renaissance” dam.

The conflict of the Nile basin is part of three major conflicts in the world regarding the sharing of water and is particularly linked to Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan.

The water problematic is a pivotal point for Egypt whose territory is implanted in one of the biggest deserts in the world. From an economic perspective, the Nile is the principal tool of development and wealth of the concerned nations, noting that more than 90% of the Egyptian population lives on the borders of the Nile and the entire Egyptian economy relies on this river and its hydric supply; that demonstrates the danger that the Ethiopian project could cause if it doesn't take into account the presence and situation of riparian countries.

The plurality of countries neighboring the Nile, mostly because of its size, undoubtedly poses many problems in terms of water management, supply and usage.



The Nile is threatened and faces today a tough geographic situation: high demographic growth, declining Nile flood, drastically destructive drought, economic and political dependence compounded by the lack of complementarity and cooperation between the three riparian states: Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia.

At this level, water provokes thanks to its distribution and its geography a number of problems and tensions exacerbated by various ways of pressure and conflicts to come.

Regarding the unequal distribution of hydric resources of the Nile, the important and powerful issue that water presenter could cause future wars.

The question of wars around water dominates, for decades now, international relations in East Africa and weighs heavily on Egyptian diplomacy.

Even though there is a tense and possibly explosive situation, a number of common initiatives and projects counterbalance the disagreements and grounds for conflict, reflection an undeniable constructive will on behalf of the concerned states, but also the importance given by the international community on the Nile question. Nine countries are associates along with Egypt within the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) founded in 1999 with the help of the World Bank in order to reverse the historic tendency of confrontations and conflicts and exploiting the Nile as a catalysis for cooperation and integration.

The support of the International Community is vital to encourage and consolidate the cooperation between Nilotic countries. This concerns firstly, obviously, financial support.

The question of cooperation is not only in the repartition of waters but also optimal water recovery and reuse solutions and this is part of the negotiation.

In sum, water, source of tensions and instability can also be a powerful tool for cooperation and a call for regional integration that can encourage dialogue around transboundary water intensifying the exchanges and peaceful communication between countries of the Nile.

The national and regional cooperation plans should be more interlinked. Thanks to this larger connectivity, the countries of the Nile can advance jointly towards stronger economic development on the regional and national levels, while building



interdependence that reinforces confidence and generates long term political and cooperation engagements.

Ultimately, moving away from deep-rooted perceptions and adopting different realistic ideas will enable the Nile countries to take the leap towards this new era of regional cooperation based on an active hydrodiplomacy and a participatory approach among the concerned states.