

**EU WATER INITIATIVE MULTI STAKEHOLDER FORUM  
STOCKHOLM 25 AUGUST 2005**

**KEYNOTE SPEECH BY UK PRESIDENCY**

**SPEAKING POINTS**

**Theme:** Making some connections – the G8, the Commission for Africa, the UN Millennium Review Summit, NEPAD and Infrastructure – what is the relevance of the EU Water Initiative and the need to enhance ownership.

**Opening comments**

- The UK is in the privileged position of holding the Presidency of the G8 in 2005, and of the EU during the latter half of 2005, at a key time in Development, with the publication earlier this year of the Report of the Commission for Africa and with the UN Millennium Review Summit in New York next month. Development issues are receiving more attention than ever before. Water and Sanitation, as critical drivers for all of the MDGs, are high on the political agenda.
- The European Union and the 25 EU Member States provide collectively around €1.4 billion annually to water and sanitation in developing countries. Collectively the European Union is the largest provider of development assistance and the largest donor in water and sanitation and this is generating significant progress. But the reports of the UN on the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals speak a clear language: we must do more and we must do better. By “we”, I mean both the developed and the developing world. To make a decisive step forward in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, in particular in Africa, we must consider new ways to deliver results on the ground and we must find new ways to unlock more resources.
- The EU is doing its part on unlocking new resources. At its meeting on 24 May 2005, the EU Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States adopted a number of conclusions on accelerating progress

towards achieving the MDGs. In particular, the EU has just committed to increasing the amount of development assistance it collectively provides to of 0.56 % ODA/GNI by 2010, that will result in additional annual € 20bn ODA by that time. In addition, the Member States have undertaken to achieve the 0.7% ODA/GNI target by 2015 whilst those which have achieved that target commit themselves to remain above that target; Member States which joined the EU in 2004 will strive to increase by 2015 their ODA/GNI to 0.33%. At least 50% of the agreed increase of ODA resources will be targeted at Sub Saharan Africa, where the development challenges are the greatest.

- Clearly these are global commitments. Bilateral commitments at a sectoral level, including water and sanitation, will be determined in dialogue with developing country partner governments to respect and respond to their needs and priorities, while fully respecting individual Member States priorities in development assistance.

### **The EU Water Initiative**

- The European Union Water Initiative, launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, is an expression of the collective will of the European Union to work in an innovative manner to focus on water and sanitation, a key development issue closely linked to achievement of nearly all the Millennium Development Goals. The time has come to increase our commitment into this most important challenge for development.
- The EUWI provides the framework for the implementation of strategic partnerships for water and sanitation:
  - Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on water and sanitation agreed at WSSD between Heads of State (Presidents Mbeki and Obasanjo for Africa and AU, EU President, EC President,)
  - EU-EECCA partnership established at WSSD and approved at the Ministerial Conference in Kiev, 2003
  - EUWI MED commitments including North African Ministerial Council on Water and Pan-European Ministerial Conference on the Environment for Europe Process (Kiev 2003)

- EUWI Latin American component launched at the Environment Minister's Forum, Dominican Republic, July 2002
- Part of the added value of the EU Water Initiative is to promote a new approach through which we can actually deliver. It requires the mobilisation of partners, water users and water industry, both in Europe and in partner countries, based on an open, multistakeholder process.
- The EUWI is also showing how scientific cooperation with partner countries and regions can be mobilised to produce inputs into innovative solutions to water problems while promoting sustainable development. The EC's 6th Research Framework programme includes the EUWI in its proposals. Through this, the ERA-NET Scheme will seek to establish a framework for long term communication, collaboration and coordination of Member State water research programmes in developing countries.
- The EU Water Initiative is now backed up by the €500 million ACP–EU Water Facility, targeted at developing countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, as well as by a specific €35 million allocation within the TACIS Programme targeted at the EECCA Region, as a response to the need to catalyse additional funding and to work directly with those most affected by shortages of water and the absence of sanitation.
- The experience of the Water Facility may be important also in the framework of a reinforced attention and focus on infrastructure, including not only water and sanitation but also energy, information and communication technologies and transport infrastructure. On-going efforts to create and sustain Sub Sahara Africa's infrastructure networks and services must accelerate for economic growth and trade to become competitive

Highlight the significance of the EUWI in the current context of the **G8 Gleneagles**

**Declaration:**

- Following on from the Kyoto World Water Forum, the G8 adopted an Action Plan at the Evian Summit in 2003 to help meet the Millennium and Johannesburg goals of halving the number of people without access to clean water and sanitation by 2015. At Gleneagles, the G8 reaffirmed their commitment to implement the G8 water action plan agreed at Evian.

- The objectives of the G8 Water Action Plan agreed at Evian is fully in line with those of the EU Water Initiative, addressing improving governance as a first priority, and calling for innovative ideas to unlock new sources of funding and to deliver on the ground.

Highlight the significance of the EUWI in the current context of the **The Commission for Africa Report**

Commission for Africa (CfA): Leaving no one out – Investing in People-Expanding Water Supply and Sanitation

Starting in 2005, donors must reverse the decline in aid for water supply and sanitation, to enable African governments to achieve the Africa Water Vision commitment to reduce by 75 per cent the proportion of people without access to safe water and sanitation by 2015. The G8 should report back by 2007 on implementation of the G8 Water Action Plan agreed in 2003

Highlight the significance of the EUWI in the current context of the **NEPAD Short Term Action Plan**

Priority areas under the NEPAD STAP

- To prepare an enabling environment for Regional Cooperation
  - Water resource planning and management
- Support for development and implementation of national water sector policies and strategies
- Meeting urgent water needs
- Improving water wisdom
- Strengthening the financial base

Highlight the significance of the EUWI in the current context of **aid effectiveness – harmonisation and alignment**

- The EUWI is an example of how to bring about in practice the harmonisation of development aid that is recommended by an OECD led process on aid effectiveness, involving conferences in Rome in 2003, in Marrakech in 2004 and, most recently, in Paris in March 2005. The lead donor approach is central to what

we are striving for through the EU Water Initiative and through in-country donor coordination mechanisms.

**Concluding remarks**

- The EUWI is an ambitious commitment launched by the EU towards achieving the MDG and WSSD targets on water and sanitation. Through the EU Water Initiative and the €500m ACP-EU Water Facility, the EU is demonstrating its commitment to providing more, new, resources to poverty reduction through improved management of water and increased access to water and sanitation.
- The EUWI will not achieve its intended objectives unless EU partners, partner country governments, regional partner organisations, such as the African Ministers' Council for Water (AMCOW), the EU MS as well as CSOs and interested public and private sector operators, share a sense of ownership and commitment to the EUWI mission and increase their cooperation with institutions in countries most affected by water and sanitation problems.
- The Multi Stakeholder Forum is the advisory body of the EUWI. This meeting is the opportunity to review the progress of the EU Water Initiative and the 2005 work programme, and to discuss the way forward. Ownership is a key issue. Now is the time to contribute advice and recommendations.