



ECA/RCID/025/WAT/99

## **ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

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**REPORT ON MISSION TO PARTICIPATE AT  
THE SEVENTH OF THE NILE 2002 SERIES OF CONFERENCES  
CAIRO (EGYPT), 15-19 MARCH 1999**

**by  
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Regional Cooperation and Integration Division**

**Report on Mission to Participate at the  
Seventh of the Nile 2002 Series of Conferences  
Cairo (Egypt), 15-19 March 1999**

**I. Introduction**

1. The involvement of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in the Nile river basin has been long and extensive. Since early 1980s, ECA has been providing secretariat services to the UNDUGU – an informal Group of mostly Nile river basin countries. The main objective of the UNDUGU Group was to promote intercountry cooperation among the member countries for development of natural resources in the Nile river basin and to promote peace and stability and trade, economic and cultural affinity among these countries. ECA in collaboration with the UNDP and other concerned UN agencies organized under the auspices of the UNDUGU a number of ministerial and expert group meetings, organized fact finding field missions to the Nile basin countries, prepared masterplan framework and detailed studies on water and other infrastructure development in the basin. In 1993, ECA prepared a framework for cooperation among the Nile basin countries, which was endorsed by a meeting of experts among these countries organized under the auspices of the UNDUGU Group.

2. In 1997, ECA provided logistic and substantive assistance to the Government of Ethiopia, which hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> of the Nile 2002 Series of Conferences held at the ECA headquarters. I represented ECA at the Board of External Advisors to the Organizing Committee for this Conference.

3. In view of ECA's past involvement and experience in the Nile basin, an invitation was extended to ECA to send a representative(s) to the seventh of the Nile 2002 Series of Conferences held at Cairo from 15-19 March 1999. Mr. M.S. Donkor, Regional Advisor for Water and I were nominated to represent ECA at this Conference.

**Objectives, Organization and Participation**

4. The Nile 2002 series of Conferences began with its first conference held at Aswan, Egypt in 1993. The subsequent conferences took place in Khartoum/Sudan (1994); Arusha/Tanzania (1995); Kampala/Uganda (1996); Addis Ababa/Ethiopia (1997); and Kigali/Rwanda (1998). This seventh conference was again hosted by the Government of Egypt in Cairo.

5. The objectives of these series of conferences are to exchange views, scientific and technical data and information among technical experts professionals and policy makers with a view to fostering cooperation for the Nile basin development. The seventh conference of the series had the following specific objectives:

- to bring together experts from the Nile basin, international organizations, and external support agencies to address specific topics related to the development of the Nile Basin;
- to discuss national water resources management strategies and action programmes in the Nile basin countries and their harmonization within the context of integrated Nile basin development;
- to discuss options for a cooperative and institutional framework, and appropriate instruments for the Nile basin;
- to enable participants to share experiences and exchange information related to the development of water resources;
- to review the progress and achievements of the previous Nile 2002 conferences.

5. The theme of the conference was "Comprehensive Water Resources Development of the Nile Basin: the Vision for the Next Century". Within this broad theme the following specific topics were selected for discussion at the conference:

1. Water for food production and rural development
  - 1.1 Economic aspects
  - 1.2 Role of women and youth
  - 1.3 Methodologies for efficient water use
2. Water for nature
  - 2.1 Water requirements for ecosystem conservation
  - 2.2 Pollution control and abatement for lakes and rivers
  - 2.3 Aquaculture and wild life requirements
3. Water for drinking and sanitation
  - 3.1 Impact of urbanization

- 3.2 Rural water supply needs
- 3.3 Conjunctive use of surface and groundwater
- 4. Water for energy, transportation, tourism and industrial development
  - 4.1 Socio-economic development scenario in the basin
  - 4.2 Impact of globalization of trade
  - 4.3 Economic integration and pooling of resources
- 5. Institutional aspects of water management for the next century
  - 5.1 Regional water management: institutional and legal aspects
  - 5.2 Capacity building and human resources development
  - 5.3 Communications, data sharing and dissemination of information
  - 5.4 Public and stakeholders' participation

6. The conference hosted and organized by the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources of the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt was attended by some four hundred fifty (450) participants from about 25 countries, including nine Nile riparian countries; a number of international organizations; The World Bank, other IGOs and NGOs. The list of participants is available from this writer.

7. The programme of the conference is included at Annex 1. The programme included a number of keynote speeches by eminent scholars and scientists from all over the world including Dr. Mostafa K. Tolba, the former UN Under-secretary-General and Executive Director of UNEP. The conference opened by Dr. Abu Zeid, Minister of Water Resources and Public Works of the Government of Egypt was addressed by the representatives of the World Bank and the Government of Canada which was one of the main sponsors of these series of Conferences. A number of Ministers and other high-ranking officials from the Nile basin countries attended the Conference.

#### **Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Contribution**

8. As part of ECA contribution to the conference, I had earlier prepared a paper on "Cooperation for the Nile Water Development: Role of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa." Over one hundred copies of this paper were distributed among the conference participants. Copy of this paper is enclosed at Annex 2.

9. After arrival in Cairo, I found my name listed in the conference programme as one of the keynote speakers on the subject of the paper that I had earlier expressed my intention to present at the conference. I had to hurriedly prepare a

keynote speech based on the paper I had earlier prepared. I delivered the keynote speech at the plenary session of the conference on Thursday morning, the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 1999. The keynote speech was very well received and I was awarded a "certificate of recognition for outstanding contribution" to the conference. A copy of this "certificate of recognition" is included at Annex 3.

### **Working Group Sessions**

10. On Wednesday, 17 March, the conference had four parallel working group sessions on the following subjects:

Vision for Water for Food Production and Rural Development in the Nile Basin in the 21st Century

Vision for Water for nature in the Nile Basin in the 21st Century

Vision for Water for Drinking, Sanitation, Energy and other Economic Development in the Nile Basin in the 21st Century

Vision for Institutional Aspects and Information Technology in the Nile Basin in the 21st Century

11. Mr. M.S. Donkor attended the first workshop while I attended the fourth one and contributed in the discussion through an interactive process. The summaries of discussion of these workshops are included in the draft report of the Conference adopted in its final plenary session. The final report will be included in the proceedings of the conference to be published by the Conference organizers.

### **Post Conference Activities and Technical Tours**

12. A number of post conference activities were organized. These included a number of alternative technical tours and a number of high level post conference meetings such as: Africa High-Level Water Consultation; Global Water Partnership – Technical Advisory Committee Meeting; World Water Council (WWC) meeting; WWC Second World Water Forum Steering Committee Meeting; World Water Day Celebration (22 March 1999); meeting of the World Commission on Water. While Mr. Donkor attended some of these activities, I took part in a conference organized technical tour to upper Egypt.

13. The technical tour took the 28 participants to the Tushka Irrigation Project in upper Egypt; to Aswan high Dam (New) and the old Aswan Dam, to the power

generating stations at both dam sites; and to the new Aswan Reservoir-Lake Nasser (High Aswan Dam Reservoir).

14. We had a first hand knowledge of these gigantic engineering projects – some of the largest in the world. The Tushka Irrigation Project is still under construction and we saw the large irrigation canals being constructed and lined with mega size polyethelene sheets, the pumping stations being constructed and the exploration of groundwater in the Nubian desert being exploited for construction purposes.

15. The Tushka Irrigation Project officially inaugurated only two years ago will divert the excess Nile floodwater from Lake Nasser to irrigate part of the Nubian desert. The Project embraces a number of development fields covering agriculture, industry, transport and communication as well as other social services. The Tushka Irrigation Project also known as the South Egypt Development Project is expected to create a new chapter in land reclamation and water management, irrigation and river basin development. The Project includes construction of a giant water pumping station on the left bank of Lake Nasser about 8 km north of Khar Tushka. Construction of this pumping station started in January 1998 and is scheduled to be completed in four years. The station will have a maximum static lift capacity of 52.3 meters to guarantee its operations when the water level in Lake Nasser reaches its lowest level of storage. Twenty one (21) pumps, each with a discharge capacity of 16.7 m<sup>3</sup>/sec will be housed in the pump station. Eighteen pumps will be on operation while the remaining three will be on standby. The designed capacity of the pumping station is estimated at about 300 m<sup>3</sup>/sec or 25 million m<sup>3</sup>/day. The main canal will be 70 km long with several branches from 20 to 60 km in length. The total irrigated land area to be covered is estimated at 2 million feddans. The bed width of the main canal will be 30 meters with maximum water level depth of 7 meters. The water surface width of the main canal will be 54 meters.

### The Aswan Dams

16. The technical tour took us to the two Aswan dams and to their respective power generating stations. Construction of the old Aswan Dam started in 1898 and was completed in 1902. The reservoir capacity of the old dam was 980 million cubic meters. In 1912, the height of this dam was raised to increase the reservoir capacity to 2,500 million cubic meters. In 1933 the dam height was raised yet again to increase the reservoir capacity to 5,000 million cubic meters. The old dam is 2,242 meters long and there are 150 gates to control the reservoir outflow.

**Old Dam Power Station:**

17. The old dam power plant was constructed in the 1950s. The designed head of the plant is 32 meters in the wet season and 10 meters in the dry season. It has nine (9) Chaplain turbines for a total output of 345 MW. Following construction of the new High Aswan Dam (HAD), the head for the old power plant was lowered to 20 meters and the total power output to 270 MW.

**New High Aswan Dam**

18. Work on the new dam started in 1960 and was completed in 1968-69, It was considered at that time as one of the engineering miracles of the world. The main purpose of the high dam was to store the Nile water to control floods downstream and to regulate storage out flow for dry season irrigation. The high dam power plant has 12 Francis turbines each with an output of 175 MW producing an annual average energy of 7,000 million KWH. The high dam, constructed about 6 km upstream of the old dam, is about 121 m high and has a storage capacity of 162,000 million cubic meters. The dam is 3830 meter long and 40 m wide at the crest and 980 m wide at the bottom. It is a rock-fill dam with an impervious core.

**Conclusions**

19. Participation at this Nile 2002 conference and at the technical tour has been beneficial to ECA and other participants. The ECA representatives made significant contributions to the conference including preparation and distribution of a paper, delivery of a keynote speech and through active participation in the deliberations both during discussions in the plenary sessions and during the working group sessions. ECA contribution was recognized through award of a certificate of recognition for outstanding contribution (See annex 3). ECA activities in the Nile basin received wide exposure and was highly commended.

**Seventh of the Nile 2002 Series of Conferences**  
**Cairo,(Egypt) 15-19 March 1999**

**TECHNICAL PROGRAMME**

**Sunday March 14,1999**

- 9:00-18:00           Registration (thebes and Sakkara Halls)  
                          Meetings of Panel of Experts – Nile Basin (POE)

**Monday March 15,1999**

- 9:00- 9:30           Arrival of participants  
9:30-11:00           Opening Ceremony (Aida Ballroom)  
11:00-11:30          Coffee Break  
                          Inauguration of Exhibition  
                          (\*Exhibition will remain open till Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>)  
11:00-17:00          Late Registration (Thebes and Memphis Halls)

**SESSION I (Aida Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Dr. Salah El-Din Amer, Egypt**  
**Co-Chair: Dr. Sam Kanyarukiga, Rwanda**  
**Rapporteur: Dr. Fouad El-Shibini, Egypt**

- 11:30-11:45          General Keynote Address  
                          "Comprehensive Water Resources Development of the Nile  
                          Basin:  
                          The Vision for the Next Century to Benefit All".  
                          By Dr. Mostafa Tolba, Egypt  
11:45-12:00          Special Keynote Address  
                          "Groundwater Resources of the Nile Basin."  
                          By Dr. Farouk El-Baz, USA



- 12:00-12:15 Special Keynote Address  
"River Nile Protection and Development Project, Sharing  
Development"  
By Mr. Normand Morin, Canada
- 12:15-12:30 Country Paper from Burundi  
Speaker: Mr. Manasse Nduwayo
- 12:30-12:45 Country Paper from Democratic Republic of Congo  
Speaker: To be announced
- 12:45-13:00 Country Paper from Egypt  
Speaker: Eng. Ahmed Fahmy
- 12:00-14:00 Poster Session 1 (Salon Vert)  
Coordinator: Eng. Fouad El-Adawy
- 13:00-14:00 Lunch Break (Nile Maxim)

## **SESSION II (Aida Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Dr. Ahmed M. Adam, Sudan**  
**Co-Chair: Eng. M. Nasser Ezzat**  
**Rapporteur: Dr. Abdel Fattah Metawie**

- 14:00-14:15 Keynote Address  
"Potential for Hydropower Generation in Africa"  
H.E. Eng. Maher Abaza, Minister of Electricity  
and Power, Egypt
- 14:15-14:30 Country paper from Ethiopia  
Speaker: Dr. Mohammed A. Hagos
- 14:30-14:45 Country Paper from Kenya  
Speaker: Mr. R. W. Cheng'oli
- 14:45-15:00 Country Paper from Rwanda  
Speaker: To be announced
- 14:00-16:00 Poster Session 2 (Salon Vert)  
Coordinator: Eng. Fouad El-Adawy
- 15:00-15:30 Coffee Break

### **Session III (Aida Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Hagos, Ethiopia**  
**Co-Chair: Mr. James K. Waititu, Kenya**  
**Rapporteur: Eng. Abdel Karim Affifi, Egypt**

- 15:30-15:45 Country Paper from Sudan  
Speaker: Mr. Ahmed El-Fateh Saad
- 15:45-16:00 Country Paper from Tanzania  
Speaker: Mr. J.M. Mihayo
- 16:00-16:15 Country Paper from Uganda  
Speaker: Mr. Nsubuga Senfuma
- 16:15-16:30 Country Papers discussions
- 19:00-20:30 Cocktail Reception  
Marriot Hotel-Aida Ballroom

**Tuesday March 16, 1999**

### **SESSION IV (Aida Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Mr. Patrick O. Kahangire, Uganda**  
**Co-Chair: Mr. Manasse Nduwaye, Burundi**  
**Rapporteur: Dr. M. Bahaa A. Saad, Egypt**

- 9:00-9:15 Keynote Address  
"Nile Water and Civilization"  
By: Prof. Fekri Hassan, UK
- 9:15-9:30 Keynote Address  
"Water for Food Production and Rural Development  
in the Nile Basin."  
By Dr. Yahia Abdel-Mageed, Sudan
- 9:30-10:45 **Topic: Water for Food Production and Rural Development**  
  
Paper 1a  
"Economic Reforms of Sudan Irrigation Sub-Sector  
and Impact on Water Use"  
By Omar M. El-Awad, and Siddig E. Ahmed. (Sudan)

Paper 1:

"Water Management Strategies under Drought and Flood Conditions in Egypt

By: M.A. Abdel Khalik (Egypt)

Paper 2:

"Water for Food Production and Rural development"

By: Eltahir, O. Eltahir (Sudan)

Paper 3

"The Involvement of Women in a Systems Approach in Water Management in Nile Basin"

By: Victoria A. Kazinja, (Tanzania)

Paper 4:

" Pollution Control in the Nile Valley: Proposals for Regional Initiatives"

By: Ntambirweki, John (Uganda)

General Discussion

10:45-11:15

Coffee Break

9:00-12:00

Poster Session 3 (Salon Vert)

Coordinator: Eng. Fouad El-Adawy

## **SESSION V (Aida-Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Mr. Mrisho M. Kivugo, TECCONILE**

**Co-Chair: Mr. Mbulu Opeta, Democratic Republic of Congo**

**Rapporteur: Dr. M. Abdel Khalek, Egypt**

11:15-12:30

**Topic: Water for Nature**

Paper 5:

"To What Extent are ENSO Events Responsible for Variations in Nile Flow"

By: K. Mekonnen (Australia)

Paper 6:

"Pollution Prevention to the Nile: A Success Story"

By: H.E. Nadia M. Ebeid, and Ahmed A. Hamza (Egypt)

Paper 7:

"Lake Victoria Decision Support System (LVDSS)"

By: Aris Georgakakos, H. Yao, K. Brumbelow, S. Bourne, C. DeMarchi, M. Mullusky, K. Georgakakos (USA) and M. Andjelic (FAO)

Paper 8:

"The Decision Support System for the Nile River"

By: Mamdouh M Hassan, Basem S. Fahmy and Bayoumi Attia (Egypt)

General Discussion

12:00-15:00

**Poster Session 4 (Salon Vert)**

Coordinator: Eng. Fouad El-Adawy

12:30-13:30

Lunch Break (Aida Ballroom)

**SESSION VI (Aida Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Mr. Girma Amare, Ethiopia**

**Co-Chair: Mr. Frank Rutabingwa, Rwanda**

**Rapporteur: Eng. Hussein El-Atfy, Egypt**

13:30-13:45

Keynote Address

Title to be announced

By Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Hagos, Ethiopia

13:45-15:15

**Topic: Water for Drinking, Sanitation, Energy and Economic Development**

Paper 9:

"Impact of Urbanization"

By: Adel M El-Toweiry, (Egypt)

Paper 10:

"The Nile Basin in a Global Perspective: Natural, Human and Socio-economic Resources Nexus"

By: Olli A. Varis (Finland)

Paper 11:  
"Towards Development of Optimization Technique for Water Distribution System"  
By: El-Sadig M. A Sharfi and Amir I. Arabi (Sudan)

Paper 12:  
"Towards Effective Technical Cooperation in the Nile Basin"  
By: Kivugo, Mrisho M. (TECCONILE)

Paper 13a  
"The Role of Non-Conventional Water for Egypt Future Development Strategy"  
By: Mona M. El-Kady and Fouad El-Shibini (Egypt)

Paper 13  
"Optimizing Water Resources Management Using Climate Information and El-Nino Based Seasonal to Inter-Annual Prediction Products with focus on Lake Victoria Basin"  
By A.E. Majugu

General Discussion

15:00-17:00 Poster Session 5 (Salon Vert)  
Coordinator: Eng. Fouad El-Adawy

15:15-15:45 Coffee Break

## **SESSION VII (Aida-Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Mr. Simon Mambali, Tanzania**  
**Co-Chair: K.G. Chesang, Kenya**  
**Rapporteur: Dr. Fathy El-Gamal, Egypt**

15:45-16:00 Keynote Address  
"Institutional and Legal Aspects in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"  
By Dr. Salman Salman, World Bank

16:00-17:15 **Topic: Institutional Aspects of Water Management for the Next Century**

Paper 14:  
"Drinking Water Supply Project – Technical Cooperation between Arab Republic of Egypt and Republic of Kenya"  
By: Ali M. Werwer (Egypt)

**Paper 15:**

**"Enhancing Regional Cooperation in Africa through Sharing and Dissemination of Information – Case Study from the SADCC Sub-region"**

**By: Arthur J. Askew (WMO)**

**Paper 16:**

**"Public and Stakeholders' Participation, Gender, Water Rights and Harmonization in the Nile Valley: Recent Development in Uganda"**

**By: Esther Obaiko! (Uganda)**

**Paper 17:**

**"Water A Tradable Commodity"**

**By Peter B. Bazimya (Rwanda)**

**General Discussion**

**Wednesday March 17, 1999**

**SESSION VIII (Aida-Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Mr. J. Mbulu Opeta, D.R. of Congo**

**Co-Chair: Eng. Eltahir O. Eltahir, Sudan**

**Rapporteur: Dr. Mohamed Lotfy Nasr, Egypt**

**9:00-9:15**

**Keynote Address**

**"Social Fund for Development and Water Conservation in Egypt"**

**By Dr. Hussein Ei-Gammal, Egypt**

**9:15 – 9:30**

**Keynote Address**

**"Ethical Dimensions for Water Resources Management for the coming Millennium"**

**By Dr. Jerome Delli Priscoli, USA**

**9:30-10:30**

**Introduction to Workshop Format**

**10:00- 10:30**

**Coffee Break**

## **SESSION IX (Aida Ballroom)**

- 10:30 – 13:30      **Four parallel workshops**
- Workshop (1): Vision for “ Water for Food Production and Rural Development in the Nile Basin in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”**  
Chairperson: Mr. Ahmed M. Adam, Sudan  
Facilitator: Mr. Ismail Najjar, Canada  
Rapporteur : Dr. Abdel Faattah Metawie, Egypt
- Workshop (2) Vision for “Water for Nature in the Nile Basin in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”**  
Chairperson: Mr. M A. Hagos, Ethiopia  
Facilitator: Dr. Asit Biswas, WWC  
Rapporteur: Dr. Hossam Fahmy, Egypt
- Workshop (3); Vision for “Water for Drinking, Sanitation, Energy and Economic Development in the Nile Basin in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”**  
  
Chairperson: Mr. R.W. Cheng’eli Kenya  
Facilitator: Mr. Jerome Delli Priscoli, USA  
Rapporteur: Dr. Hesham Moustafa, Egypt
- Workshop (4) Vision for “Institutional Aspects and Information Technology in the Nile Basin in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”**  
  
Chairperson: Mr. Patric Kahangire, Uganda  
Facilitator: Dr. Salman Salman, World Bank  
Rapporteur: Dr. M. Abdel Moteleb, Egypt
- 13:30 – 14:30      **Lunch Break (Egyptian Nights Kheima)**
- 14:30 – 14:45      **IWMI Water Scenario and Policy Dialogue Model**  
By Ian Makin and Charlotte de Fraiture  
International Water Management Institute
- 14:45 – 17:00      **Workshop Report and Discussion (Plenary Sessio)**  
Chairperson: Mr. Meraji M.O. Msuya, Tanzania  
Facilitators: Mr. Ismail Naijjar, Canada  
Dr. Asit Biswas, WWC  
Mr. Jerome Delli Priscoli, USA  
Dr. Salman Salman, World Bank

Rapporteurs: Dr. Fouad El-Shibini, Egypt  
Mr. Patrick Kahangire, Uganda  
Eng. Nasser Ezzat, Egypt  
Mr. Meraji Msuya, Tanzania

17:00 – 17:30 Wrap-Up

**Thursday March 18, 1999**

### **SESSION X (Aida Ballroom)**

**Chairperson: Eng. Youssef Fadlallah, Sudan**  
**Co-Chair: Dr. Mohamed Gasser, Egypt**  
**Rapporteur: Dr. M. Bahaa Saad, Egypt**

- 9:00 – 9:15 Keynote Adress  
"Fostering International Cooperation for Comprehensive Water Resources Management – The Role of the GEF"  
By Dr. Mohamed El-Ashry, Global Environment Facility
- 9:15 – 9:30 Keynote Address  
"Comprehensive Water Resources Development and large Scale Water Systems Management US Army Corps of Engineers Lessons for the Next Century"  
By: Mr. John d'Aniello, USA
- 9:30 – 9:45 Keynote Address  
"Cooperation for the Nile Water Development – Role of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa"  
By Mr. A.F. Hoque, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
- 9:45 – 10:00 Keynote Address  
"Water Resources in Arid Regions from Ideas to Action: The Case of the Mediterranean"  
By Dr. Atef Hamdy, Italy
- 10:00 – 10:15 Keynote Address  
"Management of International Rivers: Future Prospects after the UN Convention on Non-Navigational Uses of Waterways."  
By Dr. Asit Biswas, WWC



- 10:15 – 11:15      **Topic: General**
- Paper 18:  
"What the Hydrological Cycle Should be within  
Catchment Area"  
By: Yutaka Takahasi (Japan)
- Paper 19:  
"The Nile Forecast System and its Database and Outputs"  
By: M. Abdel Aty, Mamdouh Antar and Bayoumi Attia (Egypt)
- Paper 20:  
"Academic Training in Water Resources Engineering: New  
Initiative at Cairo University"  
By: Abdallah S. Bazaraa (Egypt)
- Paper 21:  
"Private Sector Participation in the Nile River Conservation  
Projects"  
By Ezzat, M. Nasser and Ibrahim M. Ellassiouti (Egypt)
- 11:15 – 11:45      Coffee Break
- 11:45 – 12:30      **General Discussion**  
Future Conference Topics, Themes and Venues
- 12:30 – 13:30      Closing Ceremony
- Rapporteur's General Report
- Closing remarks
- 13:30 – 14:30      Lunch Break (Empress Hall)
- 20:00 – 22:00      **Farewell Dinner and Cultural Show**  
**(Conrad International Hotel)**

**Seventh of the Nile 2002 Series of Conferences**  
**Cairo (Egypt), 15-19 March 1999**

**Keynote Speech on**  
**Cooperation for the Nile Water Development:**  
**Role of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa**

**Delivered by**  
**Mr. Azm Fazlul Hoque**  
**Senior Economic Affairs Officer and**  
**Team Leader for Water Resources**  
**United Nations Economic Commission for Africa**  
**Addis Ababa**

Mr. Chairman,  
H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Abu-Zeid,  
Honourable Minister for Public Works  
and Water Resources of  
the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt,  
Distinguished participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

When you find yourself as one of the last speakers in a four-day conference, you also find out that a lot of things you wanted to say have already been said. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, to add something new, allow me to begin with a two minute fairy-tale story about the river Nile. As you all know, the Nile has been associated with many civilizations dating as far back as 5000 years. The Nile also has been playing tremendous roles in the lives of millions of people so much so that in the old pagan days some rural people used to refer to the river as their Nile god.

Legend has it, that when the Nile flood was optimal and replenished their crops with the required nutrients people celebrated their bounty. And, when the Nile flood was excessive, devastating their crops and other properties, some rural people used to think that their Nile god was upset and furious with them. And so, to placate the anger of the river, what they did? They picked the most beautiful young virgin girl in their community and drowned her into the river, believing that she was being married to their Nile god.

Rumour has it that the ritual is still practised in some rural areas with the exception that only a dummy is used in the place of a live young girl.

The sources of the Nile has also been a mystery for thousands of years so much so that its discovery some 300 years ago has been compared to the discovery of the Americas. Like the Americas, the Nile holds tremendous potential for development of its natural resources and also for cooperation among its riparian countries.

The history of intercountry cooperation in the basin, though, is only about 100 or so years old. In late last century and early this century, there were a number of intercountry agreements on the Nile issue. These are the agreements of 1891, 1902, 1906, 1925, 1929 and 1959. The details of these agreements are recorded history. A summary of this can be found in the ECA publication dated 1995 and in other documents.

### **Involvement of the International Community:**

The involvement of international community in the basin began earnestly since 1960s. In 1967, UNDP and WMO helped start the Hydromet Project. In 1992, Hydromet was transformed into TECCONILE. And now, TECCONILE is being converted to Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The good news is that hopefully this time around, TAC will enjoy acceptance and support by more Nile basin countries than its predecessors did in the past.

### **Some past Initiatives:**

#### **The Kagera River Basin Agreement**

The Kagera basin agreement was signed by Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania after a study financed by the UNDP between 1971 and 1976. The three countries established the Kagera Basin Organization (KBO) in 1977. Uganda joined KBO in 1981.

#### **UNDP Initiative on the Nile Basin**

In 1986, the UNDP and the Secretariat of the Mekong River Commission organized in Bangkok, Thailand, a meeting for senior officials from the Nile basin countries. The objective of the meeting was to assist the Nile countries to gain from the experiences of the Mekong river countries in development and management of sharedwater resources. One of the recommendations of the meeting was for the Nile basin countries to meet periodically at the ministerial level.

### **Role of the Economic Commission for Africa**

In 1987, ECA and UNDP organized project identification missions to some Nile basin countries. During these missions, some countries expressed the need for a ministerial meeting. Accordingly, ECA convened a ministerial meeting in 1989. This meeting requested ECA/UNDP to field fact-finding missions to the Nile countries. These were carried out in July 1989 and the report was presented to an expert meeting in October 1987.

### **The UNDUGU Initiative**

Even before these activities, ECA had been involved in the Nile basin issues under the auspices of the UNDUGU initiative. UNDUGU - a Kiswahili word for brotherhood - was an informal group set up in 1983. The objectives of the UNDUGU Group had been to promote political, economic, social and cultural cooperation among the Nile basin countries to ensure integrated and harmonious development of natural resources including water resources of the basin. Since 1983, ECA provided secretariat services to the Group. Under this initiative, ECA organized and serviced a number of expert and ministerial meetings.

In 1989, ECA coordinated in collaboration with the UNDP a high level mission of two experts headed by Ambassador Paul Mark Henry of France. The mission visited four UNDUGU member States. The report of this mission was dubbed as a "framework for a masterplan" for integrated development of natural resources and infrastructures in the Nile basin.

The eighth (8th) ministerial meeting of the UNDUGU Group in 1991 decided that the Group should have a framework for cooperation among its member states and requested ECA to prepare such a framework. ECA accordingly, prepared such a cooperation framework and then convened, organized and serviced a meeting of experts from the UNDUGU member States in November 1992. The Government of Egypt hosted this meeting here in Cairo. This meeting agreed on one of the three alternatives for cooperation initially suggested in ECA proposal and later extensively modified by the member States of the Group. The mode of cooperation selected by this expert group meeting was a flexible arrangement through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). One of the major elements of this MOU was the proposal for constituting a "Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs" from the UNDUGU member States (all Nile river basin countries).

The MOU also provided for establishing a Follow-up Committee of Ambassadors supported by a Technical Committee of experts and a permanent secretariat for the UNDUGU Group.

This agreed-upon MOU was subsequently submitted to the tenth (10th) ministerial meeting of the UNDUGU Group organized by ECA at Addis Ababa in February 1993. This ministerial meeting decided to defer further consideration of this MOU until the political and economic experts in each member State of the Group had an opportunity to review the same (MOU).

Meanwhile, in 1995, ECA prepared a comprehensive study on "problems and prospects for intercountry cooperation for integrated water resources development of the Nile river basin". This study provides a comprehensive review of historical aspects of international (intercountry) agreements in the Nile basin.

### **Current Cooperation Initiatives**

A number of cooperation initiatives in the basin are currently underway. These are initiatives sponsored and supported by a number UN agencies such as the WMO, UNESCO, ECA and others and by donor countries such as Canada and others. Notable among these initiatives are the Nile-Hycos project by WMO, and the FRIENDS of the Nile project by UNESCO. ECA is currently working in developing a strategy for further involvement in the Nile water issues.

The annual Nile 2002 series of conferences supported by the Government of Canada is one of these initiatives. ECA provided logistic and substantive supports to the Government of Ethiopia when the later hosted the 5th of the Nile 2002 Series of Conferences in Addis Ababa in 1997.

The major current cooperation initiatives in the Nile basin is by the Nile riparian countries themselves. In the last two years or so, several Nile basin countries established a Council of Ministers (COM) of Water Resources from their respective countries. Several meetings of COM took place - the last ones being in Arusha (November 1998) and Dar-es-Salaam (February 1999). Ethiopia resumed the chairmanship of COM as of February 1999 and will host its next meeting in Addis Ababa in May this year. The World Bank is providing technical and financial support to the activities of COM. The World Bank under this initiative is planning to convene and organize a major ministerial level consultation-cum-donors' conference sometime early next year. ECA and the World Bank agreed to collaborate with each other on this major initiative.

### **Conclusions**

The Nile is a precious gift of God to some 250 million people that inhabit the ten sovereign countries sharing its catchment area. At the current rate of

population increase, this number is estimated to approach a billion in about fifty years from now. The natural resources in the basin when fully developed on integrated basis could significantly improve the socio-economic conditions of these people.

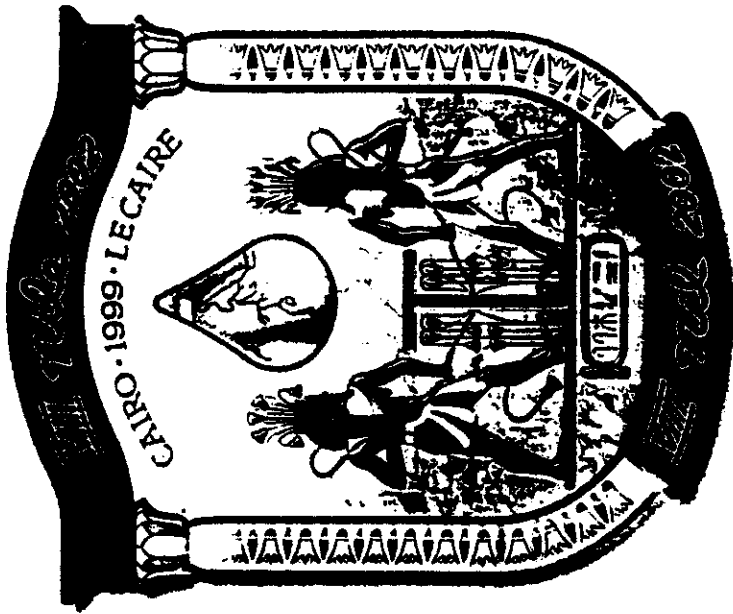
Efforts to date, to develop the resources of the basin - particularly its water resources - have been rather on ad-hoc and sporadic basis and did not enjoy the support and participation of all riparian countries. For example, most of the intercountry agreements on the Nile water issue have been on bilateral basis. Similarly, efforts by the international community (both international organizations and the donor countries) in promoting cooperation for integrated development of the basin also lacked coordination and harmonization and did not produce the expected impacts.

### **Recommendations**

1. Concerted efforts with full support and participation by all riparian countries are needed, for full and integrated development of water resources of the Nile. In this respect, comprehensive agreements by all concerned countries for equitable sharing, effective and efficient uses of the Nile water are most desirable. An effective cooperation mechanism with participation by all riparian countries will facilitate and enhance the pace of development in this regard.
2. Better coordination and harmonization of efforts by the external support agencies including the international, regional, and subregional organizations are needed to produce desired impacts of their activities.
3. As per as possible and practicable, the politics of water should be separated from the politics of ideology, trade and other socio-economic and cultural differences among the Nile basin countries. Indeed, cooperation on water issues should be as far as possible, independent of other differences among these countries.
4. The objectives of such cooperation should be to increase the yearly water yield of the river, minimize waste and losses, ensure efficient water uses, and of course to ensure equitable sharing of these common resources. The ultimate objective should be full and integrated development of the Nile waters for the benefit of people in all the Nile basin countries.

Thank you Mr. Chairman

EGYPT



EGYPT

ANNEX 3

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

PRESENTED TO

Mr. A. F. Hogue

FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE

SEVENTH NILE 2002 CONFERENCE

Held in Cairo, Egypt  
on March 15-18, 1999

CERTIFICAT DE RECONNAISSANCE

PRÉSENTÉ À

POUR SA REMARQUABLE CONTRIBUTION AU

VIII<sup>ème</sup> CONGRÈS DU NIL 2002

TENU AU CAIRE, ÉGYPTÉ  
DU 15-18 MARS 1999

*Signature*

Minister of Public Works and Water Resources  
Cairo, Egypt.

Ministre des Travaux Publics et des  
Ressources en Eau. Le Caire, Egypte.