



Closing Statement

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The global dialogue on water is generally unanimous that we are moving into a very difficult water future on the back of a variety of factors including unprecedented population growth combined with rapid levels of economic movement in the developing world in particular. The latter has resulted in growing middle classes with the resultant change in consumption patterns. This in many ways this is starting to define the Malthusian challenge. At the same time years, decades, indeed centuries of environmentally insensitive and water wasteful mining and industrial practices have come back to haunt us. This combined to the newer challenges of Global Change has defined the Water Challenge for the 21st Century.

We are also clear that developments in water sciences and engineering alone has not delivered adequately to engage this challenge and there is a strong need to consider the social dynamics, culture and heritage issues toward more holistic and complete solutions. In fact, we have for a while in our individual corners been lamenting the lack of a reasonable dialogue on this very important matter of water governance. We have in these past three days made an important start to that global dialogue. We have converged here from 29 countries from 5 continents to apply our minds, experiences and insights to both a deeper analysis of the issues. We have engaged these issues in five baskets –

- Legislation, regulatory environments, human and environmental rights and accountability,
- Markers and measures of good governance in the water domain,
- Multi-level, multi-sectoral and transboundary governance and adaptive management,
- Tools for implementation, and,
- The need for new knowledge and capacity through investments in research and development to develop and implement better and sustainable solutions to our challenges.

This has been enormously beneficial, but we have gone two steps further. The first of those is that in these 3 days we have also forded a few solution streams and started on a path of many more. The second is that we have organised ourselves an important continuity as many of the issues we have engaged here will now move to the next level in a series of discipline and area specific domains, like next year's international conference on Water and Gender before we come back together for the International Conference on Freshwater Governance 2 in Adelaide in 2014.

At a South African level the deliberations and outcomes of this conference will directly feed into the finalisation and implementation of the National Water Resources 2 as well as the processes of legislative reform and institutional alignment process that is being led by Minister Edna Molewa.

Please let me use this opportunity to, on behalf of the WRC, the DWA and all the partner organisations of this conference, to thank you and your institutions for your excellent participation and generous contributions during this conference. A special word to Professor Ali Mazrui, Professor Motshagka, and the other excellent keynote speakers. The wealth of knowledge and insights that you have shared has been inspiring and direction setting.

Finally I want to talk about use not only being the ambassadors of a better water management paradigm, but the need to lead by example. Duely encouraged by Tata Mazrui's quoting of Harry Belafonte's Island in the sun yesterday, I thought I would close with a quote from a great poet and philosopher of my generation – Michael Jackson -:

"I'm starting with the man in the mirror,
I'm asking him to change his ways
And no message could have been clearer
If you wanna make the world a better place
Then look at yourself, And
Make that change".