



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Water and Wastewater specialists of the Arab countries decide to form an utilities association

EWA and DWA take actively part in the establishment of the new network

Hennef, 27th October 2006 - Water supply and wastewater utilities of more than ten member countries of the UN-ESCWA region (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) decided during the first consultative meeting from 4th to 6th September 2006 in Cairo (Egypt) on the establishment of the ACWUA - the *Arab Countries Water Utilities Association*. The European Water Association (EWA) together with the German Association for Water, Wastewater and Waste e. V. (DWA) have been invited to this meeting, in order to bring in their authority and experiences in the establishment and management of an association.

A network of water and wastewater specialists in the Arab world

The association of water and wastewater utilities and service providers in the region is to contribute to a substantial increase in technical capacities by exchange of experience and knowledge, standardisation and benchmarking. The participants are to be enabled to improve the services provided to their customers. The association



would also act as a stakeholder. At the first meeting in Cairo representatives from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Syria, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen were involved.

The first meeting of high-ranking representatives in Cairo

The first consultative meeting of the Arab Countries Water Utilities Association (ACWUA) in the course of formation, was organised by UN-ESCWA (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). Goal of this first meeting of representatives from water utilities and service providers of the Arab countries was, to determine the need and the modalities for the establishment of such an association of water specialists in the Arab world. In preparation of this meeting, EWA and DWA were already involved in the elaboration of background papers.

Workshop held and Steering Committee elected

During the three-day meeting the participants from ten UN-ESCWA member countries discussed in several working groups the challenges of improved water supply and sewage disposal, the importance of facilitated knowledge, information and experience exchange as well as technology transfer amongst water specialists. The particular working groups looked into, amongst other things, the different possibilities regarding structure, membership, organization's governance, financial sustainability and fields of activities. On the last day the participants endorsed the establishment of an Arab association of utilities and service providers and elected a provisional Steering Committee, which consists of ten members.



This committee approved Mr. *Bassam Jaber*, Lebanon, as chairman and Mr. *Mohamed El Alfy*, Egypt, as alternate coordinator.

Follow-up meeting/ Foundation of the association in April 2007

DWA as being the German member of the EWA will be organising the next meeting of the Steering Committee from 10 to 15 December 2006 in Hennef, Germany. A further meeting is envisaged in Bahrain in January 2007 during the Water Middle East, followed by the foundation meeting of the association in April 2007 (provisional date) in Beirut. Together with further experienced international consultants, the EWA and DWA will participate also in the following meetings of the ACWUA.

Further information is available at:

www.ACWUA.org

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