

**Second World Water Forum
NGO MAJOR GROUP STATEMENT TO THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
21ST MARCH, 2000, THE HAGUE**

1. The NGO and Trade Union Major Groups, who have signed below, do not accept:

The report of the World Water Commission

The Vision document produced by the World Water Council

We express serious concerns about the process and contents to date of the Framework for Action. Although there are some positive action points and recommendations, such as community-based rights, the mechanisms for integrating them into an overall process are flawed. The process is dominated by technocratic and top-down thinking, resulting in documents which emphasise a corporate vision of privatisation, large-scale investments and biotechnology as the key answers. The process gives insufficient emphasis and recognition of the rights, knowledge and experience of local people and communities and the need to manage water in ways that protect natural ecosystems, the source of all water.

However, we support the process of community-based participation employed for the Vision 21 (Vision for Water for People).

2. If the Global Water Partnership and the World Water Council are to continue, their work must be made accountable and transparent. Their governance must be reconstituted to be more transparent and legitimate. Their work must be regularly reviewed by the United Nations, through the Commission on Sustainable Development, and by the stakeholders themselves.

3. We strongly insist that a clean, healthy environment and access to basic water and sanitation are universal rights, and cannot therefore be negotiated as commodities. Thus, water and water services must be removed from the General Agreement on Trade in Services and the agenda of the World Trade Organisation.

4. We also consider that food and water insecurity is intrinsically linked to the current unfair global trade system, embodied in the WTO rules.

5. Access to information, as a prerequisite for participation in decision-making processes, is a fundamental right. Legal and institutional mechanisms must be put in place for the empowerment of communities to participate at all levels. Access to justice must be guaranteed.

6. The key to the sustainable provision of water for life is the maintenance and protection of the ecological integrity of all ecosystems. We call for the adoption and implementation of a restoration agenda for the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems.

7. We urge a substantial increase in the levels of spending for clean water and sanitation for poor people and communities.

8. Debt cancellation is essential for water security in poor countries.

9. We strongly demand that water and sanitation services are under the control of the local communities and that the benefits stay within the communities. We also demand

that the management of these services be participatory and transparent. We reject privatisation, other than in accordance with these principles.

10. The degree to which the gender perspective is mainstreamed must be determining indicator of the success or failure of all future policies and actions.

11. We want to move forward. We are committed to transparent participatory processes and to work with all stakeholders, to develop pro-poor national strategies and standards for water resources management and services.

Signed by:

NETWORK OF WOMEN WATER PROFESSIONALS – SRI LANKA
PALESTINIAN HYDROLOGY GROUP
WATER, RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTRE FOR A NEW BURMA
GREENS MOVEMENT OF GEORGIA
FRIENDS OF THE EARTH – GEORGIA
THE BAREFOOT COLLEGE – INDIA
GOBAL WATER CONTRACT – QUEBEC SECTION – CANADA
INSTITUTE FOR POPULAR DEMOCRACY – PHILLIPPINES
UNHAYAM SHAHOJOGY TEAM – BANGLADESH
ARAB NETWORK FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT – EYGPT
ARAB OFFICE FOER YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT – EYGPT
MEDITERRANEAN INFORMATION OFFICE FOR ENVIRONMENT CULTURE AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – IRAN
BIOTICA ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY – REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS – UGANDA
EARTHFOREVER FOUNDATION – BULGARIA
ECONET – INDIA
LEISA NETWORK – SOUTH INDIA
NEOSYNTHESIS RESEARCH CENTRE – SRI LANKA
RAINFOREST RESCUE – ECUADOR
KLUB GAJA – POLAND
CENTRE OF RURAL STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT – INDIA
NEPAL WATER FOR HEALTH – NEPAL
ACCION FRATERNA ANANTA PUR – INDIA
INDEPENDENT (JYOTI KRISHNAN) INDIA
INHURED INTERNATIONAL – INDIA
AFRICAN NETWORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE – NIGERIA
GREEN CROSS BURKINA FASO – BURKINA FASO
LET’S HELP THE RIVER – RUSSIA
MOUNTAIN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GROUP – NEPAL
NATURE TRUST – MALTA
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES –
INDIA
PSI/UNISON – UNITED KINGDOM
PALESTINIAN AGRICULTURAL RELIEF COMMITTEE - PALESTINE
CENTRO DES ESTUDIOS AMBIENTARES – ARGENTINA
PROPUBLIC – NEPAL
MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPOWERMENT
AGUA DEL PUEBLO – GUATEMALA
FRIENDS OF NOMADS – KENYA
YEMEN WATER PROTECTION SOCIETY – YEMEN
SOLIDARITY WATER EUROPE
BOTH ENDS – THE NETHERLANDS
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – U.K.
UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION – U.K.
INDIAN NETWORK FOR PARTICIPATORY IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT – INDIA

HIND SWARAJ TRUST – INDIA
COUNCIL OF CANADIANS - CANADA
PSI/SOUTH AFRICAN MUNICIPAL WORKERS UNION – SOUTH AFRICA
PSI/COURAGE - PHILIPPINES
PSI/FEDERACIO NACIONAL DO URBANITARIOS - BRAZIL
PSI/CUPE – CANADA
PSI/PTV – GERMANY
PSI/JIDIVIO – JAPAN
PSI/SKTF – SWEDEN
PSI/ABVAHABO – NETHERLANDS
PSI/KOMMUNAL - SWEEDEN