

Note to Correspondents:

UN Secretary-General and World Bank Group President Appoint the Members of the High-level Panel on Water

10 Heads of State and Government Join International Coalition to Ensure Access to Water and Sanitation for All

21 April 2016 - United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim announced today the appointment of 10 Heads of State and Government, as well as two Special Advisors, to the High-Level Panel on Water.

The Panel, which was launched at the World Economic Forum in Davos last January, aims to mobilize effective action to accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG6), which focuses on ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, at a time of unprecedented challenges.

“Ensuring water and sanitation for all is crucial for reducing poverty and achieving other Sustainable Development Goals,” said **United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon**. *“I urge all partners to mobilize behind SDG 6 with political, financial and technological support.”*

Today, more than 2.4 billion people lack access to improved sanitation and at least 663 million do not have access to safe drinking water. Poor sanitation, water, and hygiene lead to about 675,000 premature deaths annually, and estimated annual economic losses of up to 7% of GDP in some countries. Floods and droughts already impose huge social and economic costs around the world, and climate variability will make water extremes worse. If the world continues on its current path, projections suggest that the world may face a 40% shortfall in water availability by 2030. The consequences of such stress are local, transboundary and global in today's interconnected world.

The joint United Nations and World Bank Group High-level Panel on Water will provide the leadership required to tackle these challenges and champion a comprehensive, inclusive and collaborative way of developing and managing water resources, and providing improved access to clean water and sanitation.

“Growing cities and populations, as well as a changing climate, are placing unprecedented pressures on our water resources,” said **World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim**. *“Addressing this challenge, and ensuring that we can provide clean water and sanitation for all, requires the kind of global action, strong leadership and commitment shown by the members of the High Level Panel on Water.”*

The High Level Panel on Water will be co-chaired by President Ameenah Gurib of Mauritius and President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico. Among other actions, it will seek to:

- **Motivate effective Action** – Focusing public policy dialogue, private sector models and practices, and civil society initiatives towards the Water SDG; and

- **Advocate on financing and implementation** – Promoting efforts to mobilize financial resources and scale-up investment for the Water SDG, including through innovative financing and implementation strategies.

The Members of the High-level Panel on Water are expected to rally concrete action on SDG6 and its related targets at national, regional and global levels, as well as leading by example, in close collaboration with partners and networks including civil society and the private sector.

The Panel members, who will serve for two years, include:

H.E. Ms. Ameenah Gurib, President of Mauritius (Co-Chair)

H.E. Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico (Co-Chair)

H.E. Mr. Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister of Australia

H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh

H.E. Mr. János Áder, President of Hungary

H.E. Mr. Abdullah Ensour, Prime Minister of Jordan

H.E. Mr. Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of The Netherlands

H. E. Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa

H.E. Mr. Macky Sall, President of Senegal

H. E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of Tajikistan

Special Advisors

Dr. Han Seung-soo, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea

Mr. Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, Minister of State for the Environment, Peru

For further information, including the Joint Statement on the launching of the High Level Panel on Water, please see:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/waterandsanitation/hlpw>