

The Speech of
Eng. Mohammed bin Ahmad Baghdadi
Deputy Minister for Planning & Development
Ministry of Water and Electricity

On the inauguration of
The Fourth Water Arabia 2015

Khobar

28th Tuesday Rabi II 1436H (17th February 2015G)

In the name of Allah Most Gracious Most Compassionate

**Praise be to Allah the Almighty, Prayer and Peace be upon the latest
of all Prophets, Our Messenger Mohammed, his Family &
Companions**

Your Highnesses;

Your Excellencies;

Our honorable guests;

Good morning,

I have the great pleasure to warmly welcome all of you here. I am very thankful & I appreciate your presence & participation in this **Fourth Water Arabia 2015** and the accompanying Exhibition. This épic making event will no doubt pave the way for those involved in water field to acquire in-depth experiences, familiarize with the state-of-the-art technologies and optimum practices in organizing and managing the use of natural water resources as well as non-conventional water resources, including desalinated water and treated wastewater. Throughout the sessions, the Conference will also cast light on the most important economical and environmental aspects for water resources use.

Your Highnesses;

Your Excellencies;

The Arab World, where most of its countries are situated in desert areas, is suffering from scarce natural water resources. The per capita share of almost 1000m³/year of renewable water for all water uses constitutes great preoccupation & concern for Arab states while endeavoring to ensure water preservation and sustainability, both in quality and quantity aspects.

Preserving water resources and rationalizing its uses require integrated efforts at all national, regional and international levels. Boosting positive and constructive cooperation horizons among Arab countries is also needed for maintaining the available water sources and ensuring its sustainability. Such objective may not be achieved without the exchange of scientific and practical expertise by way of conferences and international seminars, such as our present Conference. It is my sincere hope that this event will realize all the goals for which it is held today.

The major challenges facing the water sector in Arab countries nowadays are generally the increasing population, thus making growing & rapid water demand for all purposes. Moreover, the economic growth and the accompanying elevated standard of living has largely contributed to increasing water resources demand and

imposed requirement for meeting the same, even with the limited resources.

In Saudi Arabia, the water sector is given paramount attention by Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and incessant directives are issued by Crown Prince for development of water resources. Extensive work is going on for the infrastructure expansion and development in the area of water and wastewater re-use, with total cost of mega projects amounting to one Billion Saudi Riyals. The option of treated wastewater re-use is inevitably a strategic one for limiting groundwater depletion for agricultural, industrial ...etc purposes. Additionally, wastewater treatment and re-use will, undoubtedly, have positively environmental effects.

Your Highnesses;

Your Excellencies,

The whole world is experiencing water scarcity problem which constitutes great future concern, particularly within those countries where water resources are being extremely exhausted. Accordingly, we, in this region, are required to further our cooperation to ensure sustainable and fair management of water resources. The Middle East region is using 80% of its available water resources, while only 2% of available water resources are used in other states, such as the case with the Latin America and Caribbean region. Reports also stated that water

resources management process in the Middle East and North Africa requires reconsideration, as it involves so many problems. That is to say, water is exploited for low value uses, while uses for high value needs are not satisfied. In addition, overuse of groundwater abstraction ultimately diminishes water storage and undermines those countries' assets at economical rates ranging between 1 and 2 % of the total GDP in some Arab states within the region.

Your Highnesses;

You're Excellencies;

Last but not the least; I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to Saudi Aramco the main supporter for this conference. My thanks and gratitudes go to Mr. Hani Abu Khadra, **Executive Director, Community Services** for Saudi ARAMCO and Chairman of the Conference committees. My thanks and gratitudes go to Saudi-Arab Water Environment Association, WEF and IDA, University of Dammam and our colleagues of the Ministry of Water and Electricity for organizing this Conference. My thanks and gratitude to all those who have contributed in holding the conference and those participants, whether they are physically present or have submitted work papers.

I extend my appreciation to those companies participating in the Exhibition which accompanies this Conference. I would like to stress that Ministry of Water

& Electricity is fully prepared to support companies and industrial entities in further upgrading water cycling techniques & practices and in whatever may target the innovation of new sources and sustainability of the existing sources.

I raise my supplications to the Lord to bestow successes for all the Conference events and that your present Conference may attain all the anticipated scientific and practical benefits which would ultimately ensure the interest of water sustainability and preservation of its resources for our generation and the next generation to come.