



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

5 March 2014

Excellency,

I have the honor to transmit herewith a Summary of the key messages that emerged from the **General Assembly's Thematic Debate on Water, Sanitation and Sustainable Energy in the Post 2015 Development Agenda** which I convened on the 18th and 19th of February 2014.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John W. Ashe".

John W. Ashe

To All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers
to the United Nations

Summary
Key messages that emerged from the General Assembly
Thematic Debate on Water, Sanitation and Sustainable Energy in the Post 2015
Development Agenda
18-19 February 2014

Lessons Learned

1. Eradicating extreme poverty is the overarching goal of the post-2015 development agenda, and there was overall consensus about the importance of water, sanitation and sustainable energy as major enablers of poverty eradication and sustainable development, and as indispensable factors for sustained economic growth, raising living standards and for achieving other major development goals.
2. While notable advances have been made in moving toward universal access to water, sanitation and sustainable energy, significant progress still needs to be made. In this regard it was noted that (i) sanitation is the most off-track of all the MDG targets and this gap would need to be addressed in any new development framework (ii) major transformations of energy systems are necessary to provide affordable energy to people still lacking access, to satisfy accelerated energy demand growth, particularly in developing countries, and to reduce the negative impacts of climate change.
3. There was an acknowledgement that a number of challenges in both the water and energy sectors must be addressed if the goal of universal and sustained access is to be realized. For water, these include issues of water stress and water scarcity, improving integrated water resources management (IWRM) and effective wastewater management. For energy, these include the creation of effective enabling environments for investment, including attractive investment climates, stable and coherent policies and adequate regulatory and institutional frameworks. Any future development agenda must address all of these challenges in a holistic manner.
4. Many best practices exist globally in both the water and sanitation and energy sectors that would need to be scaled up. Notwithstanding, fragmentation in the governance of the water and sanitation sectors would have to be overcome in order to ensure sustained solutions.
5. In any rights based approach to governance in the water and sanitation sectors vulnerable groups and populations must be prioritized. Such an approach would enable these groups to have access to adequate, safe, and affordable water for personal and domestic uses and to have physical and affordable access to sanitation that is safe, hygienic, secure and adequate. Cross-cutting human rights principles include non-discrimination, gender equality, and priority to disadvantaged groups, participation, and accountability. Communities should have access to justice, and a right to information.

6. It is important to note the inter-linkages that exist between water, sanitation, and sustainable energy with many other issue areas, including agriculture, food security, health, education, infrastructure, climate change, peace and security, and gender equality.
7. Technology transfer, and with it capacity building, must be prioritized in any future development agenda. Clean, affordable, adaptable technologies must be made available to developing countries and in particular Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to support the transition to low carbon and green economies and for mitigating climate change. This could be facilitated through an international platform that can serve as an effective and meaningful technology transfer mechanism.
8. The issue of fossil fuel subsidies remains a challenge which needs to be carefully studied and addressed in any future development agenda for energy; it was also underscored that fossil fuel subsidies lead to inefficiencies and environmental degradation.
9. Overall there was a strong call for integrating a gender perspective in access to water and energy.

Contributions to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing

1. There is broad support for a dedicated goal on water, with possible targets on safe drinking water and sanitation; water resources management; reuse and treatment of wastewater and wastewater pollution and water quality. Protecting communities from water-related disasters, including floods and droughts, and protecting and restoring water-linked ecosystems were also frequently mentioned.
2. There is broad support for a dedicated stand-alone goal on energy. Possible targets could include ensuring universal access to modern energy services, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.
3. Goals on water and on energy could be complemented by having cross-cutting nexus targets with other sustainable development goals in order to further advance an integrated approach aimed at eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns. Caution was expressed regarding partially embedded nexus approaches, particularly limited to energy and water, divorced from broader, cross-sectoral linkages.
4. For LDCs universal energy access is a significant undertaking and as such, appropriate attention would need to be paid to the following: increase per capita energy supply to the same level of other developing countries; increase energy

efficiency and renewable energy access to leapfrog to the path of green economy and sustainable development; a new generation of global partnerships; and enhanced financial assistance and access to technologies.

5. The importance of means of implementation, including financing, knowledge sharing and technology transfer, capacity-building, as well as the creation of a national enabling environment including sound water, sanitation and sustainable energy policies and institutional frameworks, was also underscored.
6. ODA remains an essential source of financing, especially for LDCs and other groups of developing countries with specific development challenges. Notwithstanding particular attention needs to be given to diversifying sources of funding at the national level, including through leveraging private sector finance. The importance of the private sector and public-private partnerships was also underscored. The importance of means of implementation, including financing, knowledge sharing and technology transfer, capacity-building, as well as the creation of a national enabling environment including sound water policies and institutional frameworks, was also underscored.
7. Public funding for sustainable energy must be complemented by funding from the private sector. The private sector has an important role to play and public-private partnerships can effectively advance the goals and objectives on energy, water and sanitation. Increased incentives for business innovation are needed to use resources more efficiently and advance integrated approaches.
8. There is a need to increase support for nexus research and capacity building for integrated resource management. To implement an integrated approach, increased financing and technology transfer are indispensable requirements.
9. Partnerships between all stakeholders at all levels are also key in this regard. South-South and regional cooperation, including addressing trans-boundary water cooperation issues, in accordance with international law, can also play an important role in sharing expertise and knowledge on how to address the nexus.

The post-2015 development agenda: Issues for further consideration

1. Successful implementation of sustainable development goals and targets, particularly in the water, sanitation and energy sectors, will require strong and accountable institutions at all levels; as well as reliable monitoring frameworks adaptable to differing national circumstances and stages of development. Such frameworks would benefit from a data revolution, with specific emphasis on supporting capacities for statistical collection within developing countries.
2. As Member States advance in their deliberations on the post 2015 development agenda, further attention will be required to consider effective review and

implementation mechanisms, drawing from the lessons learned with regard to the implementation, follow-up and review of the Millennium Development Goals.

3. The implementation of the post 2015 development agenda will require the participation and involvement of all stakeholders. National parliamentarians and local and territorial governments will play a key role in this regard because of their responsibility in the development of national legal and regulatory frameworks and in the delivery of services to their citizens. This agenda will also require an increased participation by, and increased responsibilities on the part of the private sector as a partner for the achievement of sustainable development, and the promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns. The agenda will have to engage major groups and other stakeholders; it cannot ignore the question of existing gender inequality; and it will have to be particularly responsive to the needs of different groups and sectors of our societies, including those of people living with disabilities and of marginalized groups, particularly those living in extreme poverty.