

Address of Dr. Imad Khatib
Conference Co-Chair
Secretary General of Palestine Academy
for Science and Technology

«We made from water all living thing,»
The Holy Quran, Al-Anbiya (the Prophets) verse 30

Dr. Sabri Saidam, Presidents' Advisor for Information Technology and Technical Education, and the representative of Mr. President, for the opening of the Conference,

Mrs. Rima Abu Middein - Barghouti, UNDP Team Leader,

**Dr. Shaddad Attali, President of the Palestinian Water Authority,
Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,**

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of myself and all of the organizational committee in Palestine Academy for Science and Technology for the second international conference, to welcome you all and thank you for your attendance and participation in the activities of this valuable conference.

Three weeks ago the world celebrated World Water Day in devotion to the decision of the Assembly of the United Nations since 1993, to celebrate the 22nd of March of each year by the international community as a day for water in order to shed light on the most important topics related to fresh water. The theme for this year is “Shared Water - Shared Opportunities,” emphasizing on transboundary water as a source for justly shared management not a conflict issue.

This years topic and previous topics over the past years, focused on the right in water and the need to ensure good management and sustainability over the years. These topics put the international community in a position of responsibility through which they must ensure that water rights are not violated for the benefit of an entity at the expense of other people.

2nd International Conference: Water values & Rights

The responsibility of the international community, which recognizes that water is the backbone for life, is to intervene strongly to ensure that water is not used as a political tool or monopolized for political gains. Accordingly, the international community does not deal with this subject selectively considering certain entities inclusively above the law without any regard for the suffering caused by such selection. For this reason, the right in water guaranteed by the international law must not be negotiated on as a humanitarian issue and a pressing need. It should be stressed that it is a non negotiable right.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have led the celebration of World Water Day this year, with the support of the World Food Organization and the Office of the European Economic Community. This, in turn, reflects another aspect of the role of science and culture in the sustainable management of the water sector. At the national level, there must be close cooperation between the decision makers and the scientific and research institutions and researchers concerned to ensure the quality of fresh water and ensure more efficient management through the development of scientific means to guide on water consumption and ensure that the treatment and reuse of wastewater is not affecting the public health and the environment and therefore will ensure availability for future generations of this vital source.

The Palestine Academy strives to provide support for scientific research of national priority, including those relating to water. In addition, we seek through our presence as an active member of eight global well known scientific organizations to open prospects for cooperation with international scientific institutions. For this reason there have been multiple participations for scientists and researchers, institutions and national representatives of the Academy and Palestine in various subjects including those related to water.

We are still working very hard to get the required financial support for the Science Fund to grant the support for scientific research and networking among scientific institutions. Regarding this matter I would like to thank HE Dr. Salam Fayyad, for his moral support of

the Science fund and asking those involved in working to look for the necessary funding for supporting research, development and innovation.

Distinguished guests,

This second international conference is the result of the effort and cooperation between the Palestinian Water Authority and Palestine Academy for Science and Technology. As in the first conference held back in 2005, the Conference represents a forum for researchers and experts in various domains related to water.

Allow me at this point to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Palestinian Water Authority, headed by Dr. Shaddad Attili and all the colleagues in the Palestinian Water Authority who have cooperated closely to the organization and holding of this Conference. This second International Conference is co-funded from the UNDP as was the first conference held back in 2005. Therefore I would like to thank Mrs. Rima Abu Middain, and the entire working group from UNDP for their efforts and cooperation in order to Implement this International Conference.

The first and the second international conferences were sponsored by President Mahmoud Abbas and his Cabinet; we therefore send him our thanks and appreciation with the hope that we will convene the third conference in the city of Jerusalem.

I need also to express our thanks and appreciation to my colleagues in the Palestine Academy for their hard and productive work and their affiliation to their institution.

My thanks to everyone for the scientific papers submitted by scientists from Palestinian Universities, Institutions, Arab countries, Europe, Asia and the United States of America. Researchers from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, submitted papers and they were approved upon by the committee; however, the Israeli embassy did not grant the visa, though they tried for a long time, and there were some participants from the Israeli side, who also informed us, were prevented from entering Ramallah.

I wish you all a successful conference and I thank you all for your participation.