

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH TO
THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES.**

**First meeting,
Geneva, 17-19 January 2007
Item 4 (a)**

Thank you Madam Chair,

At the outset, please allow me, on behalf of the Turkish Delegation, to express my congratulations on chairing this meeting. I would also like to express our sincere thanks to the Secretariat for its efforts during the preparation of the documents.

Madam Chair,

Turkey has not signed and ratified the Helsinki Convention and its Protocol yet. Nevertheless, remarkable progress was achieved in water resources management and sanitation services during the last three decades.

We have recently revised our water and sanitation policies by taking into account Turkey's present and future water and energy needs, its fast growing and rapidly urbanizing population and the on-going EU accession process. Priority has been given to utilize water resources in an efficient and sustainable manner. We focused on the protection of the quantity and the quality of the available water resources, but more importantly, on providing safe drinking water and sanitation for urban and rural settlements. Turkey has been trying to realize its plans and programmes on "water and health" by taking into consideration the following:

- Implementing "demand-responsive approaches",
- Setting clear policies,
- Applying affordable appropriate technologies,
- Realizing sanitation and hygiene education,
- Capacity building,
- Cooperation, coordination and cohesion among all sectors,
- Provision for proper maintenance of water and sanitation infrastructure,
- Sustainable financial management.

Madam Chair,

We believe that sustainable water resources management and also prevention, control and reduction of water related disease can be achieved through enhanced cooperation at all levels. However, we should keep in mind that there is no "one size fits all solution" for water resources management. There are specific environmental, economic, social, and cultural dimensions that need to be taken into account so that the most appropriate, cost effective and affordable method can be used.

Madam Chair,

The 5th World Water Forum, which is going to be held in 2009 in Istanbul, will be crowning step of our efforts in “water and health”. Organizing this outstanding event in our country show our seriousness and preparedness in this domain. Having this opportunity, I also have the honour to announce and invite you all to the “International Congress on River Basin Management” which will be held from 22 to 24 March 2007 in Antalya, Turkey. I would like to remind you that the Congress will be one of the preparatory events gathering representatives of governments, public and private sectors, international organizations and academicians for the 5th World Water Forum.

We look forward to welcoming you in Antalya.

I thank you.