CONCLUSIONS

THE 1st MEETING OF THE WEST AFRICAN MINISTERS OF WATER (AMCOW) HELD AT DAKAR, SENEGAL, 16TH, JANUARY, 2004. HOTEL TERANGA

INTRODUCTION:

The West African Ministers Council on Water (WAMCOW) held its first meeting on the 16th of January 2004. Twelve Countries (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote D'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo) were represented at the Technical Session. At the Ministerial Session, 7 countries were represented by 5 Ministers (Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal) and two accredited Chief Delegates (Cape Verde and Gambia). This is the conclusion of the Ministerial Session.

BACKGROUND:

The West African Ministers Council on Water (WAMCOW) is a branch of the African Ministers Council on Water (AMCOW). It is a forum of Ministers responsible for water affairs from all West African countries. It provides a platform for keeping under constant review all water policy issues for Africa's development. It provides the necessary avenue for political dialogue and leadership on water discourse in and out of the continent. In the spirit of NEPAD it works to ensure that water issues are addressed to revive the economic development of Africa by optimising and sharing of water related economic benefits among riparian nations. It also promotes piece and security through Sub-regional and Regional Co-operation, which is an ingredient for economic revival. WAMCOW is the vehicle for the achievement the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) Targets on water and Sanitation by West Africa.

The objective of the meeting is to set up WAMCOW and to deliberate and conclude on a number of outstanding issues that are relevant to the goals and objectives of WAMCOW.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT OF WAMCOW

Constitution and Rules of Procedure

Taking due cognisance of the development of AMCOW Constitution and associated Rules of Procedure and the arrangement to develop (drawing from similar arrangements on other sectors) an interim document that will guide the workings of AMCOW pending finalization of the process on the constitution, the Ministers directed that the operational guidelines for WAMCOW be similarly developed to have synergy with that of AMCOW, as this will address all concerns relating to operational procedures.

Secretariat Arrangement

Appreciating the need for a functional secretariat for WAMCOW the Ministers concluded that ECOWAS should be requested to consider WAMCOW as its organ on water Affairs and have its Integrated Water Resources Coordination Unit to undertake the secretariat function of WAMCOW. In this regard, the President of WAMCOW will send a letter to the Executive Secretary of the ECOWAS.

Executive Committee (WAMCOW-EXCO)

In line with the agreement reached to expand the sub-regional representation on the AMCOW-EXCO to three, the Ministers concluded that Burkina Faso be admitted as the third EXCO member representing WAMCOW and further impress that it would be subject to the dictates of the Rules of Procedure when in force to take care of procedural concerns that relate to election and succession among others.

Technical Advisory Committee (AMCOW-TAC)

In line with the agreement reached to expand the number of regional membership of TAC to five, the Ministers concluded that Nigeria and Niger be included to join Burkina Faso, Ghana and Senegal. This conclusion is to take cognisance of the fact that AMCOW is at the preparatory stage and would be subject to the effect of the Rules of Procedure when in force.

RELATIONSHIPS

Consolidation of Relationships: with UN-Water Africa, and regional and sub-regional economic commissions.

The Ministers appreciate the need to consolidate partnerships and strengthen relationships formed, and concluded that formal partnerships agreements be entered into with all such organs. To this effect the five members of AMCOW-TAC West Africa are to take necessary actions to put the necessary papers for action by the President of WAMCOW before the next meeting.

MAJOR INITIATIVES

Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation:

The Ministers noted the significant progress made on the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. On the selection of two countries for the proposed EU support on the Water Supply and Sanitation Component, the Ministers noted the relevant Working Group report and concluded that Ghana and Cape Verde be presented to the EU as the focus pilot countries from the West African sub region.

On the selection of a basin for the proposed EU support for the development of Trans boundary basins in Africa, the Ministers appreciated the need to take early action in order not to hold back the process. Consequently, the Ministers

deliberated the available reports and dialogued to build consensus whereupon the Niger Basin is selected with further recommendation for its project components to contain a window for the development of the nascent Volta Basin institution.

African Water Facility

The Ministers noted the progress made on the establishment of the African Water Facility, especially the provision for five AMCOW members to serve on the Governing Board for which WAMCOW is to propose one member and one Alternate who will be required to satisfy job profiles to be developed to ensure donor confidence. Consequently the Ministers concluded to propose Senegal with Mali as Alternate. The Ministers observed that an impending conflict might exists on the imposition of job profiles that would need to be taken up at the harmonisation meeting coming up in Tunis.

Extra-Ordinary Summit of African Union: Agriculture and Water.

The Ministers noted the level of preparation on the Extra-ordinary Summit of the African Union on Agriculture and Water and resolved that the outcome of the Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON) be developed into a suitable document that would constitute AMCOW's input to the Summit. The initial document is to be prepared by TAC by the 20th of December. A meeting of AMCOW EXCO will hold in time to consider the document before the summit.

Input to the 12^{th} meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 12).

The Ministers noted that the meeting of CSD 12 is coming up in April 2004, and endorse that the proposed AMCOW's input to the CSD 12 meeting and the AU extra Ordinary Summit should have synergy with the outcome of PANAFCON.

Partnership between G8 and Africa for the achievement of the MDGs and WSSD targets on Water and Sanitation

The ministers noted with satisfaction the development of G8 Africa Action Plan on water as follows: A message was sent by AMCOW to the G8 Summit in Evian requesting for increased support to water and sanitation in Africa. The report from the G8 Summit in Evian in June 2003 contained their commitment and support for the development of the water and sanitation sector in Africa. The details are contained in the "G8 Water Action Plan". As a sign of commitment to this, the German Government has taken the initial step to actualise this. It is expected that the German Initiative will leverage positive action from other G8 member countries.

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AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER (AMCOW)

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