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MEDIA ADVISORY



World Water Day 2011

Water for Cities: Responding to the Urban Challenge - topic of the round table organized by UNESCO Almaty

International World Water Day is held annually on 22 March. This year it highlights a topic "Water for Cities: Responding to the Urban Challenge" as a means of focusing public attention on the the impact of rapid urban population growth, industrialization and uncertainties caused by climate change, conflicts and natural disasters on urban water systems.

On 18 March 2011, the Kazakhstan National IHP Committee and the UNESCO Cluster office in Almaty will organize a workshop "Water for Cities" as a part of worldwide Water Day celebrations. The agenda of this event includes presentations by various water experts - representatives of the Institute of Geography, the Institute of Hydrogeology and Geocology, the Kazgiprovodkhoz, UNESCO and UNDP.

This year's theme, "Water for Cities: Responding to the Urban Challenge", becomes increasingly important nowadays as urban population growth continues. According to the 3rd United Nations World Water Development Report published in 2009:

- *More than half the world's population lives in cities, compared with less than 15% in 1900;*
- *In major Asian cities the percentage of households, provided with tap water (house or yard connection) is 77% (compared with 94% worldwide);*
- *The proportion of households in major Asian cities connected to the sewer system is only 45% (compared with 86% of the world).*

In addition, lack of safe water and adequate sanitation is a major cause of the spread diseases in the world. Thus, it is essential that these issues are placed high on national, regional, and international agendas. Governments, organizations, communities, and individuals should be encouraged to actively engage in addressing the challenge of urban water management.

Journalists are cordially invited to attend this event which will take place:

Date: 18 March 2011

Time: 9.30am

Venue: Conference Hall named after Rudick Adamyan (UN building, Tole 67, Almaty)

Languages: Russian and English

For further information, please, refer to the program of the conference attached.

For accreditation and inquiries, please, contact:

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UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP) – an intergovernmental scientific programme in the area of hydrology and water resources – it is a unique intergovernmental programme in the UN System designed for scientific research in area of water, water management and capacity building. It has more than 165 national committees and coordination centers.

Useful Links:

<http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday/>
<http://www.worldwaterday.org/>

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/water/>
<http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/>

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