

**The Permanent Mission of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
to the United Nation - New York**

Statement by

His Excellency Dr. Taher E. Jehaimi

Secretary of the General People's Committee for Planning

before

**The United Nations Committee
on Sustainable Development**

New York, 20 April 2005

Mr. President,
Distinguished Members of Delegations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I wish to convey to you my most sincere thanks and appreciation for giving me the opportunity to address your esteemed committee, and to let you know, that I highly value the tireless efforts you and the members of the bureau are exerting to make the workings of this Session a success and to achieve the best desired results.

Mr. President,

The Thirteenth Session of the Committee on Sustainable Development deals with subjects of extreme importance relating to issues of water, sanitation and human settlements, which, overall, are considered fundamental elements for the achievement of sustainable development. This, requires a united and joint effort between governments, civil society organizations and development agencies, accompanied by strong and coordinated partnerships.

Mr. President,

Emanating from the Johannesburg Declaration and the plan of implementation for Sustainable Development, and the resolve and determination expressed in their contents, reached by consensus, to strengthen and deepen the roots of sustainable development in the economic, social and environmental dimensions on the various local, national, regional and global levels, we affirm our commitment to achieving these goals, to follow-up on the implementation process, and to encourage further coordination and cooperation within a cohesive framework, with support from the United Nations System, and the international organizations specialized in designing strategies for sustainable development, at the country level, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and other development goals, agreed upon internationally.

Mr. President,

Water and Sanitation are core issues in order to achieve sustainable development and reduce the intensity of poverty in the developing countries. We, therefore, affirm our adherence to the full implementation of the

commitments that were made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and in particular, the commitment to reduce by 2015, by one half, the number of those who do not have access to safe drinking water, or cannot afford it, as well as the number of those who lack the basic sanitary facilities. We call upon, and appeal to, all international financial institutions and donor countries, to increase their assistance for projects that provide potable water and sanitation services for human settlements in the different cities and rural areas of developing countries.

The developing countries, and in particular, the least developed among them, cannot in any way possible undertake projects related to water, sanitary facilities and human settlements, unless they receive financial and technological assistance from the donor countries, since these projects cost enormous amounts of money to obtain the best results, in order to have access to sanitation services, deliver potable water, and raise the standards of the human settlements.

Mr. President,

In this respect, we also affirm our support to the contents of the Dakar Declaration, issued by (the Global WASH Forum) which was convened in Dakar, Senegal from the period 29 November to 3 December 2004, and the recommendations issued by the Forum.

Mr. President,

Allow me to highlight what has been accomplished in Libya in the fields of water, sanitation and human settlements:

FIRST: WATER AND SANITATION:

During the last thirty five years, and to be exact, since the dawning of the Great 1" of September Revolution, Libya has witnessed social and economical transformations in different areas, chief among which was the utmost concern given to the provision of water and sanitation services to Libyan cities and villages. Over 1500 wells of drinking water were equipped to provide water, thousands of kilometers of main and subsidiary water networks were constructed (almost 35 thousand kilometers). Thousands of reservoirs, and hundreds of pumping stations were built. Attention has also been paid to improving the quality of water through

treatment as required, as well as utilizing seawater to provide water supplies to some cities in the Jamahiriya, using desalination plants that were started in the early seventies of the last century.

All these efforts culminated in the implementation of the Great Man-Made River Project, which aims, when all its phases are completed, to transport over 2 billion cubic meters of fresh water per year from large aquifers in the south of the country to the north, where most of the population and economic activities are centered, through a network of heavy duty reinforced concrete pipes, with a diameter of 4 meters, and extending over a distance of 4000 kilometers.

In the field of sanitation, thousands of kilometers of sewage collection and networks were built, estimated to measure over 7500 kilometers, and hundreds of relay and pumping stations, as well as tens of treatment stations, were built, with a view to reuse treated sewage water, mainly for agricultural purposes. Furthermore, the Jamahiriya was among the pioneer countries on the regional level to apply the technologies of treatment of sewage water, as treatment stations have been in operation for over three decades.

Complementing these efforts, Libya started recently implementing a national program to complete building its infra-structure facilities in the fields of water and, sanitation in all cities and urban centers, as well as to rehabilitate the existing ones, with a view to improving services and increasing the percentage of the population receiving potable water from the general networks, from the current 84% to 100% in the near future.

This program also aims to have complete coverage of sewer services within urban areas through the general networks. In this regard, it is worth noting that the current percentage of the population that have sewage facilities reaches 97%, and the number of those linked to the public sewage networks is almost 48%.

Libya has adopted this ambitious program at a cost of about six billion U.S. dollars, and is expected to be completed during the next seven years. What has been accomplished in Libya in the area of water and sanitation clearly indicates that Libya has actually accomplished many of the Millennium Development Goals, and in fact, went beyond them.

SECOND: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS:

Geographically, Libya is characterized by its vast area and a disparity in the distribution of the population between urban and rural areas, with the coastal areas considered more likely to witness a population growth. Reducing this disparity in the distribution of the population has been taken into consideration through long term physical planning, 2000-2025.

The development plans of the last three decades reflect special emphasis on improving services, represented in the construction of roads, means of transportation and communications, generation and distribution of electrical power, improving health and educational services, and realizing the Great Man-Made River Project. These achievements contributed to narrowing the gap between the different areas, and led to an equitable distribution of public services, with emphasis on the least developed areas.

These measures attained the following results:

1. A more equitable distribution of infrastructure and social services, including the provision of water, sanitation facilities, education and health services, among the various areas.
2. A reduction in the density of the population in big cities, in favor of other coastal areas, and the interior.

**Thank you, Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen, for your attention**