

2<sup>nd</sup> International Peace Conference of the Lucerne Initiative for Peace and Security

Under the auspices of

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## Water – Main Challenge for Peace and Security in the Future?

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LIPS intends to contribute substantially to the ongoing discussion about present and future challenges in the field of international water resource management. For this purpose, following the successful conference in 2005, a further edition of the International Peace Conference in Lucerne is being organised. All presentations and workshops aim to contribute to the mission of LIPS itself:

- ▶ To strengthen the position of Lucerne as a city of peace with its long tradition and to promote Switzerland as a humanitarian platform.
- ▶ To give everyone the possibility of participation and to alert the public for the local and global challenges of the current problems with water resources.
- ▶ Representatives of different cultures and religions contribute to a better understanding of the Christian-occidental and Muslim points of view.
- ▶ To strengthen the dialogue between representatives of the civilian and military peace efforts.
- ▶ To foster the dialogue between representatives of politics, economy and science.

Together with extended opening and closing events there are several presentations planned for Friday and Saturday afternoon as well as workshops for Saturday morning.

15 public presentations on the subject of „Water – Main Challenge for Peace and Security in the Future?“ will be held by people from different culture areas and representing science, politics, the private economy as well as the military and civil sectors.

5 workshops by further contributors will allow a deeper debate and understanding. This with special focus on the following topics:

- ▶ Water as a human right – or: Whom does the blue gold belong to?
- ▶ Water in the 1st World: What are the problems?
- ▶ Armed water conflict? – Myth or reality? (*Two workshops: Africa and Middle East*)
- ▶ Water – a global issue for peace and security?

## General Idea and Motive

### **Water, one of the main future challenges for peace and security?**

Water is the paramount means of life for humans, animals, plants. Strong growth of population, change of climate and resulting draughts, disappearance of moors and humid areas, wars and unrestrained water pollution are responsible for growing shortage of clean water resources. Today, more than a billion peoples do not have access to drinking water and according to IWMI (International Water Management Institute) one out of three human beings suffers of shortage of drinking water.

Increasingly, even wealthy countries face the shortage of clean water. What in the past was regarded as a problem of third world countries only is now recognized as a reason of universal concern. This is a finding of the report “Rich Countries, Poor Water“, published in August 2006 by WWF.

According to this year’s winner of the “Stockholm Water Prize”, Prof. Asit K. Biswas, an immense mismanagement of water is prevailing.

Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary General regards water as a resource of many faces, its importance will soon exceed that of oil. The water reserves are dwindling and our world will be in want of the blue gold.

Scarcity of water has a substantial influence on any biological system and can therefore be a severe threat to human health. Conflicts of interest over water rights are of the prime future problems. Fights over water are set to arise and a precautionary conflict management is indispensable to universal peace and security.

Special problems arise from the fact that natural resources are inseparably connected on the same level with political, economical and social questions. Possible strategies for peaceful use have to take technical as well as political, economical and social aspects into consideration.

### **Second international conference of the Lucerne Initiative for Peace and Security. (LIPS)**

Based on the remarkable success of the international peace conference “Visions of Peace and Security. Lucerne 1905–2005” in September 2005, the Lucerne Initiative for Peace and Security ventures to organise again a major event. By this, LIPS intends to further contribute to the dialogue for peace.

In the actual case, we are searching for ways of peacefully sharing the available water resources. Besides a thematic focus on the right of access to clean drinking water for everybody, the conference of autumn 2007 is concentrating on regional and international aspects of the resource water with regard on peace and security.

### **Participants and public target**

The character of the conference is regional as well as international. In this sense, decision makers and politicians from the region, from Switzerland as well as from internationally known problem centres, mainly from the Middle East and Africa, will participate.

Taking into account the growing public interest in the subject, the conference will give voice to selected experts in the field of water management as well as to interested persons of the civil sector and include them into active participation.

## Summary of Workshops

Five Workshops on the following topics:

▶ *Water as a Human Right or: Whom does the blue gold belong to?*

There is no life without water. But more than a billion of humans don't have access to drinking water. The cause can be overuse, squandering and armed conflicts, but also population growth and change of climate.

Should water as a mutual heritage of humanity be available to everybody and therefore be protected from the influence of a free market? Is the human right for water a condition for peace and security in conflict areas only or globally? Should the right for water be part of the UN Charta of Human Rights?

▶ *Water – conflict place Switzerland: What are the problems?*

Problems and conflicts over rights of use related to water are not restricted to third world countries but are increasingly discussed in Switzerland.

There is a wide range of possible conflicts related to water, starting with thermal pollution by industrial applications, dispute over residual water discharge in rivers, sharing of subsoil water deposits or pollution of lakes.

▶ *Armed water conflict? – Myth or reality?*

*Workshop A: Africa*

*Workshop B: Middle East*

Water, a cause of future conflicts? Will there be future wars about water and are fights raging at present?

What are the real problems and which are possible solutions? Assisted by renowned experts we shall, in two workshops, discuss actual and future problems.

Thereby, we shall focus on Africa and the Middle East, areas where these problems are clearly manifest already

▶ *Water – a global issue for peace and security?*

The United Nations have set the goal to halve the number of people without access to clean water by 2015. UNICEF fears that Africa and Asia will not reach this target of millennial importance.

Which are the consequences of water supply on global peace and security? Increased migration, unbalanced economy and poverty in the Third World are not any longer local problems restricted to the afflicted countries, but they have a global impact. Are African refugees on Gran Canaria or Sicily just a part of it? Which are the wider consequences and which solutions can be proposed by experts and politicians?

## Outlines of Lectures

### Fifteen public lectures

The topics of all lectures are in the compass of the overlying motto “Water as a main challenge for peace and security in the future“. They will be held by representatives of the civil economy, science, politics, and military as well as by persons of varied cultural backgrounds.

The conference will focus on international problems with domestic Swiss problems on the sideline.

### Groups of speakers / speakers

At this time, speakers are being recruited.

Institutions and organisations of local, national and international standing are being contacted.

- ▶ Swiss peace organisations
- ▶ Political decision makers in Switzerland and abroad
- ▶ Private firms in water and energy sectors
- ▶ Exponents of the international food processing industry
- ▶ Exponents of international cooperation
- ▶ National and international academic institutes
- ▶ Individual persons and activists with a sizable engagement in the field of water

### Contact and further information

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