



9TH WORLD WATER FORUM KICK-OFF MEETING
20 JUNE 2019-DAKAR

SPEECH OF DE MR LOÏC FAUCHON
PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD WATER COUNCIL

“AFRICA-SENEGAL- DAKAR: CAPITALS OF WATER”

Mr. Minister,
Mrs. and Mr. Ambassadors,
Dear Water Friends,

It is both a pleasure and an honour for me addressing you for the Kick-off of the 9th World Water Forum.

It is also a great pleasure to be once again in Dakar - enjoying Senegalese hospitality. The warmness of our hosts, the kindness and the courtesy of the people, and of their representatives, are a great source of happiness renewed at each visit.

It is also an honour associating our World Water Council to African, Senegalese and to the people of Dakar with their great skills allowing millions of children, women and men to access basic needs, indispensable to life.

Thank you, Mr. Minister, to you and to your team for the efforts made in launching this event. The planet is thirsty, and it is customary to say, that it is starving too. And so is Africa!

Africa is not only thirsty for water. It is especially thirsty for development and hungry for progress. Who could blame it, except some people taking pleasure in imagining it perpetually poor and weak.

No, ladies and gentlemen, Africa is rich. It is rich by its natural resources, by its land resources and especially rich thanks to the intelligence and energy of its children, women and men living here.

Yes, Africa is by its minds and hearts.

And what about water one would ask? Water surrounds us, water stimulates us, water brings us together.

While the planet is filled with water, many of its inhabitants are thirsty. And Africa is like the world. Africa is endowed by water, but Africans are mostly lacking it in quantity or quality. Water is insufficient here or there, water is suffering here and there.

And if the water suffers, it is often because it is abused. Why? You know it, we all know it.

Because at the water level, the planet is suffering and some of its inhabitants with it.

No need to throw out numbers. Reality is hard enough that we shouldn't be adding approximate figures.

Let us simply think of these billions, among the poorest, the neediest, for whom water is always contaminated.

Please do not turn our backs from those thousands of children who die each year of thirst and diarrhea. We must work on the causes, act to promote solutions, and deliver adapted answers which can be sustained in the longer term. Together, let's take back the control of the water cycle.

On this subject let's start by identifying global changes that the earth knows.

Before talking about climate, there is demography and so many mouths to feed, urbanization and the tremendous thirst of cities, littoralization and the pollution of seas and rivers, the true poison of this century.

There is more widely the aspiration of current and future generations to benefit from a rise of living standards, consuming water masses that we do not yet have. And especially let us resist to the temptation, do not sell the House of Water on credit.

All this dear friend is painful, all this is crisis, all this is tension.

You know that despite our continuous efforts, demand for water increases faster than the water offer.

And then, **only**, there is the climate and as his majesty King Mohamed VI says: "the climate crisis is the ultimate injustice that strikes the most vulnerable".

Water is often stolen, when all of us want to share it.

And that's why we're here today; **It's good to go from water theft to - shared water.**

This is our responsibility, everyone in this place. **Ensuring water security. Everywhere, for everyone and by everyone.**

Securing the use of water is firstly about securing the resource, securing its availability, securing its protection.

Securing water is about finding the best balance between water for today and water for tomorrow.

Securing means to find additional water resources while respecting this new demand for **balance between Water for Men, that is to say Water for Development and Water for Nature.**

To ensure this balance, our next actions will aim to diversify the offer for water. This means supporting human genius and his capacity to innovate and to create new solutions. And you are the living evidence. You who invent every day African solutions.

This is the raison d'être of a Forum, first by gathering experiences, know-how, organizing the meeting of all those who modestly or largely contributed to facilitate access to water and then bring together decision makers, Heads of States and Governments, parliamentarians, mayors, business leaders, NGOs leaders, donors and international organizations.

In short, all those who in various ways have a power to influence and trigger action. And convince them that **water deserves better than a second role** and that if antennas for mobile phones are good, networks for drinking water are even better.

Two years ago, the candidature carried out by the Government of Senegal and the City of Dakar won after an African and international competition.

And last year, at the same date, we designed the basis of this Forum **co-organization**. Each party brings his or her own engagement, his or her experience, his or her capacities. Each of them listens to the other to, together, build this Forum of responses which must contribute in changing the life of billions of human beings. Side by side and not one behind the other. And we are enjoying this morning, government, city, council in being together the Master of Work of this so particular challenge.

Mr. Minister, dear friends, as you know, we are used to say that water is politics.

The success of this next Forum will depend for a large part on our capacity to mobilize this essential three fold knowledge-governance-finance.

For two years Africa, Senegal, Dakar will be the Capital of Water. Let's use this opportunity my friends for Africa to express the African intelligence, for African voices to be heard.

May our work transform Solutions into Responses. Let's show that Africa has its own concrete answers to change the lives of the poorest.

Let's break the walls of obligations, procedures, models that are important to us, leading to a dependence to institutions and leading to these cemeteries of boreholes and "spoiled" pumps.

Yes, let's break the walls that separate communities, women and men.

If there are walls, they are walls of water, walls of water that gather, walls of water that unify, walls of water that fertilize our future.

My friends, let Water of Africa forge its destiny, let Water of Africa show the path of peace for water that the people of this land want to engage.

Let's take together the road to Dakar 2021.

This is the message of consideration, respect and engagement that I wanted to bring on behalf of the World Water Council and wish you a wonderful success in your work.

Thank you.