



GRIPS - February 3rd, 2020

International Symposium on Water and Culture –Learning from Water Heritage to Innovate Regional Development –

Summary of Proceedings

1. Background and objectives

Water has been closely associated with human being since ancient civilization periods. It has interacted with the people in critical fields for their existence such as health, food, energy, disasters, and environment. It underpinned social and economic development of regions and enhanced welfare and happiness of the inhabitants if managed properly. Water has affected, in many ways, formulation of the culture and society.

Learning the process through which interaction of the people and water has formulated culture and civilization will give us hints to build optimal relations between environment and humanity in the future. It will also help us explore better ways to adapt to climate and other global changes.

Relations between the people and water are not only practical but emotional, philosophical, and even spiritual. It affects the people's way of thinking and beliefs. Social structure and behavior is set at large by surrounding environmental conditions. Water is a decisive element of the settings. Philosophy and religion. We can follow how our ancestors developed their thinking and beliefs by visiting water-related steles, inscriptions and archives.

Human activities have been intertwined with water under various settings, which led to distinctive culture and civilization. We will be able to disentangle the relations by visiting remains, monuments and ancient manuscripts. The lessons gleamed from the exercise will give us a clue to create better paths towards holistic development of regions with no one left behind.

Having these in mind, the Symposium aims to help our deeper understanding of relations between the people and water by visiting water heritage around the world. Leading experts and researchers on water and cultures invited from various parts of the world will introduce case, share their experiences and knowledge, and discuss findings and lessons from the heritage. The role water can and should play for regional development in the world will be crystalized through discussion including interaction with audience. The Symposium will contribute to creating new horizon of water discussion leading to advancement of water dialogue process of Asia Pacific Water Summit in 2020, the 9th World Water Forum, Global Platform on DRR, and the 4th UN Special Thematic Session on Water and Disasters and UN High-Level Meeting on Water in 2021, and the UN Water Decade's Mid-Term Review in 2023, and fully achieving SDGs.

2. Program

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2020

Venue: National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), 7-22-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo
Japan

Organizers/co-organizers:

- High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP)
- National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS)
- Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism of Japan (MLIT)
- UN Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD/UNDESA)
- ICOMOS Netherlands

Language: English and Japanese (simultaneous interpretation)

3. Agenda

Plenary: 13:30-14:30

(1) Welcome and Congratulatory Remarks

- Dr. Han Seung-soo, Chair of HELP, and Former Prime Minister of Republic of Korea

Dr. Han Seung-soo greeted the assembly and expressed gratitude to the President of GRIPS Mr. Akihiko Tanaka for hosting the event. He then paid tribute to Their Majesties' attendance, mentioning in particular His Majesty's steadfast support namely through his addresses to three UN Special Thematic Sessions on Water Disasters. In addition to the day's deliberations, the Symposium is also the occasion to launch the establishment of the United Nations Center for Regional Development at GRIPS, for which Dr. Han expresses particular appreciation to Mr. Liu Zhenmin's support, the Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs. Finally, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, ICOMOS Netherlands, is recognized for its proposal to create a special committee on water heritage. Dr. Han calls on the participants' support in this proposal, as water and culture, not only buildings and monuments but also in the form of historical texts, traditions and customs inform us on how to better rebuild relations with water, essential paths to addressing sustainable development. In conclusion, he mentions the upcoming 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit that will take place in Kumamoto, Japan, on 19-20th October 2020.

- Prof. Akihiko Tanaka, President of GRIPS

Prof. Tanaka delivered his greetings to participants and expressed his gratitude to participants. He proceeds to express heartfelt gratitude and honor to Their Majesties' presence at the Symposium, highlighting how His Majesty in particular is globally recognized for his dedication to water issues. He makes mention of the fact that water and disasters is a key subject of their studies at GRIPS, and that the day's Symposium is intended as their intellectual contribution to upcoming regional and global Summits as well as to the UN Water Action Decade. He challenges the assembly to "better think and commit ourselves to water."

- H.E. Mr. Nobuhide Minorikawa, State Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Government of Japan

Minister Minorikawa stressed the notion that we cannot grasp our history and probably our future without a clear understanding of the relations between water and people. He makes mention of the River Law of 1896 in Japan, that laid the foundations for the cooperative use of water and rules on consolation during droughts. He highlighted how such laws throughout the world to establish cooperative uses between neighboring countries are seminal to the world's water heritage. He also mentioned that it has long since striven to reduce disasters by applying homegrown ideas in Japan. In Tokyo, in Edo Era, the floodway of the Tone River was relocated into the Pacific Ocean, originally, flew into Tokyo bay. Moreover, Arakawa Diversion Channel, dams and retarding basins were developed in recent years. The Minister also reviewed the initiatives of his Ministry that aim to reduce the effects of natural disasters related to water, with Typhoon Hagibis the most recent one in mind. The continuous efforts in flood management have formed a certain culture in Japan's history and culture. And the lessons learned from the past form the basis for the relationship between culture and water.

- H.E. Mr. Shinichi Nakatani, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

Vice Minister started his speech introducing the close relationship between water and culture in the history of Japan, mentioning about the example of Mt. Fuji, UNESCO World Heritage, where people appreciate their life with the volcano and natural springs based on a tradition of beliefs and rituals called sangaku shinko, meaning "mountain creed". He also talked about Japanese active contribution to the preservation and restoration of the cultural heritages all over the world, including Angkor Watt in Cambodia. Vice Minister stressed the importance of learning from the history and prepare for water-related disasters. And he introduced the Japanese initiative, High School Students Summit on World Tsunami Awareness Day, which purpose is to create the opportunity for young generation to understand the history and measures to tackle with Tsunami.

- Prof. Toshiyuki Kono, President, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS); Professor, Kyushu University

ICOMOS is the only global NGO dedicated to protecting world heritage sites, and Prof. Kono highlighted the fact that when perusing through the World Heritage List, we can clearly identify the complex interplay and diverse relationships that exist between human beings and water. Though ancient civilizations have evolved in tandem with the ingenious water infrastructure they erected to harness water for agriculture and to supply their cities, water also played a role in facilitating trade and economic development, namely through rivers. Yet in recent times, Prof. Kono deplors that economic growth has come at the cost of traditional heritage. Hence, the timeliness of this meeting whereby, under the UNSDGs' guiding principles, we must continually revisit our relationship with water.

- Mr. Shinichi Kitaoka, President, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

Mr. Kitaoka stated that water is the most important foundation for achieving human security. He pays tribute to Dr. Nakamura, who recently tragically perished in Afghanistan and transmits his condolences. Dr. Nakamura devoted his life to improving irrigation systems in Afghanistan, by applying the wisdom of the Yamada Zeki, a traditional weir from Fukuoka Prefecture, which Japan built over 200 years ago. This effort, he reflected, exemplifies primitive, but practical, technologies that can effectively use local resources. He states that JICA is fully committed to assisting development work with partner countries on water issues, while staying mindful of how water can play a role in people's cultures.

(2) Keynote Speech and Presentation

- Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations

Mr. Liu Zhenmin, through Mr. Nicolas Franke, Sustainable Development Officer of DESA, delivered his apologies for the cancellation of his travel to the Symposium. He expresses special thanks to the Government of Japan for their leadership in water-related issues. In his keynote speech, he proceeds to highlight that water and culture are inseparable elements of human life. That it encompasses lifestyles, value systems, traditions and beliefs, and that given its vital role, water has always had cultural significance. While water lies at the core of sustainable development, climate change, pollution and the growing demand for water are even greater challenges posed to sustainable development. In addition, over 90 per cent of disasters in the world are water-related in terms of the number of people affected worldwide. In light of this, current progress is being made in many places, but, overall, action to meet the Goals is not yet advancing at the speed or scale required. If we continue on this path, he states, the world may face a 40 per cent shortfall in water availability by 2030. This would mean 1.8 billion people living with absolute water scarcity already by 2025. Recognizing the importance of advancing the global water agenda, the United Nations decided to convene the first UN Conference on Water since 1977. The conference will take place in New York, from 22 to 24th March 2023.

- H.E. Ms. Phoeurng Sackona, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, Cambodia

Minister Sackona, in her keynote address, presented the case of Angkor Park in Cambodia, as a foremost example of the link between culture and water management. She recounted how the ancient Khmer people were a traditional agricultural community, dependent on rice farming, with the rice paddies irrigated by an extensive and complex hydraulic system, including networks of canals and large reservoirs called 'baray'. This civilization which was founded and depended on water, had a period of great prosperity and established the Khmer Empire, from the 8th to 13th century, when many temples were built, including Angkor Wat and its extensive water network. The APSARA National Authority has been, since 2012, restoring the old reservoirs, and to this day the stability of the temples depends on

the groundwater levels. APSARA is taking preventive action to protect the temples by rehabilitating the Angkor water network, such as the temple moats and the reservoirs, and while this has prevented flooding in the park there are possible threats looming with regards to over-extraction of the groundwater by the downstream city of Siem Reap.

(3) Ceremony for the establishment of the Tokyo Satellite Office of the UNCRD hosted by GRIPS Dr. Han and Prof. Tanaka officially pronounce the establishment of the Tokyo Satellite Office of the UNCRD within the GRIPS building.

Break (14:30-14:50)

(4) High-level Panel Discussion

High-level Panel I: “Visiting Water Heritage of the World – seeking better relations between water and humanity-” (14:50-16:10)

Water heritage will be guiding posts for short cut towards better relations between water and humanity. Experts and researchers from the UN and international organizations, universities and institutions, and stakeholders will give series of presentation on water heritages. The visited heritages will include not only structures and monuments but archives, rituals and traditions. The presentation will be followed by Q&A and focused panel discussion on topics such as “water and indigenous beliefs” and “historical progress of water culture”. The session will help us learn how relations between water and the human being have deepened through history.

Moderator: Prof. Kenzo Hiroki, Professor, GRIPS; Coordinator, HELP

Speakers:

- Mr. Henk Ovink, Special Envoy for International Water Affairs, the Netherlands: “From Water Heritage to Achievement of SDGs- Through Dutch Perspectives”

Water entails more than merely engineering design in The Netherlands, according to Mr. Ovink, as it is also about cooperation and inclusion, which in essence means governance. He said that while the future is their reference to guide their interventions, the past provides them with the inspiration, not only from a cultural perspective, but also from an ecological one. So they learnt that engineering their rivers was not the best way forward and that they had to rethink their rivers to keep them alive. Hence, learning about the past is essential for their future, in terms both of water quantity and quality, all the more so in light of the pressures of climate change and intensifying demand and

competition. The Netherlands seeks to share its Delta coalition and alliance knowledge with the world, and calls on the world to join in the UN midterm review of the Water Action Decade in 2023.

- Ms. Nupur Prothi Khanna, Secretary-General, ICOMOS International Committee on Cultural Landscapes, India

Ms. Khanna reviewed some of the cultural heritage in Hinduism, where water has played a central role. Access to water is of particular importance as every practicing Hindu requires it for bathing, and as cremation occurs at the edge of rivers. If we do not understand why people choose certain locations for those rituals, we will never be able to manage it properly she says. After reviewing a few other symbols where water and nature are prevalent, she states that cultural heritage and development must be looked at together, not pitted against each other.

- Mr. Denis Rose, Gunditjmara Elder and Project Manager for the Budj Bim Sustainable Development Partnership, Australia

The Budj Bim is one of the world's oldest aquaculture systems in existence, where eels were once farmed, and made its entry on the world heritage list last year. In 2010, thanks to the restoration project that involved building a weir to close off the system and bring water to Konda Lake, the lake has not gone dry in 10 years, and people living around that lake have again a sustainable source of food. Some of the ancestral culture is still alive (ie: basket weaving and stone house constructions). Mr. Rose informed participants that due to water rules and legislation, they cannot further build to retain more water in the system, but hopes that in time, they will be able to restore wetlands and revive the aquaculture industry in a bid to reactivate the cultural features of their country.

- Prof. Gretchen Kalonji, Dean, Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction, Sichuan University, China

Prof. Kalonji presented the example of Dujiangyan in China, an area that was historically hampered by perennial floods, a problem that was solved by Li Bing, who designed and built movable weirs to redirect water between channels. In addition to solving floods, this technology also had a significant impact on irrigation, which in turn provided people with time to relax and enjoy life. As a result, she says, poetry and the arts flourished, a legacy that continues to this day. In addition, Dujiangyan also played a role in the historical reconciliation of China. These lessons are a lasting legacy as to how the past can help build the future according to her.

- Prof. Aaron Wolf, Professor, Department of Geosciences, Oregon State University, the U.S.A.

Prof. Wolf recounted how, with his team, they have built a database on water and conflict, constituted of 310 transboundary water basins. While there are undeniably tension hotspots on various water basins, namely in Central Asia and the Middle East, from the 1800 times countries had an interaction with each other over water, two-thirds of the time these interactions were for cooperation. In effect,

conflict over water has occurred only once in history, some 4500 years ago! While we used to be taught in rationale dialogue for the resolution of water conflicts, we now know that the rational approach is not the foundation of conflict resolution. The world's principal faiths and indigenous cultures inform us that the dialogue among people has to address the four needs and claims, namely the: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. This is how energy between us starts to flow between us, and where we then meet and negotiate at higher levels of our shared spirituality. Prof. Wolf states that we need to bring tools that do not exist in the West (i.e.: 'listen in our heart, not in our ears', Khalil Gibran) to teach us about how we approach dialogue, treating waters and treating each other.

- Prof. Toshio Koike, Director, International Center for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM), Japan

Prof. Koike informed participants that water-related disasters have been increasing, more than three-fold since 1980. Almost half of the events have occurred in low middle-income countries. Having studied actions by individuals to prevent and mitigate disasters, he says there is a 'last-mile challenge' whereby: 1) there is a gap between knowledge and behavior, 2) irrational actions are driven by cognitive biases, and 3) people's memories tend to fade away gradually. Furthermore, every decision we make he says relies on: 1) instinct and emotion, which is more dominant and faster, but more easily influenced, and 2) the rationale, which is more deliberative but slower. The irrational behavior can be nudged, using namely virtual reality for training. On the other hand, our consciousness is controlled by interactions between what the Buddhist doctrine calls manas-vijnana and alaya-vijnana. So we need to take a cultural approach to solve problems, make the most of the convening power to build resilient societies, and to foster a culture of disaster resilience with time. The aim being that we develop a civilization of disaster resilience, which he defines as: a process through which a region or society outstretches an advanced stage of human development and organization.

- Dr. Sergio Ribeiro, Director-General, International Centre on Water and Transdisciplinarity (CIRAT), Brazil

Mr. Ribeiro shared the worldviews on protecting water from some of the ancient civilizations of South America, namely: water judges in Northern Peru, the Lauaretê waterfall in Brazil, the Buen Vivir philosophy of the Andes communities, and the rain prophets of Northern Brazil. He stated that we ought to recognize the enormous contribution of the worldviews represented by the tangible and intangible heritage that different cultures have left us, as a key to think about the present and the future, and a fundamental approach for the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To conclude this portion of the program, Dr. Hiroki invited Mr. Howard Bamsey, Chair, Global Water

Partnership (GWP), to deliver his comments on the previous presentations. Mr. Howard highlighted how water is both worshipped and engineered, and that hence there is interdependence between culture and the daily uses of water. Culture and practice co-exist side-by-side. This has an incidence for IWRM at GWP, where IWRM is about ensuring that when the water issue is being dealt with, the full relevant context of that issue are integrated into the approach to find a solution. In terms of people, IWRM is very inclusive and he observed that we heard during these presentation examples of how culture drives inclusiveness. He vows that they would try to ensure in implementing IWRM, that inclusiveness of culture becomes part of the solutions proposed. For solutions to be durable, they must build on people’s specific cultures. So just as the water community has tried to bring the water and climate change communities closer together, so we can help bring water and cultural communities together – to produce more durable solutions. It is not easy, but not immutable in his opinion. And we ought to try to do so more deliberately, to challenge our culture in the water community so as to integrate cultural heritage, as there is a daily practical benefit to be gained.

High-level Panel Discussion II: “Water and Culture – Thinking Sustainable Regional Development through Water Heritage-” (16:15-17:30)

Water nurtures unique and diverse culture of a society that becomes solid foundation of sustainable development of regions. Innovative paths for regional development can be found by looking at people’s lives and livelihood through water lens.

Leading experts on water and culture will present cases of rich water culture and their impact on regional society and economy. Good practices and lessons on water-related regional development will be shared from both historical and modern cases. The panelists will discuss how the issue of water and culture can contribute to advancement of global agenda such as 2030 Agenda, Paris Agreement, and Sendai Framework for Action.

Moderator: Mr. Henk van Schaik, ICOMOS Netherlands Water and Heritage Ambassador

Mr. van Schaik introduced the subject of this second panel by stating that the significance that water-related heritage can have in terms of opportunities for the future. While culture is included in the concept of IWRM there remains a divide between water and cultural heritage. He recounts how in 2012, Sir Dierdrik realized necessity to move water management from one a protection-oriented approach to one that is more development-oriented. The interest in a more fervent dialogue between the water and cultural communities is progressing. A panel at a UNESCO meeting last year called for the water culture heritage dialogue to be continued. The subject of this panel is to continue to explore the link between the spiritual, conceptual dimensions and the materials ones and how to rebuild those connections.

Speakers:

- Prof. Carola M. Hein, Head, History of Architecture and Urban Planning, TU Delft, the Netherlands

Prof. Hein's talk centered on historical urban landscapes, and the connection between water and culture. She reminded the audience that over centuries, people have developed and carefully refined spaces and cultures in relation to water, with entire cities and landscapes have been built through and around water. Historically, knowledge of nature has helped humans survive over thousands of years and has created artifacts that have sustained societies around the world. According to her, the complex and diverse systems of the past are necessarily the framework for preservation and reuse today as well as for new systems. The definition of heritage is 'from unique to everywhere', it surrounds us, and it is what we choose to continue. We cannot preserve water in one site, because water flows, so it we need to think of it as a network. Need to find ways of reigniting values of buildings that are no longer of use. This is an opportunity for co-creation among different cultures and different people based on our water heritage. Space, culture and society have been thought of independently, but now things are moving back to a more united view of these three. And communities' water heritage has to be seen as a living history. She proposes that the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscapes approach be combined with the SDGs to give more attention to culture in water planning.

- Dr. Jerome Deli Priscoli, Chair Technical Committee, Global Water Partnership

Dr. Priscoli delivered a presentation on water resources and the roots of civic culture from the perspective of U.S. Experiences. He poses the question "can political/civic cultures of authoritarian, or centralized or highly regulated administrative systems support water policies that produce development, poverty reduction, and civic cultures of public access data, transparency and freedom?" His analysis leads him to posit that as civic values change, water management policies respond, and those policies in turn impact civic culture. So for instance, policies have moved from fear of floods in the 19th century, to control, to prevention, to management and, now, to working with the floods and integrating structural and non-structural approaches. In all this, changing behavior is critical and this behavior is predicated on new institutional forms of federal, state, local and private collaboration. Civic values are changing today as there is a movement to active acceptance of risk and responsibility vs. passive paternalism of accepting what experts decide. Our civic culture and civic infrastructure come together in flood management as important learning ground for building new understandings of democratic civic culture. As to his initial question, he concludes by saying that answers will be revealed in our changing synthesis of civic culture and water management imperatives. Success depends very much on flexibility.

- Ms. Hasti Tarekat Dipowijoyo, Founder, Heritage Hands On

Ms. Dipowijoyo reviewed some traditional techniques of water management in Indonesia, namely: terracing for agriculture in Bali, techniques for collecting rainwater in basins and cisterns and tunnels in Western Sumatra, underground drainage in Southern Java, and techniques for extracting humidity from the air. She said that government agencies and civil society must foster this local wisdom through practice, documentation and dissemination – fitting the new development policies and programs within the local wisdom.

- Mr. Jonathan Bill Doe, Researcher, Brandenburg University of Technology, Germany

Mr. Doe posed the question of how African traditional knowledge on water management can be integrated to the international discourse. He raised the concern of how scientific and cultural knowledge are often in conflict with regards to water management. He posited that Western scientists and traditional practitioners should see there is a common reverence for water and negotiate on boundaries together, and proposes that governments should declare ‘exclusive traditional zones.’

- Mr. Karim Nawaz, Advisor, Metameta/Pakistan Spate Irrigation Network

Floods in Pakistan are considered a curse and a blessing, and as such they are trying to divert floods without spending any energy. Spate irrigation is an ancient practice by which flash flood water /run off is diverted from its riverbed (dry river) by gravity onto farmland, by constructing diversion spurs/bund across the river on a temporary basis. Hence, spate irrigation is converting disasters into a blessing. Mr. Nawaz would like to see the Bhag Nari system in Balochistan, the largest spate irrigation system in the world, declared and preserved as a world heritage site. These traditional systems are useful even in times of climate change he said.

- Ms. Li An PHOA – Drinkable Rivers

Ms. Phoa’s idea of creating a movement on drinkable rivers came in 2005 in Canada. When she first canoed one of the rivers in Northern Canada, she could drink the water from the river, but three years later that river water was no longer safe to drink. She set up her Drinkable Rivers organization to engage government officials and people of all walks of life and ages. The organization brings people to walk along rivers as she believes that once people experience their river, they will love her and take care of her. She believes that drinkable rivers could be used as an indicator, a compass, of sustainable living as it means that the watershed, and all natural life in it, is healthy and in balance. And that all our actions contribute to this. Through the Drinkable Rivers Foundation she has expanded the citizen science research on water quality, where people monitor their own rivers. Last October, with the collaboration of 30 other organizations, they mobilized more than 1000 people to monitor their rivers’ water quality, resulting in more than 38 rivers monitored in 14 countries. They will continue to grow this to other rivers in the world. They have also initiated the ‘Mayors for a Drinkable Meuse’ initiative

with three mayors from three countries' collaboration signing a statement acknowledging the river is their lifeline.

In closing remarks, Mr. van Schaik remarks that there are fundamental complexities in connecting cultural heritage with water, and that it will take time and commitment. He informed participants that there will be a statement prepared and circulated to all participants, asking each one to make their own commitment to this effort.

Ms. Phoa then invited the audience to share with someone next to them an anecdote about each one's own 'river family.'

Post-panel discussion

Mr. Maarten Ouboter of Waternet (regional public water authority Amsterdam region) said the Symposium was enlightening for him and that he now sees how water managers and technicians should connect more with the soul of their rivers.

Mr. Ovink provided three thoughts meant to help with the statement that will be prepared, with regards to water and culture: 1) it is important to have concrete ideas on how to connect both the formal and the informal realms of water management, 2) the midterm review of the Water Action Decade in 2023 is a formal process coming up – can we bring this cultural heritage component into it? 3) today was rich in many stories of aspiration and inspiration, and he invites participants to submit their stories to the World Water Atlas.

Ms Hein observed that education is critical to all this, so universities need to bring students into this conversation of culture society and water heritage to multiply what we have here.

(5) Closing (17:30-17:40)

Closing remarks: Sir Diederik Six, Former President, ICOMOS Netherlands

Sir Six in closing stated that at ICOMOS there is a strong belief that we need to understand the relevance of our heritage roots for the future. We need to understand our cultural roots to build on a sustainable future. Water as carrier of life is essential in that. He underscored the fact that in his lifetime, more people were born than all those born since the start of humanity. Hence, living in harmony with nature is a very large challenge today. Let us start with respect for nature, which has made culture possible, he says. Let us stop polluting. Is our glass half-full or half-empty? If we look carefully, we can have a full glass, in his opinion. To create better understanding, they have designed the water and heritage awareness.. shield - red for the alarming situation of our heritage and culture, blue for the rising waters and climate change, white for the wisdom we need. An interdisciplinary approach will bridge expertise. Working together should be the aim to help connect and solve

problems, and to celebrate harmony of nature. He said they are very honored that this Symposium is carrying forward what ICOMOS had started.

Wrap-up by Chair

Dr. Han returned and expressed again his gratitude to Their Majesties for their attendance, especially extending their stay through much of the afternoon. It is a sure testament to how they are personally interested in the subject of water. The water community is deeply grateful to their unwavering interest and dedication, both of which are critical to advancing the agenda forward globally. Dr. Han again thanked GRIPS for welcoming UNCRD on their premises, and extended his recognition to the Minister of Cambodia, as well as to the speakers, participants and the press. He informed participants that the Chair's message will be shared in due course, and officially declares the Symposium concluded.

Rapporteur: Marisha Wojciechowska-Shibuya