

The Law of Transboundary Aquifers

Introduction of draft resolution A/C.6/68/L.25

Mr. Rikiya Takahashi

Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Bureau, draft resolution A/C.6/68/L.25, entitled “The law of transboundary Aquifers”.

Through the discussions in the plenary and subsequent informal meetings, consensus eventually emerged for a draft resolution commending to the attention of governments the draft articles on the law of transboundary aquifers, taken note by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/124, as guidance for bilateral or regional agreements and arrangements for the proper management of transboundary aquifers and further continuing to discuss the issue of transboundary aquifers in the seventy-first session.

In addition to the two informal sessions, a series of negotiations took place bilaterally and in a small group setting. During the course of the informal discussions, several versions of a draft resolution were developed, and circulated to delegations. The text has now been issued as document A/C.6/68/L.25. I will briefly go through each paragraph of the draft resolution for the benefit of delegations.

The first preambular paragraph recalls the previous resolutions 63/124 and 66/104. The second preambular paragraph notes the major importance of the subject of the law of transboundary aquifers in the relations of States and the need for reasonable and proper management of transboundary aquifers, and the third preambular paragraph, which is new, takes notes that the provisions of the draft articles

have been taken into account in relevant instruments such as the Guarani Aquifer Agreement signed among Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay in 2010, and Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters adopted by the Meeting of the Parties of the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes in 2012. The preambular paragraph four, as the previous resolutions did, emphasizes the continuing importance of the codification and progressive development of international law. In the fifth preambular paragraph, the comments and observations of Governments, including those expressed in the debates in the Sixth Committee at the sixty-third, sixty-six and sixty-eighth sessions on this topic are taken note.

Mr. Chairman,

The draft resolution contains three operative paragraphs. In the first operative paragraph, which was amended from the previous resolution to reflect the discussions taken place in this session, the General Assembly commends to the attention of the Governments the draft articles as guidance for bilateral or regional agreements and arrangements. The second operative paragraph adopts almost the same language and formulation as previous resolutions, encouraging the International Hydrological Programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to continue to offer its assistance to the states concerned. Finally, in the third operative paragraph, the General Assembly decides to include the agenda item in the provisional agenda of its seventy-first session and continue to discuss this topic further.

Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding my statement, please allow me to express my sincere appreciation to all the delegations, who worked tirelessly and patiently, for their comments, suggestions, advice and encouragements that have been extended to the Coordinator. The negotiation process was not an easy

one, but the undaunted spirit of solidarity of the Sixth Committee experts brought about this draft resolution. My thanks is also extended to the officers in the Codification Division of the Secretariat for their precise work and kind assistance.

With this, I conclude my introduction of draft resolution A/C.6/68/L.25, which I commend to the Sixth Committee for adoption by consensus.

I thank you.