

UN OPENS OFFICE IN SPAIN TO SUPPORT THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION "WATER FOR LIFE" 2005-2015



A United Nations office to support the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015 opened in Zaragoza, Spain, on 5 October 2007. The office will be managed by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and will facilitate the coordinated implementation of UN-Water's work on water and sanitation, especially in the areas of communication and advocacy to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities to solve global water and sanitation issues.

The opening ceremony was attended by representatives of the host government, including the Minister of Environment of Spain, the President of the State of Aragon and the Mayor of Zaragoza. Aslam Chaudhry, representing UN DESA, pointed out that the new office represented an important partnership between the United Nations and the Kingdom of Spain in advancing the implementation of the global water and sanitation agenda. On behalf of UN-Water (an inter-agency mechanism for follow-up of the water-related decisions reached at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Development Goals), Stephen Donkor highlighted how the new office - together with two UN-Water offices, one in Bonn on capacity building and the other one in Perugia on monitoring - will help address the water and sanitation challenges faced by the global community.

The new office will contribute to meeting the "Water for Life" Decade's goals by promoting greater interaction between governments, UN agencies and non-UN partners to deliver a coordinated response; mobilizing resources, partners and other stakeholders; promoting and encouraging partnerships at all levels; and ensuring coherence between the implementation of the water and sanitation agenda and other development goals.

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