

7th World Water Forum
17 April 2015 – Daegu

CLOSING CEREMONY



Speech of Mr. Benedito Braga
President of the World Water Council

Check Against Delivery

Your Excellency the Governor of Gyeongbuk-do KIM, Kwan-yong
Your Excellency the Mayor of Daegu KWON, Young-jin
Your Excellency the Mayor of Gyeongju, CHOI Yang-Sik
Dear Co-Chair of the National Committee dear friend
Jung Moo LEE
Dear Co-Chair of the ISC dear friend Soontak LEE
Distinguished Delegates
Members of the World Water Council
Ladies and gentlemen

Thank you all for your energy and commitment over the last six days. Your contribution has been instrumental in ensuring that the 7th World Water Forum has been the most successful ever.

Over this week we have hosted participants from 168 countries, including 9 heads of state, 80 ministers of state from 75 nations, 71 parliamentarians and 32 mayors from 27 countries, and around 37,000 visitors to sessions and exhibitions. All of these participants have engaged in dialogue and debate in over 500 program events in total. Against any yardstick this is a very successful forum. Thank you.

As President of the World Water Council it is an honor for me to be closing this 7th edition of the World Water Forum. Perhaps my only regret is that I have not been able to attend as many sessions as I would have liked to...

I deeply appreciated the strong involvement of the government of the Republic of Korea in the 7th Forum. However the real flavor of the Forum comes from deep involvement of the cities of Daegu and Gyeongju and the province of Gyeongbuk. Thank you, Mayor Kwon, thank you Mayor Choi, thank you, Governor Kim.

There are many individuals who have contributed to the success of this Forum. In particular, I would like to thank our dear Chairman of the National Committee and good friend, Jung Moo Lee, and my dear old friend, Soontak Lee, co-chair of the International Steering Committee for their dedication and commitment.

I would also like to thank our members of Korea and of the World Water Council, who were the anchor and the hallmark of this event. And not least, I would like to thank on behalf of all of us here, those who were neither in the program book nor in the pavilions, the hundreds of volunteers who were always there helping us in all kinds of situations.

But mostly, what has made this Forum special is the renewal of old friendships, and the pride and passion of the debate.

We came together to put water at the heart of our future.

First, the 7th Forum has again demonstrated that it is the place where world leaders in the water community come to mobilize political action.

This week the Ministerial Conference identified implementation roadmaps as a reference for establishing implementation for water-related goals in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Local and regional authorities committed to scaling up progress in integrated urban water management; and Parliamentarians called on governments to promote socio-economic

development with due consideration of the environment. At all levels in the political engagement there were consistent and strong calls for action and implementation.

The pledges made during the 7th Forum will be carried to New York as a major contribution to the adoption of a Sustainable Development Goal on water.

In addition, China, Japan, and Korea have signed a trilateral agreement on water policy innovation; and the United States and Mexico have reached an historic agreement on the Colorado River.

Second, the global water community has come together to make a commitment to carry forward an agenda for action that will send a clear signal to the world: we know what needs to be done, and we are getting on with the job. I am delighted to announce that the World Water Council, in partnership with Korean and Brazilian stakeholders, will carry forward this ambitious agenda. We look forward to working with all the thematic champions to implement the Daegu-Gyeongbuk Implementation Consensus.

Finally, the 7th Forum once again has proven to be the place where the water community comes together to trigger action at all levels. For the World Water Council this has reinforced the importance of our agenda with OECD on water financing, and opened further opportunity to strengthen relationships with the energy community. I am aware of many other agreements reached between organizations this week – we are working together across boundaries more and more.

Yesterday, to prepare this speech, I went to the World Water Council's pavilion to see our wall filled with wishes. All the participants of this Forum could make a wish for the sake of water. Over the week more than a thousand wishes were made. While wishes called water as being love or as something to be shared, many of those wishes defined water as an uphill battle, a battle for a better future.

These past years gave us the opportunity to discover the Korean culture and to appreciate the pro-activity of its people. I truly believe that Korea can be proud of what it has accomplished by reaching people at home and abroad, and by sharing a message of faith for water. Your commitment to the cause has clearly made us believe that there is hope for an increasing involvement of peoples from all horizons, sectors and cultures.

This Forum gave us the chance to meet generous people that we will never forget.

To conclude, I would like to share with you a Korean proverb, which I believe perfectly fits our cause:

피는 물보다 진하다
« Pi-nin mul bú / thats na dá »

Litterarly meaning: "Blood is thicker than water", or "All friendships come second to family."

We have established strong friendships during this Forum. So strong that we now have become a family. The family of water.

Ladies and gentlemen,

No success is possible without unity. Let us continue to work together towards WATER FOR OUR FUTURE.

Thank you