

TRIPOLI III STATEMENT (25- 27th Tripoli May 2008)

Participants of the Tripoli III Conference

More than 150 participants from more than 20 countries and national, regional and international organizations and Associations attended the International Conference on **“Third International Conference on managing shared aquifer resources in Africa”** Tripoli, 25-27 of May 2008, and formulated the following Conference Statement

We the participants,

Thanking the authorities of the Great Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in arranging the series of African “Tripoli Meetings”¹ which have led to better understanding and strengthened networks, and in hosting the Regional Centre on Shared Aquifer Resource Management for Africa,

Considering the challenges of the UN MDG’s, and with concern that they may not be met in Africa by 2015,

We the participants of the “Tripoli III” conference, addressing the topic of shared aquifer resources of Africa,

Having recognised the strategic nature of groundwater in Africa, and

Having reviewed the significant achievements since “Tripoli I 1999”, through the identification of 38 continent wide, shared aquifer systems,

Responding to the African Union and AMCOW priorities,

Being aware of the important role of the regional, subregional, and non governmental organisations contributions to the implementation of developmental policies, for the sound and sustainable development of groundwater,

Noting that sustainable use of groundwater could contribute significantly towards achieving water security for poverty alleviation, as well as mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change & its variability across the Continent,

Taking note of the need for regulatory instruments and appropriate financial mechanisms for sustainable use which support investment in infrastructure for shared aquifer management,

We, the participants,

Welcome the establishment of the African Groundwater Commission by AMCOW,

¹ **Tripoli I** Conference, held in 20 – 24th November 1999, on the management of regional aquifer systems in arid zones, followed by **Tripoli II** on managing *shared resources* in Africa: International Workshop, from 2nd to 4th June 2002

Welcome the opportunity provided by the First African Water Week and World Water Week in Stockholm to contribute to the debate on the shared aquifer management in Africa,

Support the Regional UNESCO – Category II Centre, hosted by the General Water Authority of Libya,

Take note of the text, and the need for action, on the Draft Articles on the Law on the Use of Transboundary Aquifers prepared by the UN International Law Commission,

Considering the above, we have formulated the following *“Message from Tripoli III”*

We call for further actions that encourage the joint, sustainable management of aquifers shared by countries in Africa, and,

Call on national governments to facilitate transboundary aquifer management through appropriate regulatory and administrative arrangements at domestic level

Call on bilateral, multilateral financial institutions to reinforce their long term support to Countries and regional organisations in their development of groundwater for their national economic development, including providing the necessary funds for resource exploration, evaluation and sound data collection to fill in data gaps leading to knowledge based sound management practices

Call on governments to enhance & provide sustainable integrated shared surface and ground water resource management in view of maximising benefits to people and ecosystems

Call for partnerships with industry, especially the mineral development, oil & gas sectors, to participate in identification and use of productive aquifers that could contribute to poverty alleviation, human development and environmental sustainability

Call upon UNESCO (ISARM-Africa) and GEF International Waters to continue and reinforce their programme, and deploy a long term effort in support of the sustainable management of shared aquifer resources of Africa

We commend this Statement for the attention of AU, AMCOW and their constituent bodies for consideration and pursuit as appropriate, and,

We address the Tripoli III Statement for the attention of the political process of the 5th World Water Forum.

Tripoli May 2008