WATER FOR ROJAVA

30 November, 2021

A REPORT FROM THE

INTERNATIONAL WATER FORUM

HELD IN HASAKAH, NORTH AND EAST SYRIA

27-28 September 2021

CONTENT

1. The Forum and its Goals **2**

2. The Forum Program **3**

3. The Forum Findings and Recommendations **4**

4. Suggestions for follow-up **7**

Annex A: Links to video recordings and press reports from the forum **11**

Annex B: Extracts from the NES Forum's North East Syria Triple Water Crisis - Response Plan **12**

Annex C Extracts from the OCHA Report (9 Sep 2021) **13**

Annex D: A template for an advocacy letter **16**

Selected Presentations Made in the Forum **18**

Water for Rojava: Input in the Water Forum **18**

Save the Tigris: The role of international organizations in the protection of international conventions on water in NES **20**

Ercan Ayboga: Turkey‘s water policy in North-Kurdistan and its downstream impacts in Mesopotamia **24**

Nick Hildyard: Water as a vehicle for peace rather than violence: The struggle for water democracy **29**

Tony Rublon: Turkey's use of international rivers as a political leverage to impose its hegemony in the region **33**

Mahmoud Patel: The practices of Turkey to create water crisis in the region: The breach of International Law and the weaponization of water in North East Syria (Rojava) **40**

د. سليمان إلياس نهري : حول راق والع سوريا من وكل ا تركي بني املوقعة الثنائية واالتفاقيات املعاهدات الفرات و دجلة مياه **45**

Note

This report was prepared by the Water for Rojava Team for sharing information about the forum with all interested. The text was mainly written by Marko Ulvila from the Siemenpuu Foundation and Toon Bijnens from the Save the Tigris who participated in the forum. Also Nick Hilyard, Lucia T. and Jo T. contributed to this report.

More info on Water for Rojava: https://mesopotamia.coop/water-for-rojava/

1. The Forum and its Goals

The International Water Forum in North and East Syria was organized by the Local Administration and Environment Authority in the Al-Jazira region, with the participation of Rojava University and the Al Furat Center for Studies on 27-28/9/2021 in Hasakah, NES.

More than 300 representatives of civil society and international humanitarian organizations operating in North and East Syria, human rights organizations and platforms concerned with the environment, and the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria took part.

The forum focused on the currently worsening water situation in North and East Syria and the conditions arising from the scarcity of water sources. The organisers wanted to share information and find proposals that contribute to resolving the crisis and reducing the occurrence of humanitarian disasters.

The forum was held over two consecutive days with five main sessions, focusing on international agreements and conventions on international rivers and waterways, political dimensions of the water crisis in the region, the economic dimension of the water crisis, environmental impacts of the water crisis, and imminent disasters as a result of the deterioration of water security.

The organisers came out with a set of results and recommendations, in addition to forming a committee to follow up on the results and recommendations with all political and concerned parties from international and local organizations, civil society institutions, and the Autonomous Administration.

In the words of the organisers, the goals of the Forum were the following:

- To highlight the effects of international charters, laws and agreements on water, and to draw attention to the regional politics and the war of monopolizing water resources and exploiting them in political and economic disputes.
- To present and discuss the risks and challenges related to the issue of water security, to achieve security and sustainable development of water.
- To outline the economic, social and environmental implications resulting from the unjust practices of Turkey’s powers to control water resources in the region, aiming at the creation of water crises.
- To bring forth solutions and strategies for water problems in NES, attract investments, exchange experiences and attract international organizations and forces for cooperation to confront challenges in the water sector.

2. The Forum Program

Day 1

10:00-11:15	Speeches of guests of honor
	- Suleiman Arab, co-chair of the Local Administration and Environment Authority
	- Berivan Khaled and Abdel Hamid Al-Mahbash, co-chairmanship of the Executive Council in the AANES
	- Amina Omar, co-chair of the Syrian Democratic Council
	- Bernard Koushner, Former minister for foreign affairs of France
11:30-13:00	International conventions and charters on international rivers
	and waterways: 4 presentations
14:30-16:00	The political dimensions of the water crisis in the region:
	4 presentations
16:30-18:00	The economic dimension of the water crisis: 4 presentations

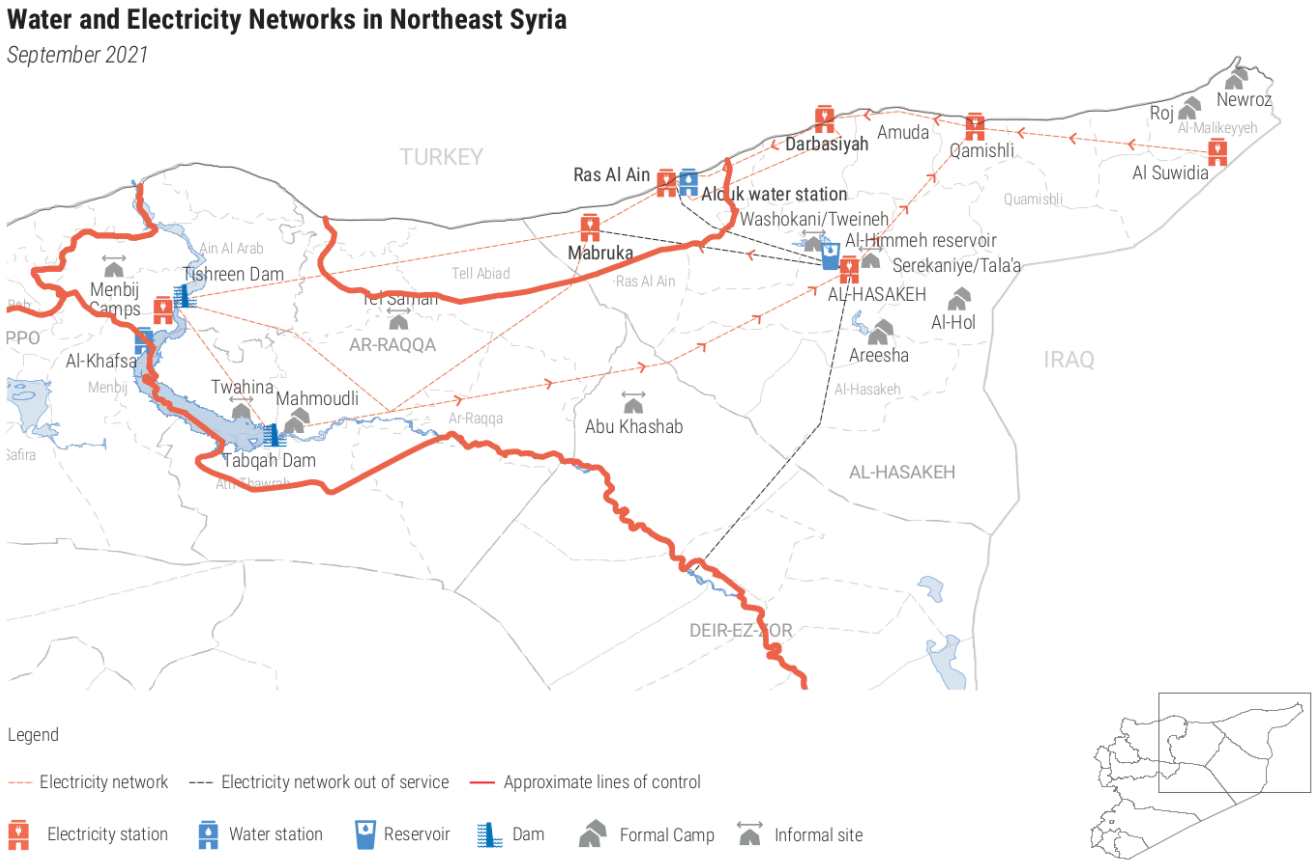
Day 2

10:00-11:30	Environmental impacts of the water crisis: video and
	3 presentations
12:00-13:30	Imminent disasters as a result of the deterioration of water
	security: 4 presentations
15:00-16:00	Suggestions, discussions and interventions
16:30-18:00	Results and recommendations

The Forum was very timely and highly relevant because of the triple water crisis that has been escalating since May this year. The event presented very clearly the acute need for multiple actions to reverse the critical situation, both short term and longer ones.

The event was very well organized. Simultaneous interpretation was provided in Kurdish, Arabic and English. Covid measures were in place and the chosen venue worked out very well. The event was webcasted live, and several presentations were made by video recordings because of difficulties in travelling

The Forum was well attended, despite limited information on the programme or venue beforehand. International participation included journalists, INGOs operating in NES and notably a high-level French delegation. Additionally, there was a sizable media presence. The opening addresses by senior politicians gave the event visibility and weight.



Map source: OCHA 2021.

3. The Forum Findings and Recommendations

The forum concluded with twenty findings and recommendations articulated by the organizing committee at the closing session. They constitute the following:

1. Denounce the policies of the Turkish state in diverting water into a political weapon against the civilian population in North and East Syria, the whole of the Syrian state and Iraq.

2. Submit a general and comprehensive report, on behalf of the Forum and all its participants, on all violations of the Turkish state's laws and charters governing international waters to the bodies and organizations of the United Nations, the European Union, and international human rights and human rights organizations.

3. Call on the international community to pressure the Turkish state to reverse its policy and breach the laws governing common international waters.

4. File a lawsuit against Turkey for violating public international law, international norms and bilateral and tripartite agreements to which it was previously committed with regard to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and its use of water as a weapon of war, in violation of the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

5. Share the results of this forum with the concerned civil society organizations and civil society in Syria, Iraq and Turkey.

6. Call on the international community to immediately intervene and assume its humanitarian duty in the region, with regard to the effects of water cuts and scarcity and their impact on communities and refugee camps. Regarding refugees and their camps.

7. Document all lectures and research that were discussed in the forum, and formulate them to prepare a water map for optimal investment.

8. Call on the Autonomous Administration to solve water problems through dialogue and cooperation with the concerned authorities, such as Iraq, Syria, and international organizations and forces, as it is a humanitarian issue.

9. Contribute to projects that support water sources, secure sustainable sources for them, build small and medium dams on small rivers, build water desalination centers, and bring river water to areas that suffer from water deficits.

10. Cooperate with humanitarian and human rights organizations in obtaining material and moral support to confront the repercussions and dangers of the water crisis in the region.

11. Call on the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria to draw up long-term strategies and policies based on, and benefit from research and studies issued by research centers to avoid the effects of the water crisis in the region, and to confront the negative repercussions and environmental disasters of water scarcity.

12. Develop serious and binding programs for rationalization and raising awareness in the various uses of water jointly by the Autonomous Administration and research centers.

13. Call on the Autonomous Administration to establish study centers specialized in water security.

14. Construction of sewage treatment plants.

15. Use alternative energy methods (wind and solar).

16. The possibility of benefiting from the Tigris River and drawing its waters to areas that suffer from a water deficit.

17. Focus on the need to maintain the cleanliness of running water and its follow-up by the local administration bodies in the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, and to develop programs and policies that rationalize and deter individuals, groups, companies and institutions that do not adhere to hygiene standards in and near river basins, and for groundwater as well.

18. Work to establish a comprehensive and in-depth study of human and economic resources and water resources in the region, and employ them for the requirements of development in its various directions, especially those related to water, its sources and methods of management. And submit a general and comprehensive report from this forum on the possible solutions and proposals put forward by the lecturers to preserve the existing water sources, secure new sources for them, and submit them to the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria to work on following up and studying them, implementing what is possible from them, and following them up by the Follow-up Committee.

19. Form a follow-up committee emanating from the Forum to follow up on the implementation of recommendations and proposals.

20. Call on the Autonomous Administration to form a diplomatic committee specialized in water affairs.

Source:
https://www.hawarnews.com/en/haber/international-water-forum-concludes-with-a-set-of-recommendations-h26949.html

Note: Other recent recommendations by water related reports of the NES NGO Forum and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs are in the annex.

4. Suggestions for follow-up

Based on the Water Forum recommendations, proposals below by the Water for Rojava team could be considered for follow-up and further actions.

1. *Submit a report on violations of the Turkish state ... to United Nations, the European Union, and international human rights and human rights organizations*

   The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, Mr. Pedro Arrojo-Agudo <srwatsan@ohchr.org> would be one good body where the violations could be reported:

   https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/WaterAndSanitation/SRWater/Pages/SRWaterIndex.aspx

   instruction for a submission: https://spsubmission.ohchr.org/

2. *Call on the international community to pressure the Turkish state to reverse its policy and breach the laws governing common international waters*

   Attached is a template letter for a simple advocacy message. The template text touches also on the recommendation 6 calling for additional humanitarian assistance. It can be signed by an international coalition of organizations on the water crisis in NES and widely circulated.

   Also international sign-on platforms such as Awaz, Some of Us and WeMove could be mobilized for international citizens' advocacy.

3. *Using alternative energy methods (wind and solar)*

   Recent paper by A Al Jamil and G I Sidorenko demonstrates that wider use of renewable energy sources (primarily solar and wind) can solve energy problems in Syria. The growing role of renewable energy in Syria should lead to greater stability and efficiency of energy supply. Such changes will have a positive impact on the environment and help economic development of the region. Syria is a promising region for the development of solar and wind energy.

   Source: https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1742-6596/1614/1/012023/pdf

   Similarly, Vladimír Krepl et al emphasize the importance of the adoption of renewable energy solutions in the reconstruction of Syrian electricity sector, since these can help promote ecologically sustainable production (reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting the environment, increasing energy efficiency, creating jobs, etc.) and securing the electric supply of Syria while enhancing its stability.

Source: https://www.mdpi.com/1996-1073/13/23/6326/pdf

There is a fascinating article from Idlib, but might not be politically correct here: https://heatingnewsjournal.com/syrias-surprising-solar-boom-sunlight-powers-the-night-in-rebel-idlib/

4. *Propose alternatives to dam construction*

   Construction of additional dams in NES was proposed on a number of occasions as a solution to the water crisis. Such large infrastructure would only further degrade the environment. Large quantities of water would be lost due to evaporation in dam reservoirs while they would cause further water scarcity downstream in Iraq.

   Instead, alternatives should be proposed to store water such as ponds, rainwater harvesting and traditional water harvesting methods. Research, revival and evolving of traditional, low-tech water harvesting methods like underground aqueducts/ qanats, cisterns and rainwater infiltration basins make use of natural springs and foster infiltration of rainwater during the rainy season in winter and refill the natural aquifers. These methods are ideal to be combined with collective democratic management. Research could e.g. be done in collaboration with local Jineolojî researchers. Successes in Indian villages including water parliament might serve as an inspiration.

   As for energy, solar and wind are feasible alternatives to hydropower, which is not a sustainable solution for climate adaptation. Small hydroelectric power plants (without dams and artificial lakes) on smaller rivers could also be worth evaluating. They could also serve remote regions without connection to the central grid. But an environmental assessment on potential negative impacts and remediation measures should be conducted.

5. *Expand the participation to include, beyond the Self-Administration and academics, also local civil society, CSOs and local NGOs.*

   The International Water Forum contained a good participation of local officials and policymakers, academics and INGOs. Local NGOs, CSOs and activists were not visibly present. To build a strong coalition representing local communities, it is vital to include civil society groups from NES.

6. *Build relationships and partnerships with neighbours*

   It would be beneficial to invest in the relationship with the Iraqi neighbour, located at the downstream end with whom the Euphrates is shared. Communities in Iraq have equally suffered from decreased flows upstream and have been mobilizing against

Ilisu and other upstream dams for more than a decade. NES should build relations with their Iraqi neighbours. In this regard bilateral meetings between NES and Iraq, including academics and civil society, could be organized to discuss joint actions.

7. *Advocate with international platforms about the water crisis in NES*

   Despite logistical difficulties, Syrian voices and civil society groups, beyond officials of the Self-Administration, should be present in international platforms to inform the international community about the water crisis in NES. Such platforms could include the World Water Forum and the Mesopotamian Water Forum, or global civil society networks such as International Rivers. Here voices from the Middle-East often are lacking, despite the fact that the region suffers more than most other areas from water scarcity and water conflicts. If a personal presence at such forums is not possible, digital seminars could be organized or one could look into digital participation.

8. *Train local researchers/activists/youth to document and monitor river pollution and water scarcity at local level.*

   There is a lack of reliable data on the availability of water resources in NES. Most recent data is provided by INGOs operating in the area. Their reach, however, is limited. Authorities and universities in NES, with the assistance of civil society, could train local communities in the monitoring and documentation of water levels and pollution and provide a network to exchange data in order to create a comprehensive overview of fluctuations in the status of water resources in NES.

9. *Advocate with the Self-Administration, with the inclusion of Rojava University and other academics, to produce a comprehensive strategy for water resources management in NES*

   The region is in need of a comprehensive water management plan, for at least the next five years. Such a plan should ideally be basin wide and could be developed with the assistance of the international community based on recent data. It must support environmental impact assessments for all water infrastructure to be built in the region.

10. *Build local democratic collective governance structures of water and other ecological issues*

    Introducing community water stewardship can counteract uncontrolled water use from groundwater wells. The initiation of the follow-up committee at the Water Forum is a great step in this direction. In critical situations such local decision-making bodies might identify non-essential or wasteful water consumption and rationalise

water use based on democratically agreed priorities. Such structures can identify gaps in the water management and required steps to address them like training of local practitioners on sustainability of water use and management.

11. *Make use of the potential of technical interventions by the AANES*

The AANES can explore the potential to mitigate the water crisis with smaller technical interventions that intervene in different parts of the water system like:

- Identification and reduction of water losses through checking and fixing leaking water pipes.

- Increase of the resilience of the water system by identifying and bolstering up key components like the Alouk pumping station e.g. through building alternative stations and pipes.

- Needs evaluation and provision of small-scale water filters for drinking water.

- Reduction of water contamination and waste-water ideally at source.

- Assessment and piloting of grey-water reuse e.g. for irrigation.

- Assessment, optimization and repair of agricultural irrigation systems.

12. *Longer-term shift in agriculture and landscapes*

The shift towards low-irrigation, drought-resistant, climate-resilient crops (incl. research and seed banks) reduces water need for irrigation and susceptibility to risks of the climate crisis. Reforestation and greening improves the water-retaining capacity of the soil and the overall natural water cycle.

Annex A: Links to video recordings and press reports from the forum

Video recordings of the forum can be found here:

Day one:

Opening: https://fb.watch/8sg6YAfWoq/

Afternoon: https://fb.watch/8sg9UB04_F/

Day two

Morning: https://fb.watch/8sgc-utTCw/

Closing: https://fb.watch/8sggaAKOv9/

Press reports on chronological order

Day 1

https://npasyria.com/en/65245/

https://hawarnews.com/en/haber/international-water-forum-kicks-off-in-ne-syria-h26928.html

https://hawarnews.com/en/haber/turkey-is-responsible-for-violating-international-laws-by-blocking-euphrates-river-water-h26929.html

https://www.hawarnews.com/en/haber/amina-omar-turkeys-control-over-water-resources-puts-the-region-at-risk-of-food-and-water-insecurity-h26930.html

Day 2

https://hawarnews.com/en/haber/international-water-forum-concludes-with-a-set-of-recommendations-h26949.html

https://www.hawarnews.com/en/haber/water-forum-in-ne-syria-we-will-follow-up-in-solving-crisis-and-solutions-water--h26954.html

https://npasyria.com/en/65321/

https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/syria-water-forum-discusses-turkish-damming-rivers

Annex B: Extracts from the NES Forum's North East Syria Triple Water Crisis - Response Plan

The NES NGO Forum is the core coordination body for the humanitarian response in North and East of Syria, taking the lead on operational coordination, inter-sector coordination, policy and advocacy, liaison and negotiations with local authorities and external representations as with donors and other key stakeholders. In September it released a report and a response plan on the water crisis.

Summary of response requirements by sector

Humanitarian actors in NES require a total of $333,389,221 to implement the NES Forum Triple Water Crisis Response Plan, with the current gap in funding of approximately $233,630,407. This multi-sectoral plan and the consequent funding requirements focus on integrated short and mid-term solutions given that the scope of the crisis falls outside of the humanitarian mandate and requires dedicated efforts of nexus-programming, development/stabilization efforts and respective technical expertise and financial investment. Sector chapters – where possible – outline suggestions for longer term response activities while focusing the funding request on so far identified priority activities.

While this plan strives to reflect all funding requirements, this first iteration is principally focused on those response activities being prioritized by NES Sector Working Groups / NGOs. Therefore, in some areas which are either beyond the scope of NES NGOs to support or where UN and partners are taking the lead are likely an underestimation of the total funding required.

Sector	Funding Requirement	Funding Gap
WASH	6,678,187 $	5,476,437 $
Health	7,151,754 $	7,151,754 $
Cross Sector RCCE	906,800 $	906,800 $
FSL	313,976,320 $	215,564,456 $
Nutrition	3,857,200 $	3,857,200 $
Early Recovery	tbd	tbd
Protection	260,960 $	215,760 $
Sites and Settlements	150,000 $	150,000 $
Shelter NFI	408,000 $	308,000 $
Education	under WASH	under WASH
TOTAL	**333,389,221 $**	**233,630,407 $**

Source: NES FORUM, North East Syria Triple Water Crisis - Response Plan September 2021

Annex C Extracts from the OCHA Report (9 Sep 2021)

WATER CRISIS IN NORTHERN AND NORTHEAST SYRIA

Immediate Response and Funding Requirements

Response Priorities

Immediate Priorities by Humanitarian Partners (next six months):

- Ensure access to safe water for an estimated 3.44 million people.

- Respond to immediate food assistance and livelihood support needs of an estimated 3.36 million food insecure people.

- Treat malnutrition in 6,000 severely malnourished children, 25,000 moderately malnourished children and 200,000 pregnant and lactating mothers through mobile and fixed delivery modalities, and support training and capacity-building on early detection and recommended infant and young child feeding practices in emergencies (IYCF-E).

- Mitigate and prevent livelihood and income loss through short-term work opportunities and vocational training for an estimated 23,000 people, with a specific focus on vulnerable groups including women, people with disabilities, female headed households and young people; rehabilitate basic, local economic and agriculture infrastructure, including 200 markets, warehouses and small shops and twenty-two kilometers of irrigation canals and valleys; and establish water users' associations/groups to promote water use efficiency in 31 sub districts.

- Scale up the provision of essential health services, including reproductive health, by at least six hospitals and 20 Primary Health Centers (PHC), set up 12 Rapid Response Teams (RRTs), and train an additional 78 RRTs to support the early detection and response to water-borne diseases and acute malnutrition, including complications for PLW, in affected communities, and provide required medicines, equipment and training.

- Implement specific services as well as training and awareness raising initiatives in order to respond to and mitigate significant protection needs and risks across the affected population.

Recommendations regarding Alouk water station:

Recommended actions by donors:

Provide additional funding to continue to support:

- emergency water trucking when Alouk is partially or totally switched off.
- the implementation of 17 reverse osmosis units on boreholes in Al-Hasakah city;

Recommended actions by parties to the conflict:

- Based on the critical status of Alouk, parties to agree to ensure sufficient electricity provision to Alouk water station, and sustainable access for the technical personnel in The Department of Water Resources and for technical elements of the humanitarian community to support Alouk's functionality.
- Protect and provide access to both Alouk and the al Derbesiye power plant.

Considerations for longer-term actions and technical support

- Increased efficiency of water use, supporting water harvesting projects and using high efficiency irrigation methods; In order to build climate change resilience, build on humanitarian
- Promotion of non-conventional water use (e.g. treated wastewater) and a generalized need to invest in sewage / wastewater treatment systems and the re-use of treated waste, for example, in irrigation; investments and support sustainable recovery and development, enhance social cohesion and improve people's livelihoods and well-being, sustainable natural resource (water and land) and energy management need to be addressed along the Euphrates River basin, and across Syria. Key measures should include:
- Mapping of existing groundwater resources in particularly depleted areas to assess remaining viable aquifers; establishment of plans for managing and regulating groundwater resources, and promotion of best practices for water use by private actors and farmers;
- Protection of water resources, including preventing the contamination of surface and groundwater resources and wells;
- Repair of piped systems to reduce water loss;
- Improvement of agricultural production practices (e.g. drought tolerant crops and trees, adopting 'climate smart' agriculture);

- As far as energy production, greater diversification of energy sources, e.g. through solar energy, to reduce operational costs and decrease dependency on hydro-electric power generation. Implementing these measures will require strengthening the capacities of, and coordination efforts between, national and sub-national government institutions and authorities, communities and vulnerable groups to assess, plan and manage climate change-induced water, land and energy challenges. At the same time, transboundary coordination and agreements on water management and use are required, including provisions on monitoring.

Annex D: A template for an advocacy letter

His excellency President/Prime Minister

Honorable Foreign Minister

Honorable MPs of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN NORTH AND EAST SYRIA

With this letter, we would like to draw your attention to the worsening humanitarian crisis in northern and eastern Syria. The area suffers from severe water shortages for three reasons: the exceptional drought, the water retained by the Turkish upstream rivers and the obstruction of the Alouk water intake caused by Turkey in the illegally occupied area.

Water scarcity has alarmedly reduced the food supply and health status of the area's residents. According to humanitarian organizations, during a ten-year conflict, child malnutrition has now become a visible problem for the first time.

We appeal to the [country/institution] foreign policy leadership that [the country/institution]

- urges Turkey to withdraw immediately and permanently at a sufficient distance from the Alouk water intake to enable the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) to safely repair and operate a vital water intake serving half a million people;

- urges Turkey to discharge into Syrian rivers at least the amount of water required by the agreements reached to resolve the humanitarian crisis;

- increases humanitarian aid to Syria, especially in areas suffering from water scarcity;

- starts channeling development cooperation funds to the self-government and NGOs in north-eastern Syria, which are committed to democracy and equality;

Below are links to the recommendations of the recent Water Forum in Hasakah in northeastern Syria, as well as a recent report by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (OCHA) with a $ 200 million request for additional assistance:

NES Water Forum:
https://hawarnews.com/en/haber/international-water-forum-concludes-with-a-set-of-recommendations-h26949.html

OCHA Water Crisis in Northern and Northeast Syria:
https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/water-crisis-northern-and-northeast-syria-immediate-response-and-funding

Sincerely yours,

NN

Selected Presentations Made in the Forum

Water for Rojava: Input in the Water Forum

Intervention at Water Forum in Hasakah 27-28/9/2021

Solidarity greetings from Water for Rojava (W4R) Europe Committee!

After meetings with several local representatives in NES and internationally in 2019, we identified water as one of the most pressing local issues. Besides the challenges that have been caused by the violent conflict, there are additional problems. The Turkish state increasingly uses water as a weapon of war, which is a crime that we strongly oppose. Also the global climate crisis makes droughts, floods and other irregularities more common, causing increasing difficulties.

As a response to this, in the year 2020 we launched an online crowdfunding campaign to start a fund for water-related projects. Many people from all over the world have donated around $150,000 USD for the water fund. This is a wonderful expression of solidarity from the people who follow and care about the well being of people in NES.

Two committees have been formed – one in Rojava and one in Europe – to decide collectively and democratically for which water-related projects the funds will be spent. The committees mainly consist of women, ecological activists and smaller solidary NGOs.

Up to now, the fund has supported Aboriya Jin's women's agricultural project near Dêrîk with water for irrigation and other needs. Discussions are underway for new projects. The planned next steps of W4R are continuing support for local water projects, building up the local W4R committee and expanding the Europe committee with new partners joining.

We know that the water crisis is very big and the needs are enormous. For example the recent report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) titled "Water Crisis in Northern and Northeast Syria: Immediate Response and Funding Requirements" identifies the present funding gap for NES as 78 million dollars.

The W4R committee has small resources. Nevertheless, we would like to make a meaningful contribution suiting the local needs and priorities. Therefore I am very happy to be here with you to hear more about your approaches to the water issues and to exchange personally.

Contact: water@mesopotamia.coop

https://mesopotamia.coop/water-for-rojava/

Save the Tigris: The role of international organizations in the protection of international conventions on water in NES

Intervention at Water Forum in Hasakah 27-28/9/2021

I am here today on behalf of Save the Tigris, a broad coalition of civil society organizations from Iraq, Europe and the Middle East concerned with water management in the Tigris-Euphrates basin, to share with you our solidarity. We are here to discuss how we can make progress in the current water crisis in North East Syria and the critical water levels of the Euphrates.

The region including NES is facing a triple water crisis as a result of long drought, climate change and low rainfall during the previous winter, critically low water levels of the Euphrates River and shutdowns of the Al Alouk and Al Bab water stations. The population of NES has been deprived of their human right of access to clean water. Ideally transboundary waters should involve two-way communication and be free from coercion, guaranteed by international conventions. The opposite is the case in NES. Representing the NGOs which launched “Save the Tigris” campaign, I would like to briefly discuss what role international organizations can have in the protection of these international conventions and what international organizations can do to mitigate the impacts of the crisis. In Iraq for example we managed to conduct public solidarity actions jointly with organizations in other countries, publish research about the impact of dams, invite international media to cover the water crisis in Iraq, speak about water scarcity and pollution in Iraq at international platforms such as European parliaments, the UN climate change conference or UNESCO.

INGOs, or international organizations, are operating across NES. Though our purpose is mostly delivering vital services such as health, protection and livelihoods and social services, we have played a role in facilitating cooperation over shared waters as third-party facilitators, fill gaps in information and mitigate power imbalances. Especially in this case where Turkey has a large institutional capacity and there is an uneven access to data and technical information between Turkey and NES. Our strength is our ability to talk to many different stakeholders, indeed this work can only be done by establishing a group where LAs and members of local civil society organizations in NES are both represented, including those affected by the water crisis directly, and international organizations.

But just what can international organizations concretely engage in to support NES in the water crisis?

- Address immediate needs: access to clean water is poignant and related to health and food security while sanitation during the time of a pandemic we need the combined efforts of WASH sector to engage in rehabilitation of the water infrastructure.

- Support local capacity: training in livelihoods such as agriculture particularly during water shortages or building up technical knowledge and capacity. This would be important to foster broader regional cooperation in the absence of strong negotiating capacity.

- Promote short-term security: monitoring the water flows and the state of the rivers or install early-warning mechanisms in case of possible reduced flows.

- Urge action by other members of the international community; currently there is engagement and advocacy as in this particular forum . We are testifying before international government committees on the water crisis, alert states and other international organizations about the water crisis, publishing information with data of the impact on populations and environment, creating spaces at the international level where affected communities can voice their concerns.

- Mediate with stakeholders: facilitating workshops or meetings with policymakers. International organizations can propose neutral forums for talks or negotiations, though this depends on the general political climate.

- Promote networking and collaboration: fostering connections between civil society groups, using media to promote a solution to the crisis, involving universities and research centres, or encouraging collaboration towards mutual goals.

- Civil society, both local and international, can play a key role through engagement at grassroots level in advocacy and awareness on cross-border water management. Engagement of civil society in both NES, Whole of Syria, internationally and Turkey would be instrumental to influence the water policies of the region.

International organizations have established that fair water management cannot be conducted without public participation and the involvement of democratic institutions. Steps in this direction in the Middle-East have been taken by local and regional campaigns against destructive dams and poor water policies in recent years.

These efforts have contributed to a growing consciousness in the societies of the Tigris-Euphrates basin. I can refer here to the Mesopotamian Water Forum which was organized in Sulaimania in 2019, and digitally last year, and included more than 200 participants from the states of Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran to discuss collaboration in water management and challenging policies that abuse water and river ecosystems. A global example is the World Commission on Dams, which existed between 1997 and 2001, gathered more than 2,000 organizations from across the world who came together and said

no dam should be built without the “demonstrable acceptance” of the affected people. The World Commission on Dams is an example of internationally coordinated public participation and civil society action having a global impact, in which international organizations took the lead.

The use of international law opens a window of opportunity for international advocacy by international organizations. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has a right to safe drinking water and sanitation. The UN General Assembly has explicitly recognized “the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation as essential”. The UN Sustainable Development Goals also say that “the availability and sustainable water management of water and sanitation must be ensured for all.” The most important instrument at our disposal would be the 1997 Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (generally referred to as the UN Watercourses Convention), the only global treaty governing the use, management and protection of international watercourses. It has been signed by Syria and Iraq but not by Turkey.

The convention sets basic rules for management and cooperation of transboundary waters. It entered into force several years ago and could serve as the base for an agreement over the Euphrates River. The Convention’s principles of equitable use, access to information and accountability around shared waters could offer a basis for a solution to the water crisis. International organizations have begun advocacy to support the creation of a Water Crisis Group in NES. This could consist of a three-steps mediation/negotiation approach:

1. Support direct negotiations between NES, Iraq and Turkey, which to some extent has begun as the governments have engaged in dialogue irrespective of the problematic nature a collaborative approach can entail The three disagree on the definition of “international river” and on the application of international laws and conventions. It would therefore be better to focus specifically on particular dams or water cuts, not water shares or management in general. Negotiations should remind Turkey that Syria is a neighbour and that water policy is part of any economic or political agreement for the future.

2. Mediation. Support a role for international actors, and other countries that hold good relations with NES and Turkey or share mutual treaties and conventions with them, to mediate.

3. If Turkey does not further engage in regional discussions they could be held accountable by bringing the issue to inter-governmental organizations, of which the United Nations Security Council would be the highest level.

To find a genuine solution to the water crisis, stakeholders must be able and willing to participate, perceiving the issue as high priority. If there is mutual interdependence, there is a higher likelihood to reach an agreement. Additionally, any solution should also consider drought, low rainfalls, maintenance of water infrastructure and promote a combined approach. Then possible solutions can be negotiated. I hope in this meeting we can come a joint strategy that eventually will combine the humanitarian sector, regional actors and the UN.

Ercan Ayboga: Turkeys‘s water policy in North-Kurdistan and its downstream impacts in Mesopotamia

Mesopotamian Ecology Movement

Intervention at Water Forum in Hasakah 27-28/9/2021

The Republic of Turkey implements its water policy through the governmental institution called State Hydraulic Works (DSI). The DSI plans and constructs dams mainly for the aim of electricity and irrigation; at a secondary level for drinking water and other purposes. In doing so the maximum economic benefit is targeted – everything else is subordinated. There has been no serious consideration of impacts on humans and environment; also the downstream regions in other states have not been taken into account.

In other words: Dams, as political and technological assemblies combining hydro-electrical and agricultural interventions with centralised bureaucracy, are conceived and utilised as material agents and pervasive symbols of modern state power. As an expression of ‘modernity,’ the construction of an intensive water infrastructure and the networks of irrigation canals and electricity cables that go with it, linking the periphery to the centre, peasants to markets and thus remote populations to a central administration, have been employed in the service of the nation-state (see 2021 published article by Jongerden, Akıncı and Ayboğa 2021).

Until today this has not changed even partly, also not through statements, discussions, programs and some international dialogue which happened in the last two decades.

This approach does not surprise as the state and its governments have not experienced any serious democratization which could change this antidemocratic and anti-ecological water policy.

The Turkish government has been constructing in all regions of the state “territory” dams since the 50s and particularly since the 80s. But there is one region which is the main hotspot for middle scale and large dams: North (Turkish) Kurdistan in the southeast of the Turkish state territory. This has three reasons:

1) The two biggest rivers, the Euphrates and Tigris, originate here and offer technically big economic benefits.

2) The Turkish state treats this region as a colony by using antidemocratic tools and policies and dams are useful to oppress, displace and assimilate the Kurds.

3) The two rivers flow to the territories of the states Syria and Iraq and could be used as a political weapon for geostrategic interests in the Middle East.

The most large dams in North Kurdistan are constructed within the South-eastern Anatolia Project (GAP) which developed after the construction of the first large dam Keban on the Euphrates in 1975 and consists of 19 dams and 22 HEPPs. In the project, which is implemented in almost half of North Kurdistan, there have been official plans to irrigate 1,8 Mio. land and create up to 3,5 mio. Jobs. When at the end of the 80s the armed and political rebellion of the Kurds with the PKK experienced stronger levels, the state developed social plans within the GAP in order to integrate better peasants into national and international markets. Thus would "modernize" the rural Kurds and eliminate the basis for political uprising. This is in the sense of the rascist Turkish nation-state.

In the 21st century new plans initiated the construction of hundreds of small and large dams in North Kurdistan which affect almost all river and even creek stretches. There is no small area which is not affected by dam projects. Considering that in the 90s up to 4000 villages have been forcibly emptied by the Turkish Army and still more than half of them are not populated, dam reservoirs are also an obstacle for these displaced people who want to return to their homes.

We estimate that almost 1 million people in the whole Turkish state have been displaced by dams, half of them in North Kurdistan. Most of them have ended up in worse conditions.

Dam construction goes parallel with thousands of other forms of projects for economic exploitation like mining, roads, coal plants and industrial agriculture. All the geography is covered by these destructive project forms which displace additional hundreds of thousands of people and impact the social-economic relations negatively and depprivate the environment.

An additional reason to build so many dams in North Kurdistan is to flood possible hiding places for the PKK guerrillas and create watery barriers against their movement. However there are 11 dams at the Turkish-Iraqi border region, provinces Sirnak and Hakkari, which have been developed officially only because of so-called "security" reasons (see DSI annual 2007). They are neither for water drinking or irrigation nor for hydroelectric power production.

19 of the 22 GAP dams have been completed nowadays – some like the Ilisu Dam after long protests by the local people in which we have been involved directly. When completely constructed the large reservoirs would have with 110 km3 the double capacity of the annual flow of the Tigris and Euphrates. It is officially said that such a big dam capacity is needed to produce sufficient energy and to irrigate large scale lands. The reality is that large scale irrigation affects the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of peasants, creates more big landowners and introduces industrial and non-organic management forms. While some

circles benefit from the increased production, in the end the broad society and nature are confronted with heavy losses. Small scale and decentralized irrigation for few hundred thousands hectares (instead of 1,8 mio. hectares) makes much more sense and is sustainable, social and ecological. Crops that have adapted to the decrease in precipitation can play an important role to adapt to decreasing precipitation. Small technology not controlled by big private companies should be used as well. Finally cooperatives could play an important role in a new and alternative agricultural policy.

There are two more main reasons for such an alternative approach:

1) There is not unlimited water for so many big water projects in North Kurdistan. If implemented the downstream region would experience a deeper water crisis and their right to water would be violated.

2) As a result of the climate crises there is dramatically less precipitation in Mesopotamia for 20 years. The technical plannings are still made for old figures which are not true any more. A reasonable and rational approach would be to reduce dramatically – up to 80 % - the planned water amount from the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers for irrigation.

As for the international dimension:

The Turkish government still refuses to ratify international conventions which foresee a more fair cooperation between states sharing rivers instead of using them as a weapon. Although the important UN Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses from 1997 has been ratified by enough states in order to be accepted as a standard for agreements on transnational rivers , Turkey still refuses it strongly. Also because Turkey is a NATO state and internationally aggressive, it is internationally very difficult to file a suit against it. However even the World Bank refused to finance GAP in 1984. In recent years the Turkish government has declared frequently it will not use water as a weapon, but this does not change the fact it could do it – or better it does it - without any consequences.

To understand how the Turkish state could use water as a weapon against the people in Syria and Iraq it should be said that sometimes too much water could create a flood at certain months and be harmful. So not only cutting water is the way to cause problems and destruction in the downstream territories.

Since the beginning of the 2000s Turkey started to discuss with the Iraqi and Syrian governments about water. It was the time when Turkey’s water storage capacity was growing. But no mutual agreement covering the whole basin has yet been forthcoming. It could be said Turkey followed an approach to hold the two states back from more active policies at the international level.

In the last few years the Turkish state used more than ever water as a weapon against the population in the states of Syria and Iraq. While in 2016 it started to decrease dramatically the water flow of the Euphrates to North Syria, since 2016 it has been negotiating with the Iraqi government a comprehensive deal on water which includes also other aspects.

With the completion of the Ilisu Dam on the Tigris in 2020 the Turkish government can cut for the first time in history the water flow to Iraq in a significant way. When the relations between the Turkish and Iraqi governments improved again in 2016/2017, they started to negotiate also about water. The Iraqi government stopped its criticism of Turkey and does not follow any interest of its own people.

We are sure that the Turkish government connects the water flow to other economic and political issues. To remember: In the 90s Turkish ministers said on a number of occasions that they will discuss water shares if Syria halts its support for the PKK. So nowadays Turkey offers Iraq a minimum and average water flow for the next years if Turkish companies get investment projects in Iraq and especially the Turkish Army can attack without limit the South (Iraqi) Kurdistan region where is resistance against the Turkish occupation of all Kurdistan regions – also the Shengal (Sinjar) region is part of this deal. There is a so-called water memorandum prepared by the Turkish and Iraqi governments which could be ratified very soon by the two parliaments. Read it and you will see what the negotiations include.

At the Euphrates with 5 large dams Turkey is able to cut completely the water flow to Syria for at least several months. How Turkey cut the water since 2016, the participants of this forum know better than us. What i can add here, is that Turkey could also increase larger amounts of water flows in a way that could be harmful for the Kurds, Arabs and Assyrians in Syria. Since a very aggressive and dictatorial government is ruling the Turkish state, this can happen every time.

The decrease of the Euphrates flow to Syria is an extreme act of aggression and up to date unique in the modern history of humans. In the same logic Turkey cut drinking water from the Turkish occupied Serekaniye region to the Hasakah region. We do not know of any similar case where water has been used so openly as a weapon, so it is a high level of crime at international level! Unfortunately in the mainstream press of Turkey this is not discussed with any news, only some left oppositional and Kurdish press writes about it. The same is valid with the political groups, only the political party HDP and some smaller oppositional groups criticize the Turkish government; but not enough in our view. The international press is not sufficiently covering Turkey’s criminal act against the free North East Syria.

Here we in North Kurdistan and in Turkey have to do more to raise pressure on the Turkish government, it is our duty to develop solidarity with Rojava and all free regions of North and East Syria! It is our obligation if we want to maintain the opportunity to democatize our regions in Mesopotamia!

We follow the principle that access to water is a right of life! Nothing can justify the instrumentalization of water as a weapon against others. Rather water should be considered a tool of cooperation and peace as it is the basis of life of all living beings!!

Nick Hildyard: Water as a vehicle for peace rather than violence: The struggle for water democracy

Intervention at Water Forum in Hasakah 27-28/9/2021

Historians of the human use of water often point out that the English word 'rival' comes from the Latin noun 'rivalis', meaning "those who use the same stream as a source of water".

Many have taken this as evidence that, since time immemorial, water has always been a source of antagonism; and that those who rely on shared sources of water are forever condemned to a perpetual state of violence or near-violence.

In fact, the reverse is true. As numerous scholars have documented, water has historically been "a catalyst of peace rather than a cause of war". Certainly, shared waterways have been a source of rivalries, disputes, conflicting social and economic interests and tensions. Certainly, there have been instances where violence has erupted over access to water. But violence between nations or over water as a scarce resource have been rare.

This is not to deny that water is currently being weaponised by many states. Through the 22 dams it has built as part of its giant Southeastern Anatolia Project, Turkey now has the means to deny water to its downstream neighbours, Syria and Iraq; and, as many of you will have experienced directly, it has recently exercised that power by ruthlessly cutting off water cut off flows of the Euphrates and other rivers to exert pressure on the Kurdish regions of Rojava and the Northern Iraq. ISIS, too, used water as a weapon, threatening to flood or deprive areas of water.

But when policy makers such as former United Nations Secretary-General Boutrous Boutrous Ghali claim that such water terrorism or past and future "water wars" are rooted in "water not politics", they are wrong, wrong, wrong.

Where conflict (violent or otherwise) has erupted, it is very rarely because of an absolute scarcity of water. Instead, conflict results from politically-generated scarcities rooted in inequalities of power that enable one group to deny others access to water or to degrade the environment at the expense of others.

In effect, water conflicts are always about politics.

Inequalities in power are not God-given: they are directly related to processes of capital accumulation, patriarchy, imperialism, corporate and state expansion at the expense of the commons, and ambitions for regional hegemonic control.

If those in Rojava who rely on the River Khabur do not have water, this is not an Act of God. It is because Turkish-backed militia have cut the supply.

If people cannot drink the water in Basra because it is too saline, this is not an act of God. It is the result of decisions that have been made by specific people with specific political and economic interests that have led to poor drainage, reduced downstream water flows, increased salinisation and increased levels of chemical run off into water ways.

And if people are denied water because they cannot pay for it, this is not an Act of God but a direct outcome of unjust economic policies and privatisation of water supplies.

Whether in the Middle East or elsewhere in the world, water scarcity today is primarily politically-generated water scarcity. To understand why people go short of water – or any other resource – it is therefore necessary to address the complex workings of power that deny access to water at the local, regional, national and international levels.

Conflicts over water will not be addressed simply through improved technologies of water extraction, distribution and use, necessary as these may be, because the issue is not at root amenable to technocratic solutions.

The struggle is not a technological one: it is a struggle against imbalances of political, economic and social power. It is a struggle for democracy. Whose voice counts? Whose environment gets protected and whose gets impacted? Who gets to enjoy the benefits? Whose needs get to be met?

And because it is a struggle over who controls decision-making, collaboration in the use of water requires more than simply creating forums in which water can be negotiated.

Turkey, Syria and Iraq, for example, have been conducting secret, behind-the-scenes water negotiations for decades. The forum for negotiations exists. But the weakened state of Iraq and Syria, particularly in recent years, has left Turkey entirely dominant in the negotiations – to the extent that it can simply ignore the outcomes. Addressing that inequality of negotiating power is essential if an enforceable mutual agreement on the shared use of the Euphrates and Tigris is to be achieved. And that will require social and environmental movements in the region not only to pressure Turkey but to pressure NATO, the European Union, the United States, Russia, the United Nations and other international actors to hold Turkey to account.

Who takes part in the negotiations over shared waters, whether transboundary or within countries, is also of critical importance. The Turkey-Syria-Iraq negotiations have been almost entirely between technical experts who have taken it for granted that large dams and water transfer schemes are part of the solution. Civil society groups have been entirely excluded from the process. Yet the lesson from elsewhere is that multi-stakeholder processes reach very different conclusions on water policy options to those that are restricted to government experts and their corporate allies.

This is hardly surprising: for corporations, water is simply an input, a cost of production and a source of profit. For state bureaucrats, it is tube wells, dams, transfer schemes, pipes, irrigation schemes and the accompanying bureaucratic imperatives of implementation. But for those who depend for their livelihoods directly on the land, water is not simply something to drink or water fields with – it is survival.

Consider, for example, the rules that emerged from one decades-long, community-led struggle in India to restore the Alwar watershed in Rajasthan, an area whose annual rainfall is even less than that received in Syria. Years of deforestation and tube-well extraction had depleted aquifers in the watershed, causing the River Alwar to dry up in summer months. To combat this, villagers came together to restore hundreds of small village ponds, known as johads, that had silted up due to increased deforestation-driven erosion. Each pond was managed by a village council, which enforced its own rules for collaborative water management. At a watershed level, the villagers also formed a “water parliament”, whose rules included “not allowing exploiters and polluters into the area, being on guard against privatization forces, conserving the environment, seeking drought-resistant crops, and not growing cash crops”.

These are not rules that would emerge from a state- or corporate-driven negotiating process. They are rules that reflect the priorities of the commons – those ways of social and economic organising that recognise (and seek to put into practice) the collective right of all, rather than the few, to survival.

While it has no legal authority, the Alwar parliament has “the moral authority to be able to impose fines on rule-breakers and to resolve resource-use disputes between villages”. The result is that, during the 1990s and early 2000s, the Alwar River began to flow again all year-round. Groundwater sources were restored, local wells replenished, and forests bought back to life.

Many communities in other areas of India have followed the Alwar example: a water parliament has also been established in Finland to manage the Torne River and numerous other communities worldwide have sought to restore watersheds through community-run water harvesting initiatives. The potential is enormous.

But the achievements of the communities in Alwar and elsewhere in restoring and collaboratively managing water sources are not easily replicated. They rely on more than a bundle of technologies, rules and councils. They are more than a set of template institutions that, once in place, somehow guarantee water democracy.

Their success lies in their active, daily promotion of collaboration. Their harvesting is about more than simply obtaining water: it is about building society through an active process of challenging undemocratic, unjust, inequitable and discriminatory practices wherever and whenever they arise.

It is this activism that ultimately engenders the solidarities that make for collaboration. The struggle is not to obtain H20; nor to put in place new institutional structures; but to build and defend water justice and democracy through active, everyday commoning.

Tony Rublon: Turkey's use of international rivers as a political leverage to impose its hegemony in the region

Good afternoon everyone.

Thanks for being here everyone and many thanks to the organization commitee who made this event possible here in Hassake. I'm Tony Rublon, researcher in International Relation and Migration field and President of the Kurdish friendhsip of Britany, a french organization who worked with kurds in Turkey and in Syria since 25 years. This presentation entitled « *Turkey's use of international rivers as a political leverage to impose its hegemony in the region* » is based on different works : some researches I've been conducting myself in Turkey and Iraq, and some articles and reports from international journalists, activists and academics. As the time is obviously limited I'll focus on two dimensions which seem to be crucial to understand the scope of the question. First we will take a closer look to the inner territory of Turkey and how water has been used as a leverage to impose its control through the national space; and in a second time we will dwell on the regional consequences, and the use of water as a pressure instrument in international relations.

I) The regional roots

First of all, let's move back to the post first-world-war, the decay of the Ottoman Empire and the rise ofTurkey as an independent Nation-State. The Treaty of Lausanne signed in 1923, divided the watershed of the two rivers , namely Tigris and Euphrate, between 4 states :

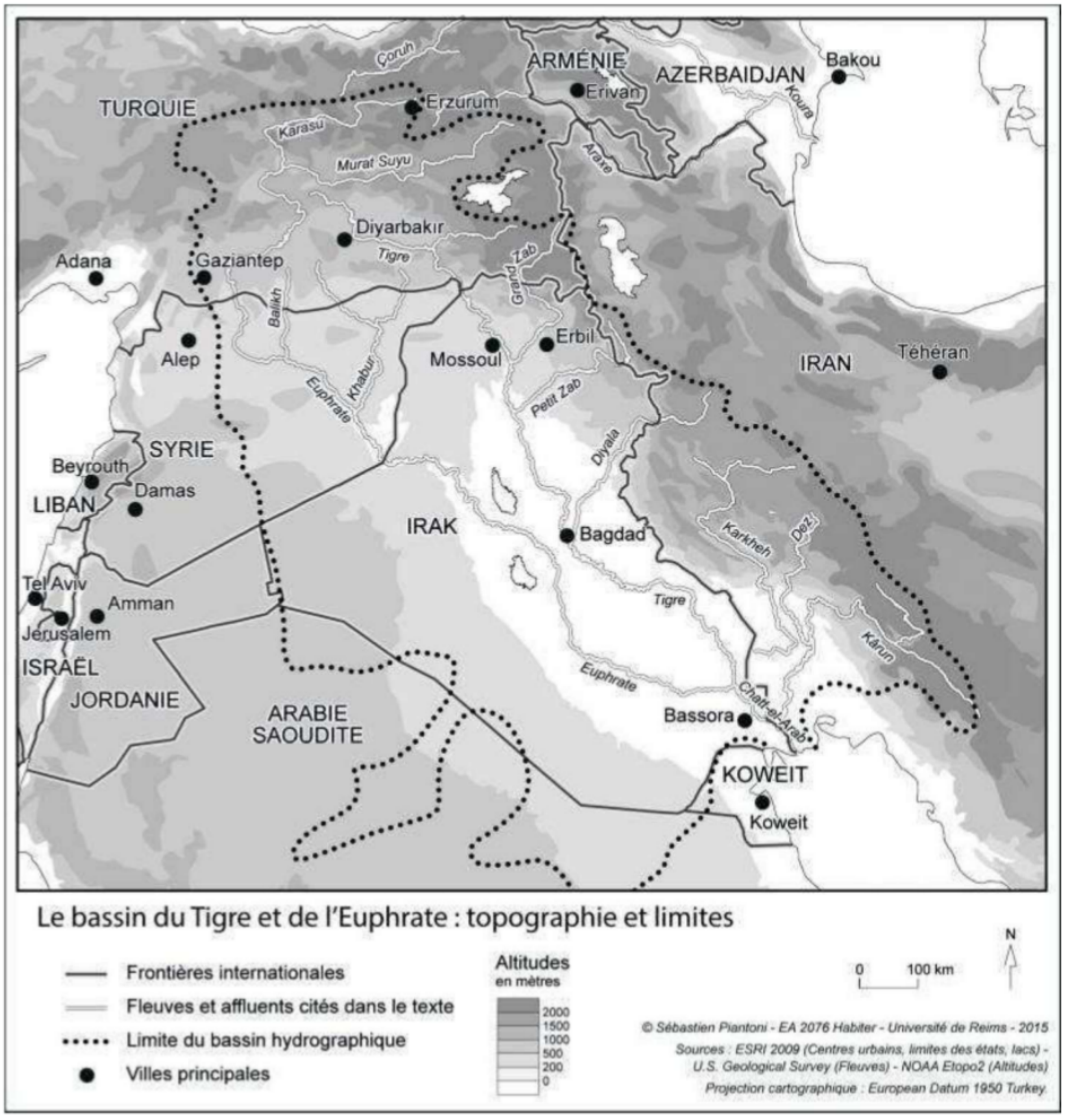
- Turkey controls most of the upper basin of the two rivers, Iran controls the Zagros and the upper Diyala valley.

-The Euphrates flows through northern and eastern Syria for a length of 675 km.

-Iraq is crossed by both rivers for about 1200 km

It can be seen that Turkey has great advantages from its upstream location. It is its water that feeds the basin the most and it can therefore capture water before it reaches the downstream states.

The four states also share the Kurdish settlement area, which occupies the heart of the watershed of the two rivers and extends quite far to the north-east on the Iranian side. It is therefore the interference between the Kurdish question and the distribution of water resources that gives the geopolitics of water its complexity.



(Credit : Marcel Bazin & Stephane de Tapia « THE SOUTHEASTERN ANATOLIAN PROJECT – GAP – IN ITS TURKISH NATIONAL CONTEXT AND MIDDLE EASTERN REGIONAL FRAMEWORK)»

As early as 1930's, the founder of the new turkish nation, Mustapha Kemal Ataturk, began to explore how its rivers, and the Euphrates in particular, could be harnessed for power generation. In 1938, the first dam is inaugurated in Çubuk in Ankara district, intended for water supplying to the new administrative capital : Ankara. A large scale water policy is slowly developed in the 1950's-1960's overseen by State Water administration. The starting point is the completion in 1975 of Keban Dam, just downstream of the junction of the two upper branches of the Euphrates, supplying the most powerful hydroelectric plants in the country. From there the GAP (Southeast Anatolian Project) was officially launched in 1977 , based on the construction of 22 dams on the Euphrates below Keban, the Tigris and their tributaries. In step with the Keban Dam, Syria opened its own dam on the Euphrates : the combined effect of Turkey's and Syria's two dams on the Euphrates sent Iraq into a devastating drought, bringing Iraq and Syria to the brink of war.

II) The GAP

The GAP covered six departments : Adıyaman, Gaziantep, Urfa, Diyarbakır, Mardin and Siirt. This project carry different aims :

1-storing water in reservoir dams to develop irrigation over large areas for specialised crops such as cotton

2- generate electricity in 19 hydroelectric power stations .

Then come the political dimension :

3- modernising and densifying the infrastructure network to better connect the South-East to the rest of the country

4- to firmly anchor the region to the Turkish national territory by integrating it into the "one and indivisible" Turkish nation.

The first project was the construction of the Karakaya dam in the province of Diyarbakir, which submerged 27 villages and displaced some 17,000 people living almost exclusively from the production of their land and local agriculture. These first works, deeply transforming the way of life and the identity of the Kurdish areas, were confronted with the resistance of a people who organised their struggle in 1978 around the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The increasingly violent and warlike offensives of the Turkish government in the East of Turkey at the end of the 1970s were not without justification in the government's desire to carry out this development policy, allowing both the stifling of the expression of minorities in Bakur, and a strong economic and energy development that placed Ankara in a position of strength on the international stage.

From 1984 onwards, the PKK carried out regular offensives against various GAP projects, in particular the Atatürk Dam, on which work had begun in 1983. Displacing nearly 60,000 people and creating a huge water basin, the project has many detractors including in the ranks of the government.

During these years, attacks were recorded on all GAP construction sites, which officially became, from the beginning of the 1990s, an instrument of the "fight against terrorism". The Turkish state clearly explained that the dams were a means of preventing terrorists from moving from one region to another and that it was therefore a matter of internal security. The Ilisu dam is considered a key element of this "security policy" as it is close to what the Turkish state call the "Hell's Valley", the corridor used by the PKK guerrillas to cross from Iraq to Syria. Allowing to close the access roads between Turkey and Iraq, Ilisu also allowed to justify the continuous presence of more than 5 000 soldiers in the surrounding villages.

After successfully pitting its neighbors against each other, Turkey entered into an interim water protocol agreement with Iraq in 1984 and one with Syria in 1987, early in the PKK's full-scale insurgency. In the Syrian agreement, Turkey guaranteed a set minimum annual flow from the Euphrates basin into Syria. Further down the page, Syria vowed to end PKK activities on Syrian soil.

In the early 1990s, the Turkish government completed the Atatürk Dam—the fourth-largest dam in the world—causing the forced resettlement of 50,000 people in a predominantly Kurdish region. It demolished several Unesco World Heritage Sites. In filling the Atatürk tank, Turkey cut off the majority of the Euphrates's flow into Syria and Iraq for weeks, crippling agriculture. In virtually the same moment, then-President Turgut Özal asked Syria and Iraq to help combat the PKK.

Water conflicts are never disconnected from other issues. Thus, the conflict around the GAP is part of the Kurdish problem on the one hand, and the power struggle for regional leadership on the other.

III) Water used as a weapon which can lead to conflict

Looking at the relationship between the turkish-kurdish conflict can shed an interesting light on the water politics conflict nexus. On a first level we can identify two reasons for a state to control ressources :

1- scarcity of natural resources

2- political leverage

Independently from the scarcity of resources, which is nowadays part of a global problem, we will focus on the use of water as political leverage. We can identify two strategic uses of waters as political weapons :

1- Water project used as a weapon which can lead to conflict : the consequences of the GAP in Turkey

2- Water as an active weapon in an already existing conflict with differents tensions levels : turkey action in the local field

The case study of the GAP stresses the point that water resources, and the policies related to them, are a political project, and their consequences should therefore also be considered as politically induced. Looking at what happened in Southeast Anatolia through a human security lens, indicates that the difference between using guns or water might not always be that big. As Leila Harris explained, the water dam project in Southeastern Anatolia exacerbates disparities in the region and causes tensions between states and also between communities. Indeed, the concept of human security, which is not concerned with weapons

but instead “with human life and dignity” (MEIJER L. 2018), shows how the use of the GAP dams should be considered a real security threat to the populations affected. Water should thus be considered as a means that can be used in conflict settings, with significant effects on the population’s human security.

But it is also used as an active weapon in already existing tensions, and the nowadays control of Turkey toward the Tigris and Euphrate waterflow on Syria and Iraq is a clear expression of it.

IV) Nowadays

In the 1990, the flow of the incoming Euphrate rivers had been significantly reduced by Turkey to counter Damascus' strategy of supporting Kurdish opposition. Since February 2021, the general administration for the management of the Syrian northern dams noted that Turkey had reduced to 200 cubic metres per second the incoming flow of euphrates into Syrian territory. As a result, the water level in the Tishrin dam has fallen by several metres. This reduction in the flow rate constitutes a breach of the 87 treaty with Syria, by which Turkey undertakes to supply Syria with a minimum flow rate of 500 cubic metres. It causes important water shortages for populations and agriculture but also has serious impacts on hydroelectric power production. While Turkey is experiencing water stress and dwindling water supplies as a result of climate change, the political dimension mustn’t be neglected but rather perceived as a new offensive against North East Syria, following the military operations of 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Baghdad also deplores the consequences of the operation of the Illisu dam on the Tigris since December 2020. This hydroelectric mega-project, having engulfed the ancient city of Hassankeyf, has serious consequences on the flow of the Tigris River entering Iraqi territory. This has to be integrated into a broader strategy of control of Iraqi Kurdistan, which is being materialised by multiple air strikes on the Sinjar region and by the large Turkish military presence in the Iraqi-Turkish border region. Water control is a central element of the Turkish state's tension strategy in Iraq, an active diplomatic and politic weapon willing to assert its desire for regional hegemony.

V) CONCLUSION

The relation between water, politics and conflicts in this context is obivous. And the Turkish President does not try to hide or disguise it. On 29 March, the first National Water Forum was held in Turkey. On this specific occasion, Recep Tayip Erdogan presented the situation as follows : « There is no différences between water protection and protecting our internal security ». Water is therefore a strong political leverage, especially in these times of global climat change in which access to primary resources turned to be a matter a matter of survival and stability.

Mahmoud Patel: The practices of Turkey to create water crisis in the region: The breach of International Law and the weaponizing of water in North East Syria (Rojava)

PRESENTATION AT THE FORUM

Revolutionary greetings to one and all. My thanks and much appreciation to organisers of The International Water Forum in North and East Syria for giving me the honour and opportunity to participate in this International forum.

The earliest agreement for the waters of the Tigris-Euphrates basin occurred between the French and British mandatory governments of Syria and Iraq. The goal of this agreement was to lay the groundwork for the future utilization of the rivers. Additionally, the agreement called for a bilateral commission to review any proposed plans. This was followed in May 1926 and May 1930 by the Turco-French which committed the Turkish republic and French mandate to coordinate the uses of the Euphrates. This agreement excluded and subjected the Kurds and other peoples to an agreement by the French and Turks. In March 1946, Turkey and Iraq signed the Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbourly Relations, committing both parties agreed to share related data, consult with each other over usage of the waters, and establish a committee to implement agreements. The problems that arose from these previous treaties were due to their bilateral nature, which excluded the third riparian state (Syria) from involvement. This led to the development of the Joint Technical Committee in 1980. The purpose of this committee was to get all three states into a general agreement and ensure that all future bilateral actions were in accord with established international law. While a definitive trilateral agreement failed to take shape under the committee, by the end of the decade an agreement was reached between Syria and Iraq over the Euphrates waters. Iraq was granted 58% of water that flowed out of Turkey; however, that amount would be determined solely by Turkey. The larger failure of all three states to agree on a trilateral arrangement stems largely from each state interpreting their right to the waters of the Tigris-Euphrates basin in different contexts.

Turkey has largely followed the Harmon Doctrine: Turkey considers the Euphrates, as well as the Tigris, to be national or boundary rivers. Therefore, Turkey has made claims that the locations of both rivers, originating within its borders, give it sovereign rights over the water. The position taken by Syria and Iraq, however, is that the Euphrates is an international river and both countries believe they have acquired rights to the waters. The 'Afrin River flows from Turkey into northwest Syria and back into Turkey, while the Orontes runs through the Turkish of Antakya before connecting with Syria and has been a source of contention between two countries.

Turkey has spent billions of dollars in the past decades building dams to increase its water

reserves and boost its hydroelectric capabilities. But a number of projects, particularly the Ilisu and Yusefeli dams, have faced delays after several Companies withdrew funding following human rights violations by the Turkish state. When Turkey commenced the South-eastern Anatolia Project (also known as GAP) to dam sections of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers north of the Syrian/Turkey border. Finding themselves without control of their waterways, Syria and Iraq formed an alliance, ignoring the previous disputes which had divided them, to confront the issue of water control. Iraq and Syria watched with apprehension the construction of the Atatürk Dam in Turkey its other project have drawn severe criticism for the projected systemof 22 dams on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Downstream neighbours Syria, Iraq and Rojava

in particular have been bearing the brunt of Turkeys weaponising of water contrary to international law and pursuing its imperialistic agenda in the region. GAP also allows Turkey to cut water flowing downstream in the short term at short notice. This was demonstrated when Turkey filled the reservoir of the Dam in 1990, which resulted in damaging consequences for the two downstream riparian states.

In the first phase of filling the reservoir, both Syria and Iraq were a months notice of reduced water flow with additional water to be released the month after the filling to make up for the shortfall. In the second phase of the filling, however, Turkey gave no advance warning to either state, and the 500 cubic meters per second water flow was reduced to 165.34 Turkey's downstream neighbours are thus faced with a situation where long-term water supplies are in danger, while, at the same time, the threat of short-term shortages and stoppages from a belligerent neighbour and human rights violator Turkey!

We may argue that water conflict is nothing new to international relations and as a result there been a variety of principles a riparian state may use to justify its actions in disputes. However, as nothing is codified beyond the Helsinki Rules of 1966 or the 1997 United Nations Convention on Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, as well as lack of enforcement, there is little precedent for states to fall back on in disputes, which in turn extends conflicts over water. Of the principles used by states the basis for their arguments, three different categories may be considered: upstream downstream riparian control of water, ancestral rights, and equitable.

Of the categories of principles described above, the first and second are not considered legitimate in today's international system. The first category of upstream/down- stream riparian control of water is outdated and lacks legitimacy due to the fact that no state can claim a monopoly on the usage of a resource as vital as water with support from the international community. However, it is still claimed by states today who insist that as upstream riparian states in whose territory bodies of water are formed, it is their sovereign right to do with the rivers as it pleases as if they were “national”. The ancestral claims category is also not accepted in international disputes, although it may be claimed by a

riparian as a justification for usage of the waters. The lack of thought given toward future development may result in an inequitable utilization of the waters which may fuel further disputes, and allow the imperialist state of Turkey to continue getting away and not being held accountable for its draconian conduct in the region. In contrast, the final category of equitable utilisation is the most accepted of the categories, as it attempts to minimise disputes and provides a legitimate path for an improved sharing of the water resource.

Structural scarcity as a form of exploitation by Turkey in Rojava which is caused by an unequal distribution of the resource etc. In this form of scarcity Turkey seeks total control directly or indirectly (through militant proxies) and uses a disproportionate amount of a given resource, thereby creating a scarcity issue for other segments of society in Rojava. International water law must equip States to jointly and sustainably manage the freshwater resources that they share. The clearest definition of the human right to water was issued by the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in General Comment 15 drafted in 2002.It was a non-binding interpretation that access to water was a condition for the enjoyment of the right to an adequate standard of living, inextricably related to the right to the highest attainable standard of health, and therefore a human right. It stated: “The human right to water entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses.” Water being a human right should be given to all people because it is essential to life. The resistance to the hegemony of Turkey in Rojava is another example of combatting the inimical goals of Turkish weaponising of water. A human right to water generally rests on two justifications: the non-substitutability of drinking water (“essential for life”), and the fact that many other human rights which are explicitly recognized in the UN Conventions are predicated upon an (assumed) availability of water (e.g. the right to food).

The United Nations declared access to water as a fundamental basic human right under articles 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which identifies and protects rights at an international level. The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of 2000 includes the sharing and fair allocation of water as a major goal. The United Nations and MDG recognise water as a human right and every human being is entitled to water use. Equal access to water entails that no individual should be given privilege over the other at the absolute basic level. The sale of water cannot be permitted or justified under the United Nations at the basic level because water is seen as a universal human right. The right to water was created specifically to assist poor people in developing countries through attaining equitable access to water to prevent illness and death. Additionally, water rights are also associated with protecting the environment, strengthening the economy and strengthening the water delivery system.

However, the United Nations fails to create a policy that appropriately creates balance in terms of water-sharing and allocation and allows its member Turkey to commit human rights abuses through weaponising water against those in Rojava. Nor does the other partners of

Turkey in NATO hold Turkey accountable. Turkish affiliates use essential services such as water and electricity as a weapon. Turkish-affiliated armed groups, which control the Alouk water pumping station in Ras al-Ain, have repeatedly disrupted water supplies, affecting access to water for up to one million people in the city of al-Hassakeh and surrounding areas, including extremely vulnerable displaced people in various IDP camps. The interruptions of pumping at Alouk are a pressure tactic to force Kurdish-led authorities to supply electricity to areas under the control of the Turkish-backed factions from al-Mabroukeh electricity station, which remains under the control of the Syrian government and Kurdish-led authorities as part of the Russian-Turkish deal that was concluded in December 2019. International law prohibits destroying, removing or "rendering useless" objects – such as water installations – that are indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. Impeding access to water, sanitation and electricity endangers the lives of large numbers of people, a danger rendered all the more acute amid fighting a global COVID-19 pandemic. Turkish authorities' failure to ensure adequate water supplies to Rojava are by extension compromising humanitarian agencies' ability to prepare and protect vulnerable communities in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, Alouk water station provides water supplies for populations that are already deemed vulnerable, including in al-Hol and Areesheh camps, which host tens of thousands of Syrians, Iraqis, and foreigners who lived in areas formerly held by ISIS. Human Rights Watch has documented the terrible conditions in these camps, including overflowing latrines, sewagetrickling into tattered tents, and residents drinking wash water from tanks containing worms.

These shocking conditions are exacerbated with the water supplies cut off, and will only put the population at greater risk of contracting COVID-19. Under international human rights law and the laws of war, all parties to an armed conflict must protect objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, including those necessary for water distribution and sanitation. Parties to the conflict need to ensure civilians' access to adequate water and sanitation. International human rights law also obligates governments and de facto authorities to respect the right to water and ensure that people can enjoy clean, available, acceptable, accessible, and affordable water and sanitation. In flagrant disregard for International law, Turkey is targeting innocent civilians and the destruction of cultural objects, the Turkish army also attacked the infrastructure in Afrin, including dams and factories. These attacks constitute a gross violation of international law.

Turkeys breach of international law is not merely the opinion of solidarity and human rights groups. The Council of Europe which has, incidentally, through the European Court of Human Rights, condemned Turkey over 2 800 times since 1959. In Rojava the weaponising and control of water by Turkey is calculated to make their living conditions unbearable and seeks to force the people to submit to its authority.

The extremists who surround the current Turkish government know perfectly well that Rojava does not threaten them militarily. It threatens them by providing an alternative vision of what life in the region could be like. Turkey should not try and delegitimise people's rightful claims to natural resources such as water by branding them terrorists. Above all, they feel it is critical to send the message to the people across Rojava that if they rise up for their rights, let alone rise up in arms, the likely result is that they will be denied their right to the most basic source of life: water and be maimed and killed, and none of the major powers will raise an objection.

There is a word for such a strategy. It's called "terrorism" – a calculated effort to cause terror. The question is, why is the rest of the world co-operating? Instead International pressure must be put on Turkey to stop weaponising water for its political hegemonic objectives, to leave Rojava, to stop using extremist proxies and to seek a political solution through dialogue based on dignity, human rights and respect of the people of Rojava.

Thank you.

د. سليمان إلياس: حول راق والع سوريا من وكل ا تركي بني املوقعة الثنائية واالتفاقيات املعاهدات الفرات و دجلة نهري مياه

ثرية أأل الناحية من العامل يف املوجود اجلغرافيات و املناطق هم أ من الرافدين بالد منطقة تعد ، تعقيدا كثر أأل ي ه وكذلك االثنوجرافية الناحية من .

اترخيية ألحداث مسرحا كانت و ، اليوم ها ا نر اليت سكتها على البشرية احلضارة وضعت ، وضع يف رئيسيا دورا دت أ و احلياة جماالت جلميع ساس أأل حجر - الدينية ، الثقافية و ، االقتصادية و ، الفلك جمال يف يضا أ و ؛ والسياسية و الرايضيات.

والفرات دجلة هنري و ه املنطقة هذه يف احلضارية البدايات لكل الرئيسي والسبب وروافدمها.

ني العظيم ن ي النهر ن ي هلذ مدينة احلضارية الناحية من ة البشري .

سف أأل مع ولكن ، السياسية اخلريطة على حديثة كدولة ا تركي ظهور منذ (أي خرية أأل سنة ائة امل يف ، الدولة وريثة املتشاطئة الدول شعوب على ضغط ل ل تركيا بيد ورقة بل إ وروافدمها النهرين مياه ل حتو العثمانية) ، مكاسب جل أ من سياسية ، بالد شعوب ضد امل مياه جمال يف الدولية البلطجة ممارسة و ممية أأل القوانني مجيع ذلك ب خمرتقة الرافدين، الدولية امل مياه لتقسيم املنظمة ، سوراي من كال بني و بينها املوقعة والربوتوكوالت االتفاقيات وكذلك العراق.

دجلة ي هنر وذلك والفرات،

املفاوضات يف تركيا إليها ترتكز اليت أألساسية طة النق ، َ عن الدويل الطابع صفة نزع هي

واملعقول العادل االستخدام لقواعد أحادي تفسري وفق شاطئة ت امل الدول حدود حيرتم ال سلوك ويف للمياه، واحتياجات سكاهنا.

واحدا مائيا حوضا والفرات دجلة حوض تركيا تعد ، شط هو واحد لنهر رافدان ومها تعترب ال فإهنا وهلذا العرب.

هزار حبرية رى جمل حتويلها - لنهر التقليدي املنبع وهي سهول ال لسقي خاص نفق بواسطة الفرات حوض إل دجلة، حدود ضمن ضفتيها إحدى تقع ر ٍ جما ا أبهن الدويل، املعاكسة الشمالية اجلهة يفوتقع دولة، - مبجرى تالعب أبنه دجلة. عابرين هنرين اجملرى النهر/أو تركيا ف وتعر للحدود.

دولة حدود ضمن أألخرى الضفة اجملرى منتصف يف احلدود خط ليمر اثنية، للحدود العابر اجملرى/النهر أما املائي، ينبع اليت للدولة املطلقة للسيادة فيخضع منها.

وعليه ، حلوضية ا للدولة متنحها اليت امل ياه كمية يف تتصرف أن حقها من فإن تشاء ما هي تستخدم بينما األلخرى، النهرين مياه من حاجتها لسد ، ومستقبال حاضرا . تركيا تعريف يف إن - أعاله - صاحل يف ليست ثغرة الدولية لألهنر أصال صحيح غري الدولية لألهنر تعريفها أن إبل (ابإلضافة تركيا، بنهر يتعلق فيما وذلك)، دجلة أن حيث دجلة. جزيرة مدينة من واعتبارا (ملسافة السورية احلدود يؤلف بوطان، 44 (منها)كم، 37 وسوراي تركيا بني حدودا)كم ، و(7 السورية احلدود من جزءا تشكل)كم االحتاد مع عتها وق مبا شبيهة اتفاقية ستوقع تركيا كانت فهل العراقية. (أرمينيا السابق السوفييت ، الوقت يف وجورجيا بتقاسم احلاضر)، الدولة موافقة دون النهر مبياه التالعب وعدم امل ياه، املنبع دولة هي من عن النظر وبغض املقابلة "احلدودية" ، هبا يسري اليت املسافة أو النهر؟!!.

والفرات دجلة هنري مياه تقسيم مبدأ تركيا ترفض (ج) ، توزيعهما أو ، أو مبدأ ذلك عن بدال وتطرح حماصصتهما، امل ياه) استخدام (ختصيص ، البلدان يف والزراعة الري ملشاريع مشرتكة لدراسات وفقا على هذه وتعتمد املتشاطئة، االستعمال مبدأ وفق الري مشاريع يف امل ياه الستثمار األلولوية إعطاء إبل تنتهي واقتصادية فنية جدوى دراسات " واألكفأ األلمثل " للمياه، .

والفرات دجلة "حوض" يف املائية مواردها على لرتكيا املطلقة السيادة حق على الرتكية املائية السياسة تقوم (د) داخل مبياه مطلق بشكل تصرفت ولذلك أراضيها، اإلروائية واملشاريع السدود تشييد خالل ومن النهرين، والزراعية، بنهج مستمرة تزال وال املتشاطئة الدول حقوق "مراعاة" دون من مقارب، معها.

مما (هـ) اتفاقيات عقد على توافق ال تركيا أن نعلم سبق، - وسوراي العراق مع ثنائية - أو املائية ابحلصص تتعلق احلالية "االستعماالت أو احلالية"، تقسيمكانت لقد املفيدة". على جيربها ال الدويل القانون أن حبجة امل ياه، ذلك.
حول الثالثية "االستعماالت بتعبري عنه واالستعاضة امل ياه،

مفاوضاهتا مجيع ويف تركيا، ضد والعراق لسوراي د موح موقف يوجد ال أن حتاول السابقة، الريبة جو خبلق وذلك ها، حول وسوراي العراق بني والشك بني جدا " املشحون " السياسي اجلو ذلك يف د ساع ولقد امل ياه، وخصوصا البلدين، القرن من التسعينيات من األلول والنصف الثمانينات يف بعد بدأ ملا استمرار هو أيضا اآلن حيدث وما املاضي، االحتالل . لذلك إضافة ، يف دائما متاطل كانت تركيا فإن هنائيا احلبل تقطع وال املفاوضات، ، الوقت لكسب وذلك الواقع" "أألمر وخلق مشاريعها ال إلكم .

والعراق سوريا موقف

العراق موقف مع جدا السورية املائية السياسة تتشابه العموم على ، من ابملوقف يتعلق مبا أبرز يلي وفيما تركيا،

مالحمها:

1 . مائية ر ٍ جما والفرات دجلة أبن والعراق سوراي تؤكد من الدويل القانون مبادئ عليهما تنطبق وعليه دولية، تقاسم حيث امل ياه.

لذلك إضافة ، سوراي من لكل مشرتكة حدودا يشكل دجلة هنر فإن سوراي وكذلك وتركيا، بعض فإن كذلك والعراق. روافد مثل دجلة، زاب ل وا اخلابور، العراق بني احلدود من قسما يشكالن أيضا فإهنما الكبري، املفهوم فإن هلذا وتركيا، احل هذه مثل يف أيضا يطبق أن ميكن الدولية لألهنار الرتكي هلذا وسوراي العراق رفض رغم االت، املفهوم.

2 . حوض عن مستقل الفرات حوض إن شط يف يلتقيان وكوهنما دجلة، واحدا حوضا منهما جيعل ال العرب، . حوض مها ودجلة الفرات وضي ح أن على تركيا أتكيد ن إ غرضني خيدم واحد، ، االول : أكثر للحركة حرية يعطيها النهر حوض مناطق إل النهرين أحد مياه جمرى لتحويل ابلنسبة الثاين والغرض اآلخر. : من التحاسب سيمكنها أنه والعراق سوراي إل الواصلة امل ياه جممل على ، من أو دجلة من امل ياه تزويد مت سواء يفيد قد االمر هذا إن الفرات. دجلة بني فعلي اتصال وجود حالة يف العراق (بعد الثراثر خالل من مثال والفرات، يفيد ال االمر هذا ولكن حتليته).

الفرات و دجلة مياه ، داخل سيكون االتصال أن إذ سوراي،ليس ابلنسبة اخلاصة مشاريعها لسوراي وأن كما العراق، لدجلة. أو ثنائية اتفاقيات خالل من العراق ود حد أو حدودها يصل ما وأن كما ثالثية،

من ة من االعراف وفق شرعي حق بل أحد، عام بروتوكول ووفق الدولية، 1987 تركيا بني ملوقع ا وسوراي.

الثنائية االتفاقيات

القانوين اجلانب هبا حيفل اليت واملعاهدات االتفاقيات نظمت ، دجلة هنري حوض دول بني واملوقعة بعض والفرات، أوجه والعراق تركيا بني للتعاون مهمة مرتكزات االتفاقيات هذه وأرست استغالهلما، خت ترس أن بعد وذلك وسوراي، للنهرين الدولية الصفة ، وسوراي العراق من كل يف الدولة قيام أعقاب يف ، العاملية احلرب انتهاء بعد يف وتربز االول، اآلتية واملعاهدات االتفاقيات اجمالل هذا :

- الثاين كانون ابريس معاهدة 1920 : وبريطانيا فرنسا بني املعقودة املعاهدة وهي ، على االنتداب دوليت بصفتهما العراق مشرتكة جلنة تسمية إل املعاهدة وتشري وسوراي. ، الفرنسي االنتداب حكومة به تقوم مشروع أي بدراسة تقوم سوراي يف الري لتنظيم ، والفرات دجلة هنري مياه يف يؤثر أن شأنه من ، العراقية االراضي إل دخوهلما نقطة عند ابريس معاهدة (وثيقة طاين الربي االنتداب حتت الواقعة 1920 ، امالدة الثالثة).

- متوز لوزان معاهدة 1923 : وتركيا احللفاء دول وقعتها اليت املعاهدة وهي ، شاملة خاصة مادة تتضمن واليت

على تنص املياه ملوضوع : األلحكام غياب عند " على احملافظة أجل من املعنية الدول بني اتفاق عقد جيب املخالفة، لكل املكتسبة احلقوق دولة إقليم يف املنفذة األلعمال على ما دولة يف املائي النظام يعتمد عندما وذلك منها، أخرى، دولة إقليم يف املائي االستعمال يكون عندما أو ، أخرى دولة يف املياه هذه ومصادر ، حدود تعيني بسبب جديدة، البتحكيم املسألـة حتسم االتفاق ر تعذ وعند .

- آذار وتركيا العراق بني وار اجل وحسن الصداقة معاهدة 1946 : وتركيا العراق انتفاع تنظيم املعاهدة هذه تضمنت والفرات دجلة هنري مياه من لنهر األلوسط اجملرى دولة كوهنا رغم اتما جتاهال سوراي املعاهدة جتاهلت وقد وروافدمها. الفرات ، (عن تزيد ومبسافة 600) كم ، استقالهلا على سوراي حصول على واحد عام بعد املعاهدة جاءت وقد الرتكية أو العراقية األلراضي يف ، تكاليف ق العرا يتحمل أن على إقليمها من األلجنبية القوات روج خب الفعليإنشائها. . بصورة الفيضاانت على للسيطرة أو طبيعية،

الدولية األلهنار مبياه االنتفاع مبادئ من مجلة الربوتوكول يقرر كما ، وأمهها : السيادة مبدأ التشاور ومبدأ املشرتكة، لعام وتركيا العراق بني اجلوار وحسن الصداقة معاهدة (وثيقة املشرتك والتعاون 1946 ، رقم الربوتوكول 1).

- وسوراي والعراق تركيا بني والثالثية الثنائية املفاوضات 1962 - 1971 : الدول بني مفاوضات عدة جرت دجلة هنري يف الثالث املتشاطئة املياه حول التفاق التوصل أجل من وذلك والفرات، تلك تتوصل ومل املشرتكة، إىل املفاوضات أبرزها من وكان نتائج، :

أوال : للفرتة ق والعرا سوراي مفاوضات 1962 – 1974 .

اثنيا : للفرتة وتركيا سوراي ت مفاوضا 1962 - 1971 .

اثلثا : للفرتة الثالثية املفاوضات 1965 – 1971 .

رابعا : الثاين كانون وتركيا اق العر بني والفين االقتصادي التعاون بروتوكول 1971 ، اتفاق إىل الربوتوكول تطرق إذ املشاورات إجراء على الطرفني ، كيبان خزان مبليء تركيا قيام عند ، املياه من وتركيا العراق حاجة أتمني بغية وذلك ، احلبانية خزان ملئ متطلبات ذلك يف مبا .

- األلول كانون والفين االقتصادي للتعاون املشرتكة الرتكية العراقية اللجنة اجتماع حمضر 1980 : هذا توقيع جرى أنقرة الرتكية العاصمة يف ، العراق بني (عام سوراي إليه انضمت مث وتركيا، 1983) . اخلامس الفصل واختص احملضر

املياه بقضية منه يف املشرتكة املياه تلوث على السيطرة جمال يف التعاون على الطرفان اتفق إذ اإلقليمية، املنطقة.

احملضر توقيع اترخي من شهرين خالل املشرتكة الفنية للجنة اجتماع عقد على الطرفان ووافق ، املواضيع لدراسة

ابملياه املتعلقة ، دجلة هنري خاص وبشكل اجتماع انعقاد دون تركيا حالت احملدد املوعد انقضاء ومع والفرات، املذكورة اللجنة .

- وتركيا سوراي بني والفين دي االقتصا التعاون بروتوكول 1987 : الربوتوكول هذا على الطرفان وقع ، يقضي الذي (على يزيد الفرات هنر مياه من سنوي معدل بتصريف الرتكي اجلانب إبلزام 500 م) 3 / الرتكية احلدود على اثنية أاتتورك سد إمالء فرتة خالل وذلك السورية،التوصل ، وتركيا العراق الثالث الدول بني النهر مليا ه النهائي التقسيم حني وإبل 58 % الرتكية احلدود عند الواردة املياه من بنسبة سوراي وحصة السورية، 42 % حني إبل وذلك منها،

تركيا مع الفرات هنر مياه تقسيم بشأن هنائية ثالثية اتفاقية إبل . من عقدين من أكثر نتيجة االتفاقية هذه جاءت وقد الطرفني بني ، ومببادرة مع املفاوضات يف سوري عراقي ملوقف مشرتكة أرضية لوضع هتدف وكانت عراقية، املباحثات

تركيا .

املعاهدات بتلك نفسها ألزمت قد كانت تركيا أن ورغم تلك لنقض الفرص تتحني دائما كانت لكنها واالتفاقيات، املعاهدات ، العراق من لكل املائية ابحلصص االلتزام عدم خالل من على أهداف عدة حتقيق أجل من وذلك وسوراي، آن يف واإلقليمي احملليل الصعيدين الوقت من املزيد لكسب املماطلة طريق سلكت وقد واحد، ، مشاريعها تنفيذ بغية على العمالقة لقسمة هنائية اتفاقية إبل التوصل إبل ة الرامي اجلهود لعرقلة أدى الذي ألمر وهو النهرين، املياه، الدولية واملواثيق ألعراف كل بذلك متجاهلة ، جهة من والعراق سوراي بني العالقات على سليب بشكل ر أث مما ، أل اجلهة من الرتكية و خرى.

والفرات دجلة هنري مياه يف التصرف حق نفسها تركيا منحت ، مشاريع فيذ ن بت القيام خالل من مثل ضخمة، : (مشروع GAP) (كيبان ـروع مش قبلــه ومــن)، ،) السالم (أانبيب ومشروع ، سياسي دور لعب ألجل أبيت ذلك وكل يف من ينبعان تركيان هنران مها والفرات دجلة أبن املستمر أتكيدها جانب إبل املنطقة، عابرة هنران وأهنما أراضيها، للحدود ، دولية أهنار وليست .

عام لغاية املياه من والعراق سوراي من لكل الفعلية االحتياجات بتجاهل املتعلقة الرتكية الطروحات رت استم وقد (1997 (يف املتحدة لألمم العامة اجلمعية اعتمدت إذ)، 21 أاير 1997 االستخدامات قانون حول دولية اتفاقية) املائية للمجاري املالحية غري القانون حتديد عدم من تنطلق االتفاقية تلك قبل ت الطروحا تلك كانت فيما الدولية، دول بعدة متر اليت الدولية ألهنار مياه الستخدام قواعد الدويل ، اخلاصة التقليدية الزاوية من إال وذلك ابملالحة، يف املعقودة برشلونة اتفاقية طريق عن ابألخص 20 نيسان 1921 ، للمالحة الصاحلة املياه جمرى نظام حتدد واليت

ألمهية ذاتأغراض كافية غري كانت القواعد وهذه الدولية، ، السكاين ابلنمو املرتبطة االستخدامات تضاعف مع تتالءم وال االقتصادية ، الكثافة تزايد أو اتفاقية مشروع راسة د جرى فيما احلضرية، ، يف امل ياه جماري ابستخدامات تتعلق

غري ينطبق اتفاق حول تفاوض كل يف املشاركة يف مائي جمرى هبا مير اليت الدول حبق االعرتاف مت إذ املالحة، أخرى

املاء جمرى على ألمم ملنظمة بعني واألر الثالثة الدورة مناقشات وثيقة (االتفاق ذلك يف طرفا تكون أن ويف أبسره،

للفرتة املنعقدة املتحدة 14 – نيسان 19 متوز 1991 ، عام التفاقية إلعداد مشروع استغرق وقد 1997 يزيد ما

قرن ربع عن ، (ألعوام طيلة واملناقشات التحضريات استمرت إذ 1970 – 1997).

من االتفاقية هذه وتتكون 33 مادة ، لألمم ة التابع الدويل القانون جلنة أعدهتا هذه مالمح أهم من وكان املتحدة،

االتفاقية ، العامة القواعد تضع إهنا ، شؤون غري يف ألهنار ابستخدامات املتعلقة الكلية واألصول والقواعد املالحة،

عام بوجه لألهنار املائية املوارد تقاسم مبقتضاها يتم اليت ألساسية ، عام اتفاقية واشرتطت 1997 بعدها أتيت أن

من هنر لكل خاصة اتفاقية فيما مياهه تتقاسم اليت النهرية الدول بني إبرامها يتم ألهنار، من تنطلق حبيث بينها،

العامة القواعد ، (اتفاقية تضمنتها اليت الكلية واألصول 21 أاير 1997) ، ابلنهر اخلاصة ألوضاع االعتبار يف آخذة

النواحي مجيع من ، آخر حبت املائية خمططاته يف قدما الرتكي اجلانب مضى وقد مع خالصا نزاعها أصبح حبيث مدى،

املياه بشأن سوراي ، (عام بعد إلقليمي التوازن معادلة من العراق خروج اء جر 2003) ، معظم جتاهلت أن بعد

العراق مع املوقعة السابقة املائية االتفاقات ، والفرات دجلة هنري مليا ه احلصص د وحتدي عمل بتنظيم املتعلقة ، واالهنار

املشرتكة احلدودية ، تركيا دراك إ عرب ألوسط الشرق يف املياه زمة أل السياسي التوظيف وأبيت - مبكر وقت ومنذ - أن

السياسي دورها تنمية على يقوم البعيد مستقبلها ، الشرق دول مع ومصاحلها اليت الغرب دول مع وليس ألوسط،

االحتاد يف عضوا قبوهلا ض ترف ظلت ألورويب.

الدور هلذا استعدت تركيا فإن لذلك ، (الكاب) ألانضول شرق جنوب مشروع ضمن أقامت و GAP هنري على

ودجلة الفرات 22 سدا ، منها 14 الفرات هنر على سد ، أاتتورك سد وأكربها ، و 8 دجلة هنر على سدود ،

إليسو سد وأضخمها ، و 19 حمطة مساحة تعادل كبرية مساحة الستصالح كهرومائية، تسع ويشمل بلجيكا.

داير وهي حمافظات غازي بكر، عينتاب، شانلي سيربت، أدي أورفا، ايمان، ماردين، كالس، شرانك، وبطمان.

بنحو للمشروع التخزينية القدرة وتقدر 100 مرت مليار التخزينية رة القد أضعاف ثالثة متثل القدرة وهذه مكعب،

جمتمعة والسورية العراقية للسدود ، من أكثر املشروع بناء كلفة وتبلغ 35 دوالر مليار ، مساحة سريوي إمتامه وعند

8.5نتيجة مليون مشروع يف واسعة مكانة القطنية املنتوجات وحتتل هكتار. على ستزرع إذ الكاب، 3.1 هكتار مليون مائية بوفرة تتمتع اليت األلوسط الشرق منطقة يف الوحيدة الدولة هي تركيا أن املعروف ومن أراضيها، ، جاءت

التعامل يف اسرتاتيجي كسالح امل ياه ورقة استخدام جادهتا إ ، سوراي مع فقط ليس عربية أخرى دول مع بل والعراق،

وإسرائيل وخليجية ، أانبيب مبشروع يسمى ما خالل من على الغالب هو السياسي الطابع ابت لذلك السالم.

تصرفاهتا يف تركيا دوافع وري الكهرابئية الطاقة إبل حاجتها بسبب املائية سياستها ترسم ال فهي املائية، املزروعات،

معا التقليدية وغري التقليدية األلسلحة بقية من كا فت أشد سالح املاء أن إلدراكها وإمنا ، وكلفة ضجيجا أقلها وهو ،

كثري ال منه ولديها نظافة وأكثرها .

تركيا ، السالح هذا خالل ومن ، واملستقبل احلاضر يف اإلقليمية اهليمنة من أكرب قدر حتقيق يف ترغب ، التغلب مع

املائية لألداة ثل األلم االستخدام عرب الداخلية مشكالهتا بعض على .

خامتة

الرتكية احلكومات سلوك يوضح الفرات و دجلة هنري مياه حول املفاوضات بداية منذ املتعاقبة، ، للرغبة غياب

السوريني جرياهنا حبقوق ابالعرتاف البلدين هذين يف الناس ماليني معيشة على البالغة لألضرار وجتاهل والعراقيني، ،

حتكمها نتيجة واهية وحجج ذرائع ذلك ألجل ختتلق وهي ابملياه، ، حسن وقواعد والقانون املنطق مع تتناقض اجلوار.

والعراقيني السوريني عن الفرات مياه حبس إن ، فقط ضفافه على الواقعة والقرى املدن بسكان يضر ال ، يُضر بل

البالد هذه بسكان حباضرهم مجيعهم، ومستقبلهم.