

In the Name of God

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this important event that focuses on one of the most important issues in water management, and also on behalf of Ministry of Energy and Regional Centre on Urban Water Management- Tehran. I am very grateful to thank the UN-Water Decade Program on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC), and Dr. Ardakanian who is the major proposer for holding this workshop, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and Regional Centre on Urban Water Management - Tehran who have collaborated in organizing and implementing this workshop.

I would like to tell you that we should not look at floods from a negative and pessimistic point of view. Although the economical losses of floods in the world, has extremely increased especially in the recent decades, in many parts of the world, especially in arid and semi arid areas that the temporal and spatial distribution of precipitation has an intensive dispersion and suffers from lack of snow covering and lacks base and steady flow, only the water volume provided by occasional floods is their water resources supply. Actually in these areas aquifers recharge, water ecosystems storage filling and reviving life in the rivers depends on the occurrence of these floods.

As the audiences may know, our country has faced many problems in supplying water demands in recent years due to droughts and intensive precipitation reduction. Although by the considered maneuvers and great efforts that have been done to confront this period, the vastness of these losses considerably decreased. Of course the continuation of this situation would have made vast economical-social and environmental losses. Intensive precipitations in the last months of last Iranian year and beginning months of the New Year and floods occurrences caused flood to be an auspicious event. For example, in Zabol region where Hamoun Lake, as the most important registered water ecosystem in Ramsar

convention, had dried because of lack of water, and life had been ended up, has revived by the flood occurrence and Zabol people and the ones who live in suburbs has welcomed flood. Generally, the face of many parts of our country which has been faded due to lack of rain, again has been revived and has experienced freshness.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my lecture, flooding has negative impacts and human and financial losses that should be reduced by construction of necessary infrastructures from structural and non-structural aspects such as widespread watershed management, groundwater management, establishing artificial recharge systems, postponing dams and flood alerting systems and in return make its positive value be accompanied by added value. I believe that if the international society can consider the flood as a positive event and learn how to live with flood, it can claim that it has managed flood. The management means adopting appropriate policies to make this threat to an opportunity for the promotion of humans' life and comfort.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It seems that appropriate attentions to the floods issue as well as other aspects of water management have not been considered.

A review on the past experiences about the floods management shows that the following lacks are apparent:

- Most of the actions have focused on flood control rather than flood management;
- Implemented works have been more reactive rather than preventive;
- Structural aspects have been considered more than non-structural aspects;
- Governing vision to floods management is absolute rather than interdepartmental and multipurpose.

Unfortunately in addition to the mentioned lacks, new challenges in facing and confronting floods and their management have come into existence in the recent decades:

- Risk increase due to the extensive development of flood plains;
- Climate change and its impacts on floods' intensity and period;
- Environmental considerations in any change of the surface flow regimes of the rivers.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Indeed, Integrated Flood Management has been proposed for the repairing the past gaps and lacks and to face the serious challenges and because of being interdisciplinary it has got worldly famous. If the principles and basics of this concept can be implemented and put into action correctly, we can expect the following results:

- Integrated Flood Management can cause a logical balance between the flood plains development and the flood risks and help the sustainable development in these regions;
- With the use of Integrated Flood Management and its tools, the human activities benefits in flood plains can be maximized and its negative impacts can be prevented;
- Finally, it can guarantee the effective and good performance of ecosystems.

I hope that in this workshop, which is being organized with the presence of professors and experts as lecturers and presenters, the theoretical and applied principles and premises of Integrated Flood Management and its effective tools can be transmitted in its best form to the participants who are mostly the experts and managers from the region countries and can promote their ability in applying these principles in their own countries.

At last, I thank the organizers of this workshop and all the ones who have made successful contributions in organizing this workshop and I wish you a pleasant stay in Iran.

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