

HIGH LEVEL PANEL on HYDRO-DIPLOMACY

On the Side of the UN-Water Summit on Groundwater 2022, coordinated by UNESCO

Under the High Patronage of

Mrs. Irina Bokova

*Co-chair of the International Science Council's Global
Commission on Science Missions for Sustainability*

Former Director General, UNESCO

Mr. Erik Orsenna

*Chairman, Initiative for the Future of Great Rivers
(IAGF Initiative pour l'Avenir des Grands Fleuves)*

Academician at Académie Française

The Conveners

Ambassador S. Gompertz

*Board Member, The Bridge Tank
former Ambassador for the
COP21 French Presidency*

Minister (Dr.) Hakima el Haite

*Board Member, The Bridge Tank
former UNFCCC Champion for
climate & Minister for COP22*

Dr. Joël Ruet

*Chairman, The Bridge Tank
Institute for Innovation,
Ecole Polytechnique*

Minister Hamed Semega

*Board Member, The Bridge Tank
former High Commissioner,
Senegal River Basin Organisation*

Request the pleasure of your active contribution to the High Level panel

“Rethinking Hydro-diplomacy: International Rivers as Instruments for Peace

Shared experiences, solutions, and sustainable resources management”

followed by the launch of the

WORLD WATER for PEACE CONFERENCE

December 6th, 2022, Paris & hybrid,

The Bridge Tank

An international, non-profit, independent think tank specializing in emerging economies, global industries, sustainable development, and global public goods.
Palais Brongniart, 28 Place de la Bourse, 75002 Paris

<https://thebridgetank.org/> www.thebridgetank.org/en/who-are-we/



Concept note

On the eve of the [UN-Water Summit on Groundwater 2022](#) coordinated by UNESCO and a quarter ahead of the [UN 2023 Water Conference](#), The Bridge Tank convenes a high level panel to take place in Paris on December 6th, 2022,

on “Rethinking Hydro-diplomacy: International Rivers as Instruments for Peace. Shared experiences, solutions, and sustainable resources management”.

Contribution to the global agenda: The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (the Water Convention) adopted in Helsinki in 1992 now gathers 47 countries, and its acceptance by the global community ought to be accelerated. In addition to the Convention, and in the age of coalitions, there is the need for a Blueprint for “Shared River Basins Peace” through the promotion of sustainable management of shared rivers, as well as tools and institutions to achieve this aim, which shall be discussed during this meeting.

Approach to address the gaps in the governance of shared river basins and achieve peace: We need to overcome both internal sectoral rivalries over access to water and the rivalry between riparian countries to adopt a river basin approach based on international law. The very concept of sustainability of the resource implies cooperation across actors, which is paradoxically often domestically implemented within countries that externally fight. Water, and more specifically International rivers and their management should no longer be limited to the single dimension of the quantity of water needed by a country, but addressed in a more holistic way by taking into account the whole river basin in terms of territory, actors and activities from upstream to downstream - something that some river basin organizations are already doing well, a fact that is seldom showcased.

Expectations and outcome for the Paris High Level Panel on hydro-diplomacy: The Paris High Level Panel will gather practitioners of success stories and inspiring case studies, policy and decision makers, influencer and civil society, financiers. Relaying the expertise of Peace Nobel Prize nominated water organizations, The Bridge Tank aims to offer a platform for a dynamic exchange on the preservation of great rivers, the potential of peace building through hydro-diplomacy, best practices and to build consensus on the importance of the right level of integration of stakeholders. In line with these efforts, the objective of this conference in Paris in December 2022 is to address: 1) the politics of Water Peace, 2) innovative legal and institutional tools for hydro-diplomacy ; 3) conceptual framework & institutional tools of inclusive cooperation across river basin organizations (RBOs), riverine people’s assemblies, and other actor, 4) Rivers Science, technical innovation and entrepreneurship incubation.

Further Milestones towards the “World Water Peace Conference”, 2022-2023

We will bring the High Panel conclusions to the UN 2023 Water Conference next March in New York, to further make the platform perennial with an annual "World Water for Peace Conference" with a first edition in 2023.

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On the Side of the UN-Water Summit on Groundwater 2022, coordinated by UNESCO

6th December 2022 Paris & Hybrid

France-Ameriques

9 Av. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Paris

9h-10h - Welcome of the participants (Paris & Hybrid)

WORDS OF INTRODUCTION – CHALLENGES

10h-10h30

Objectives: This opening session shall set the stage for the day by providing an assessment of the existing international & United Nations system on questions of water. It will introduce existing hydrodiplomacy initiatives and experiences from non-conflictual and integrated development water co-management efforts for a renewed and enlarged practice of hydrodiplomacy.

Welcome address & Moderator: **RUET Joël** (Dr. Mr.) Chairman, The Bridge Tank, Institute for Innovation, Ecole Polytechnique

- **BOKOVA Irina** (Ms.), Co-chair of the Global Commission on Science Missions for Sustainability, International Science Council (ISC), Former Director General, UNESCO
- **ORSENA Erik** (Mr.), Chairman, Initiative for the Future of Great Rivers (IAGF Initiative pour l’Avenir des Grands Fleuves), Academician at Académie Française
- **SEMEGA Hamed** (Minister Mr.) Board Member, The Bridge Tank, Former High Commissioner, Senegal River Basin Organisation (OMVS)

SESSION 1: TESTIMONIES OF PROGRESSIVE WATER POLITICS

10h30-11h45; each speakers’ intervention: 5-6 minutes & 2 rounds of discussion

Objectives: Building on the introductory session, this session will give the floor to political decision makers from around the globe for them to share and discuss their experiences with water and its management. This shall provide an insight into existing practices and offer new ideas towards more progressive water politics and a renewed approach to hydrodiplomacy.

Moderator: **GOMPERTZ Stéphane** (Mr. Ambassador), Board Member, The Bridge Tank, former Ambassador for COP21 French Presidency

- **EL HAITE Hakima** (Dr. Minister. Ms.), Board Member, The Bridge Tank, former UNFCCC Champion for climate, Minister of Environment, Morocco & Host of COP22 (*by Zoom*)
- **KHAN Runa** (Ms.), Founder & Executive Director, Friendship NGO, Bangladesh (*by Zoom*)
- **TOURE Sidi** (Minister Mr.), Minister, Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries, Côte d’Ivoire (*video*)
- **SIDIBE Diaka** (Dr. Minister Ms.), Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation, Guinea (*video*)
- **SEKERINSKA Radmila** (Minister Ms.), Former Minister of Defence of Northern Macedonia (*by Zoom*)
- **LALONDE Brice** (Minister Mr.), Former UN Under Secretary, Former Minister of Environment, France

SESSION 2: WATER & DEVELOPMENT

11h45-13h; each speakers' intervention: 5-6 minutes & 2 rounds of discussion

Objectives: This second session on water and development will turn to international aid and development actors. Their concrete experiences and field knowledge will create a dynamic dialogue around their existing initiatives, and the challenges and hurdles faced as part of their activities on water-related topics.

Moderator: **VERCAMBRE Marie-Laure** (Ms.), General Director, French Water Partnership

- **SORENSEN Claus** (Mr.), Former Director General, European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO) (by Zoom)
- **KARLSSON Mats** (Mr.), Former World Bank Vice President & Former State Secretary for development, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden
- **LUNDE Lars Andreas** (Mr.), leader of Norad's Section for Nature and Climate, The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) (by Zoom)
- **DELISLE Pascal** (Mr.), Head, Economic, Development, Environment and Digital Issues, European External Action Service (EAES), Geneva (by Zoom)
- **GOUJON Lionel** (Mr.), Head of division, Water and Sanitation Division, French Development Agency (AFD)
- **KUINDERSMA Eric** (Mr.), Senior Policy Advisor Water Governance, Waterschap Rivierenland, The Netherlands
- **LIPPONEN Anukka** (Dr. Ms.), Chief Specialist on Water Resources Management, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland

BREAK 13h-13h20

LUNCH 13h20-15h

SESSION 3: INNOVATIVE TOOLS FOR A REVISITED HYDRODIPLOMACY

15h15-16h30; each speakers' intervention: 5-6 minutes & 2 rounds of discussion

Objectives: This last panel shall discuss the diversity of tools at the service of hydro-diplomacy, be they economic, technological, social, legal or political ones. Building on the need to renew and enlarge the practice of hydro-diplomacy, this session will discuss innovative ways to involve the variety of sectors, actors, resources, and territories needed for a sustainable development and co-management of water.

Moderator: **BRETHAUT Christian** (Dr. Mr.) Scientific Director, Geneva Water Hub (GWH), Global Observatory for Water and Peace (GOWP)

- **BHUTTA Zulfiqar**, (Prof. Mr.), Founding Director, Institute for Global Health and Development and the Centre of Excellence in Women and Child Health, Aga Khan University, Karachi (by Zoom)
- **TURAYEVA Suriya** (Dr. Ms.) leading lecturer for "Environmental Protection and Rational Use of Natural Resources", The University of World Economy and Diplomacy of Uzbekistan (by Zoom)
- **DAS Arnab** (Commodore. Dr. Mr.), Director and Founder, Maritime Research Center (MRC), Pune
- **VETTAH Mohamed Ould Abdel** (Mr.), High Commissioner, Senegal River Basin Organisation (OMVS) & Former Minister of Petroleum, Energy and Mines, Mauritania
- **TARDIEU Eric** (Mr.), Director General, International Office for Water (OIEau)
- **SCHMEIER Susanne** (Dr. Ms.), Associate Professor, Water Law and Diplomacy, Institute for Water Education (IHE), Delft
- **TIGNINO Mara** (Dr. Ms.), Lead Legal Specialist, Geneva Water Hub (by Zoom)

CONCLUSION 16h30-16h45

16h45 – 18h Coffee & Networking