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Committee on Middle East Questions

Second Roundtable on Water: *From words to actions*

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Geneva, Switzerland

Experts' bios

Dr. Danilo Türk – Chair, Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace



Danilo Türk is the Chair of the Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace and the chairman of the board of the Global Fairness Initiative, a Washington-based NGO dedicated to economic and social development in developing nations. He is also the founder of the Danilo Türk Foundation, devoted mostly to the rehabilitation of child victims of armed conflict. In 2016 Mr. Türk was a candidate for the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations. He served as the President of Slovenia from 2007 to 2012.

Mr. Türk was the first Slovene ambassador to the United Nations, from 1992 to 2000, and was the UN Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs from 2000 to 2005. In 1987 Dr. Türk initiated and participated in the establishment of the Human Rights Council in Slovenia. From 1984 to 1992 he was member of the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities as an independent expert and acted in his personal capacity. Since 1975 he has been actively involved with Amnesty International and has acted as adviser in many cases involving human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia.

Prof. Dr. Herwig Schopper



Dr. Schopper is an experimental physicist. Currently Dr. Schopper works as an advisor and goodwill ambassador on science for peace. He is the founding father of SESAME, the laboratory for Synchrotron-Light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East, which provides an extremely bright light source to investigate a broad range of domains from condensed matter to biology and archeology. In 1999-2008 he became President of the Preliminary International Council and later, after the formal foundation of SESAME, of the International Council.

At UNESCO, he served as Member of the Physics Action Council and Chairman of the Working Group on Large Facilities, President of the Scientific Council of the Regional Office for Science and Technology ROSTE of UNESCO in Venice (2001-2002) and in 2003-2009 he was the Chairman of the International Advisory Committee for the International Basic Science Programs.

Dr. Schopper was elected Director General of CERN and served from 1981 to 1988. His first task was to unite the two CERN laboratories existing at that time under two Director Generals. The Large Electron-Positron Collider (LEP) was also proposed and constructed under his leadership. From 1977 to 1979, he was Chairman of the Association of the German Large Research Centres (now Helmholtz Association) and member of various advisory bodies of the Federal Ministry of Research, the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and the Max Planck Society. He also served as President of the European Physical Society.

François Münger – Director, Geneva Water Hub



Since 2015 Mr. Münger is the Director of the Geneva Water Hub that he has launched. The Geneva Water Hub is the Secretariat of the Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace, co-convened by fifteen countries, as well as the Secretariat of the Group of Friends on water and Peace with about forty UNOG missions. From 2008 to 2015 he was Head of the Water Initiatives division in the Global Cooperation domain at the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation that he has created and developed. He worked on the following fields: (i) global influence through strategic global networking as GWP, WSSCC, WSP & WWC (ii) partnership with research institutes, Swiss municipalities utilities, NGOs and Private sector (iii) global projects (iv) Interdepartmental coordination of Swiss departments working in the water & development field. He was also the Special Envoy for Water of Switzerland. Mr. Münger has a scientific background in Geophysics, mineralogy, hydrogeology and environmental engineering.

Amanda Loeffen – Director General, WaterLex



Amanda Loeffen is a water governance expert, leading a qualified team of lawyers, policy makers, and technical experts with expertise in water law and policy at WaterLex. WaterLex supports governments and parliamentarians in development of strategies for implementation of SDG6, using the human rights to water and sanitation as a basis for the framework.

Prior to joining WaterLex, Amanda directed a water resource project management company in New Zealand, where she oversaw the design, environmental consent and multi-stakeholder engagement for a large community-owned hydro-irrigation scheme. She has also worked in business management in the private sector, predominantly in natural resources and plastic intermediates. She has a BSc in Chemistry, and an MBA in finance.

Dr. Maurizio Bona, CERN – Senior Advisor for relations with Parliaments and Science for policy, European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN)



Maurizio Bona holds an engineering degree, and a Doctor degree on material science. Starting in the mid-eighties he participated in the design and development of the superconducting magnets for the LHC (the Large Hadron Collider accelerator), with key responsibilities in the first full-length dipole prototypes. He also acted as Invited Professor at University, teaching applied superconductivity and superconducting magnets. Between 1998 and 2005 he led various CERN Groups, and from 2006 to 2008 the CERN Safety department.

From 2009 to end 2015 he was the Advisor to the Director-General, charged with relations with international organizations. He was instrumental to develop the CERN network of relations with other international organizations and to obtain the status of Observer for CERN in the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 2012. From January to September 2016 he served as the Head of Relations with international organization. As from October 2016 he is Senior Advisor for relations with Parliaments and Science for policy, as well as Senior Advisor on knowledge transfer.

Natasha Carmi – Policy Advisor on Water, Environment, Agriculture and Energy to the Palestinian Negotiations Support Project (PNSP)



Ms. Carmi, an engineer by education, holds a Master's Degree in Hydrology for Environmental Management from Imperial College. She is currently Policy Advisor on Water, Environment, Agriculture and Energy to the Palestinian Negotiations Support Project (PNSP) and has been a "water team" member on the PNSP for the past six years. Ms. Carmi has worked with water resources and environmental challenges in the Middle East for the past 20 years.

She serves frequently as a faculty member for conferences and workshops dealing with transboundary water resources, presenting the perspective of a country in which all of its water resources are transboundary, where water is a core political issue and international water law is a necessary framework for resolving conflicts and identifying opportunities and solutions.

Ms. Rose Osinde Alabaster – Programme Director, Africa Region, WaterLex



Rose Alabaster is a water and sanitation governance and policy expert (with specialized knowledge of human rights and conflict resolution), with close to twenty years of global experience working at international, national and sub-national levels with key development partners including bilateral donors and regional banks such as the African Development Bank. Her experience goes beyond the traditional water sector partners, and includes the formulation and audit of projects and programmes that support sustainable planning, evaluation, research on social, economic issues related to sustainable development, as well as at advisory level to governments and programming.

Dr. Florian Thevenon – Senior Scientific Officer, Waterlex



Dr. Florian Thevenon has 15 years of international experience in linking natural scientific-based knowledge and water governance: climate change, human activities and pollution, international policy and human rights. He has collaborated on water capacity development with international organizations (e.g. UNDP, UNESCO, UNEP and UN Water), universities (e.g. Geneva and Kinshasa) and NGOs (e.g. IUCN). He has participated in international projects in Africa, America, Asia and Europe, resulting in the publication of 50 peer-reviewed research articles/reports read 15k and cited 1k times (c.f. ResearchGate Stats).