



MESSAGE TO APWF

EASAN DECLARATION

BEPPU CITY, Japan, 02 December 2007

Ministers and leaders from 15 East Asian countries gathered for two days of talks about SANITATION and HYGIENE in the region.

Almost half the population of East Asia lacks access to adequate sanitation, such as pit latrines with slabs or composting toilets. This harsh reality – affecting almost 800 million people – has spawned disease and deprivation on a massive scale, reinforced a vicious cycle of poverty among the marginalized, and widened disparities between urban and rural, rich and poor households.

The East Asia Ministerial Conference on Sanitation and Hygiene is the highest-level gathering of its kind ever to be held in this region. One hundred and thirty-five delegates attended, including ministers of health and water and senior government officials. The focus was on nine countries: China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Mongolia, Timor-Leste, the Philippines and Viet Nam. In addition, representatives from Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore and Thailand attended.

The EASAN declaration:

- Identifies sanitation and hygiene as primary requirements for poverty reduction and economic growth;
- Recognizes that levels of investment and political attention are not commensurate with the scale of the challenge; and
- Commits the EASAN countries to strive for UNIVERSAL SANITATION going far beyond the MDG targets.

The EASAN Declaration specifically calls on the Asia Pacific Water Forum (APWF), to recognize EASAN 2007 and its follow-up as an integral part of the APWF process, to recognize the Declaration and to provide practical support in operationalising these commitments

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