



**EUROPEAN UNION**

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**Press Release**

## **European Union (EU) Continues to support Water Sector in Egypt**

European and Egyptian officials inaugurated the fourth EU-Water Talks event in Cairo where they exchanged views on national investment projects in the water sector. The two-day event gathered over 150 experts, academics, senior government officials and project managers of donor agencies. It is part of the continued EU-Egypt cooperation in water/wastewater sectors. This is part of the European Union (EU) funded Water Support Reform Programme- Phases I and II with total Grant of **€200 million** which is in line with the Millennium Development Goals in water sector in Egypt.

"The EU has a steadfast commitment to work with Egypt in this vital area" said H.E Ambassador James Moran, Head of the EU delegation to Egypt. Moran added that "water is key to sustainable development. Indeed it is life itself. Yet, population growth, poverty and climate change bring new pressures every year. One in three people already lives in a country with moderate to high water stress, and by 2030 nearly half the world's people could be facing water scarcity. Egypt faces major challenges: to name but one, over 40 million have no access to sanitation. Best practice and the application of new technology are essential to planning for the future and I am confident these talks will make a major contribution to that".

This is the fourth event of EU-EGYPT Water Talks and is co-hosted with the Egyptian Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities (MHUCC) under the title: "**EU-Egypt Water Talks; Towards Integrated Planning for the National Projects in the Water Sector**". The main topics of discussion are: joint integrated investment planning in wastewater sector, National Rural Sanitation Strategy (NRSS) of Egypt, innovative strategies towards enhanced wastewater reuse techniques, Inclusion of Desalination option along the Egyptian coastlines, Inter-ministerial coordination and Institutional Capacity Building in water sector.

The event aims at enhancing exchange of expertise and knowledge amongst water and wastewater professionals to support continuing reform programme of water sector in four main areas; Desalination as a means for covering service gap; EU support to the National Rural

Sanitation strategy; EU support to the National Rural Sanitation Programme and utilising innovative techniques for wastewater reuse. This comes in accordance with the objectives of the National Water Resource Plan 2005-2017 and of recently adopted Water and Wastewater Sector Development Policy.

**Background:**

EU-Egypt Water talks are funded by European Union within the framework of the **Water Sector Reform Programme-II (WSRP-II)**. Following the success of **WSRP- Phase I** with total Grant of **€80 million**, the EU and the Government of Egypt agreed to allocate an additional grant of **€120 million** for phase two of Egypt's WSRP (WSRP-II). Phase two is scheduled to be implemented between 2011-2015 and is to be distributed according to a new set of jointly agreed reform benchmarks. The beneficiaries are the Ministry of: Water Resources and Irrigation, Ministry Housing and Urban development and Ministry of Finance in addition to the Holding Company for Water and Wastewater. The overall objective of the WSRP-II is to support the Egyptian government in continuing its water sector reform programme of in accordance with the **National Water Resource Plan 2005-2017 (NWRP 2005-2017)** and of the recently adopted **Water and Wastewater Sector Development Policy (WWSDP)**. The overall budget is **€120 million** which **€10 million** is **Technical Assistance** to Line Ministries

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