Speech by GWP Deputy Executive Secretary Rudolph Cleveringa

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- The insights I share with you today are gleaned from the session on Civil Society contribution to the implementation of the SDG related to Water, coordinated by Alice Bouman/Dentener, Women and Water Partnership, and Bart Devos, World Youth Parliament for Water, the many presenters, discussants and participants. We all elaborated on aspects related to Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, Water Scarcity and Allocation, Water Quality and Ecosystem Services, and Adaptive Planning and Management.

- The views and opinions of organizers and participants are supported and contextualized by the excellent background materials prepared for the Conference as well as for this specific sessions. We focused on governance relationships between CS and Government and did not explore the governance of the relations with academia and business, or private sector, as these were covered by parallel sessions.

- The overarching principles are still the Dublin Principles for Integrated Water Resources Management, notably:
    - *Principle No. 2 – Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners and policy-makers at all levels. The participatory approach involves raising awareness of the importance of water among policy-makers and the general public. It means that decisions are taken at the lowest appropriate level, with full public consultation and involvement of users in the planning and implementation of water projects.*

- Let me remind us that the Decade coincided for the most part with the MDG era where the Global South was told by the Global North what is was to do with the World in the South. Climate Change has altered that bias in the sense that at all the giant COP conferences the governance of mitigation is at least coupled to the one of Adaptation. Of course it is the common understanding that the Global South must adapt and mitigate< the North will just mitigate in order to reduce Loss and Damages as in Disaster Risk Reduction. So when we extract lessons learnt on Governance of Water from this era we may be focused too much on the South and not cover LL in and by the Global North.
    - WEF Davos have again for 2015 voted Water Crisis as a Global Risk: number one in terms of impact, followed by Interstate Conflicts and Failure of Climate Change Adaptation
    - Water crisis is a crisis of Governance, we all said as UN Water
    - End of a Decade Water for Life 2005-2015
    - SDGs, DRR, COP and US/EU trade agreements to also be seen as Nexus

- I do not claim today#s presentation is comprehensive and in full reflection of the participants# points of view but the intention is there. Excuses to all who feel underrepresented- possible symptomatic for civil society as well. I hope you bear with me.

- Which are then some of the more salient findings_

1. Civil Society does not manifest itself as a single, homogenous set of actors with shared goals, norms and values. Actors are varied in socio/economic status, in cultural appreciations, in

aspirations, in age and gender, in self-identification as IP, castes, or farmers and urbanites, yet above all as citizens in their societal contract with their governments, rules and institutions that constitute governance. Indeed, we would like to think in terms of diverse and segmented Civil Societies, plural.

2. A common denominator is constituted in the space that is conquered or allocated to CSs to engage in governance of water. This space is characterized by the trust relationship between these governance actors. Actually it is more the lack of trust, or the asymmetrical build-up of that trust. Governance, maybe redundant, is not the same as Government.

3. Trust building is not a mechanical, predictable, linear process> I do this, and an x amount of trust is built. When eroded I add some more x and we are there again. Trust building is a long and winding process around perceptions more than facts. It is driven by incentives and egos, or by the lack thereof. It extends within CSss as well as between CSs and other stakeholder actors in Governance, incl the different levels of Government. For the context of today, our main counterpart. So trust is a process, not just between CSs and Govt but also between CSss parties.

4. What do we need this trust for? Basically the governance relation between CSS and others is about informed participation, inclusion in decision making on roles and responsibilities, access to risk and benefit sharing, risk sharing and conflict resolution, accountability and transparency in political and financial terms such anti-fraud and anti-corruption, and above all, to get from localized solutions in governance to larger societal models and approaches that empower the roles and responsibilities as well as rights and obligations of CSs constituents, also known as pro/active citizens. So trust is the key ingredient of inclusive and equitable governance of water, and water related development and risk sharing.

5. These aspects were illustrated by the Myanmar and LAC case study which embraced at local level, and set in local cultural self/appreciation, the following global role of civil society:
   a. holding its government(s) accountable both parties practice good governance and therewith enforces sustainable water governance. Government and CSs are people, not acronyms.
   b. Part of accountability is also the monitoring which prevents irregular use of finances etc.
   c. articulating the needs of the local population and providing the evidence base for informed decision making. This included the design and implementation of projects and programmes on the different water themes. Several examples of that were articulated in the cases
   d. raising awareness and motivating the community to get involved.

6. We introduced a differentiation in CSs, we also introduced a differentiation in levels of government. Participants found ample evidence that trust building between CSs and decentralized, local governments, such as municipalities, counties or districts, is more likely to happen where land and water governance issues, technology choices, capacitation efforts, financing propositions, are local. Here segmentation is welcome as expressing diversity, and fragmentation is more easily overcome, yet recognized land and water, to consolidation of common views and approaches in a shared river basin, in a watershed where one lives, in a coastal or riverine setting affecting your livelihood.

7. Local languages, customs and norms enrich and complement national ones which makes communication easier and knowledge sharing somewhat more accessible. But evidence was also voiced that even at these levels CSs need a lot of P words> from politeness to perseverance, and that these local trust building processes take time, often more than a

decade. Participation is a mind-set and a behaviour, and self-confidence of CSS is more often than not self-expressed as #we are not smart enough#.

8. A key finding is that not only at these levels, Indigenous Peoples have a lot to ask and a lot to offer, yet remain marginalized from governance of water, oftentimes their land and water, their livelihoods. We simply need to learn to listen, listen to other concepts and understand how to mistrust can be reconstructed into trust. Persuasive approaches abound from settings as diverse as full embraced and recognized IP by Govt, such as in LAC as illustrated by ILO, to approaches battling reservations with regard to the very nature of IP, not by Govt but by CS itself as well (such as in Tanzania, and in some countries in SEA). Hijacking agendas of IP by Govt and how experiences in governance of self/determination in mitigation of suck risk were addressed.

9. Furthermore, the meetings largely coincided that Govts at higher and federated levels are growingly convinced their open and constructive engagement with CSs is needed in order to grow to sustainable solutions in governance for lasting impact such as universal coverage and Human Rights based access to sanitation. Or the governance of reforms in NR tenure and in recognizing the multi/functionality of landscapes, thus overcoming insecurity of access and control over the use of resources, incl alternative dispute resolution such as River Contracts and Basin Parliaments, while securing multiple benefits for all stakeholders. Participation pays.

10. Participation is still very much a physical exercise, people meeting people to build understanding and trust. ICT may support information but not substitute for these #in the flesh, see eye to eye# meetings. These multi-stakeholder platforms are doors, doors in communication. The lessons learnt on strengthening doors, entry and exit points, hence in dialogue between actors, were highlighted as opportunities to better understand roles and responsibilities. It pays to learn to listen.

11. Either side of the door, hence Govt and CSss, need to be informed and prepared in their capacities to understand each other in water governance. Where Govts may allocate funds to train and capacitate its institutions, such funding for CSs is subject to stress and conditionalities. Donors were reported to have fallen back into their accounting comfort zone, focused on quick results, earmarking funds, and requiring high transaction cost but allowing for low overheads. Economic instruments do not deliver at scale, we heard from OECD. Why?

12. As alluded to earlier, with the Climate Change, DRR and SDG coming on, enormous pledges to dedicated funds will emerge further. LL from the MDGs is that the governance of these funds is, to say the least, not sufficiently transparent to have warranted maximum use to maximum of effects. Absorption at local and national levels have stayed way below projections, scaling up of empowering approaches and tools has not happened to the desired degrees. The meetings addressed scaling-up, replication and impeding elements, obstacles, but did not elaborate extensively (GIZ, IFAD and Brookings Institute have elaborated insights). Yet these Global Funds seldom dedicate an appropriate level of funding to preparedness and readiness for absorption. Preparedness and informed participation as an equal partner, as a peer, doesn#t come for free. Suggestions were made to create dedicated budget lines or whole funds altogether, such as a Women and Water Fund, which would address capacity building of CSs and related partners. Pay for Participation?

13. Capacitation, also subject to the next round of sharing findings, needs its own set of governance approaches. Our participants vividly engaged in sharing LL on involving and being accountable to Women and Youth. Encouraging examples of pilots and approaches to scaling up capacity development or reinforcement were shared. However, scaling up while

overcoming obstacles, need to address the governance of fiscal space, institutional space, policy and political space. Cultural space, partnership space and learning space form explicit part of the scaling up spaces and drivers. All need monitoring, monitoring of governance of scaling up, obviously involving CSs. Scaling up needs a different analytical framework, such as the one from Brookings, than just removing obstacles.

14. With multiple actor capacitation as a key concern, and linking capacitation to training and knowledge, the governance of networking and communities/of/practice was touched upon. Fragmentation of interests, missing or not understanding (economic) incentives to co-act, consolidation and competition go all hand in hand in networking, we learned from audience interaction. With my Global Water Partnership hat on I refer you to our site on the web.

15. The inclusion of Youth as a driver and agent of communication found wide embrace. The SDGs which do have a dedicated goal 5 for women, does also address Youth, but not in an sufficiently explicit way, twice as a target in Goal 4, and once in Goals 8 and 13. There are no goals or targets for the Third Generation. This invited the audience to reflect on what were considered innovative dimensions>

    a. Governance institutions to include youth, and how this is being done for instance by Water Youth Parliaments<

    b. Governance of communication is no longer a question of affordable access to communication but of ownership and use, and possible abuse, of social media and big data, encouraging examples of mass use of smart ICT for DRR in Bangladesh and in Eastern Africa were highlighted,

    c. Governance of consumers (The Academia sessions raised this as well). Consumers were identified to be a driving force of change in water governance as especially young consumers are growingly informed and involved in water and land footprinting, slow food and wanting to know the origin of their food. Branding is key and consumers go for brands. However, mainstream governance look more at the input&production or management side of water rather than use and increasing the efficiencies in the field to fork value chains where considerable water quality and quantity issues are locked,

    d. Governance of the use of social security networks and guaranteed work schemes as part of a Green Economy in attaining water objectives and securing green jobs. We were informed that UN Water is addressing Water and Jobs, and governance thereof, in its next iteration of the World Water Development Report and how the Stockholm World Water Week has this as the feature for 2016.

With this incomplete and biased resume, I have dwelled with you on:

- main challenges identified

- the roles of the different civil society actors and their added value in achieving universal access and sustainable water governance

- the preconditions we need to do our work,

- and the tools that civil societies applies successfully in our work.

Looking forward to your feedback and suggestions to improve Governance and CSs towards successful SDG implementation.