
Press Release

Business says sound policies for investment in water infrastructure are vital as part of economic recovery

PARIS and ISTANBUL, 13 March 2009 – In anticipation of the 5th World Water Forum to be held in Istanbul, March 16-22, business leaders from BIAC and one of its Turkish member organisations, TUSIAD, called on policymakers to swiftly develop and implement fact-based and data-driven policy measures to meet the rapidly growing investment needs of water infrastructure and services.

“Today’s political leaders should be aware that improving access to water presents a real opportunity towards economic recovery”, said Mr. Tadahiro Asami, BIAC Secretary General. “Policymakers urgently need evidence about the economic benefits of pursuing water policies, and the costs of inaction.”

To ensure effective actions are taken, meaningful and comparable data on spending, costs and benefits is required urgently. Without this data there is a strong risk that flawed policy decisions would be taken, thereby leading to negative repercussions for peoples and economies around the world. To fill this need, BIAC and TUSIAD call on the OECD, a global leader in providing fact-based economic analysis and a major contributor to the World Water Forum, to generate much-needed research on the “economics” and “value” of water.

The main reason for concern about water provision is not water scarcity, but rather under-investment and poor water infrastructure and management. With no water services, there is no business, no economic growth, no prosperity and no sustainable development.

One half of the developing world’s population faces the risk of water-related diseases, and even death, as they do not have access to safe and hygienic drinking water and sanitation. If a major global water crisis is triggered by reduced investment in water infrastructure and service provision (which could face even greater cuts in the current economic crisis), it would devastate agricultural production, undermine energy security, and cripple national or regional development.

“Business believes that sound policies for water management and investment should be central features of economic, industrial, environmental and social policies of all countries, and should be particularly considered in national economic stimulus packages”, added TUSIAD Secretary General, Mr. Zafer Ali Yavan. “Investment in water provision, coupled with greater public awareness about efficient water management, is expected to significantly boost economic growth and yield major benefits for economic recovery.”

With millions of lives and livelihoods at stake, the cost of inaction is too serious to ignore.

Notes to Editors:

BIAC www.biac.org

Founded in 1962 as an independent organisation, the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD (BIAC) is the officially recognised representative of the OECD business community. BIAC's members are the major business organisations in the OECD member countries and a number of OECD observer countries.

The BIAC Water Group has provided regular business input towards the first phase of the OECD Horizontal Water Programme, the outcomes of which are to be presented at the 5th World Water Forum. For more information on BIAC's water policy activities, please contact Jonny Greenhill (greenhill@biac.org) and Hanni Rosenbaum (rosenbaum@biac.org).

For information about BIAC, journalists are invited to contact [Mark Primmer](#), BIAC Communications Manager. (Tel: +33 1 42 30 09 60, Email: mark.primmer@biac.org).

TUSIAD www.tusiad.org

TUSIAD is a non-governmental voluntary association composed of individual members. TUSIAD is devoted with its various departments to economic, political and social problems of Turkey on the way to the EU accession.

TUSIAD is a window of business through its representations in Brussels (1996), Washington DC (1998), Berlin (2003), Paris (2004), Beijing (2006).

TUSIAD is a member of BUSINESSEUROPE, BIAC (Business and Industry Advisory Council of the OECD), and UMCE (Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises) and UBCCE (Union of Black Sea and Caspian Confederation of Enterprises).

TUSIAD's Environmental Working Group, which is composed of industrialists, academicians, experts and representatives of the NGOs, aims to promote sustainable development by achieving the balance of economy-environment-industry and by integrating sustainable development into all policies. Moreover, TUSIAD works for the promotion of environmental awareness in the society.

TUSIAD contributes to the 5th World Water Forum at national and international levels. For this occasion, TUSIAD and WWF-Turkey are organizing the exhibition of "Water for All", which is designed by Cité des sciences et de l'industrie in Paris, in Santralistanbul during 12 March-31 May 2009. This exhibition, aims to increase awareness towards the water consumption.

For further details, journalists are invited to contact Mr. Leman Atesok, TUSIAD Press Relations (Tel: +90 212 324 6560 / 111 Fax: +90 212 293 3783 Email: latesok@tusiad.org)