

Water in Armed Conflict
Friday, March 22th, 1:00-3:00pm
Talking Points

Opening Remarks

- Good afternoon, my name is Adam Lupel, IPI's Vice President and it is my pleasure to welcome you all to this policy forum on "Water in Armed Conflict".
- Today we are commemorating the 2019 World Water Day and we are pleased to host this important event together with UNICEF and the Geneva Water Hub.
- This year's theme is "**Leaving no one behind**", which as you know is a central promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It encourages all of us to address the reasons why so many marginalized people and those affected by crises have no access to safe water.
- Many of you in this room tackle various water issues worldwide or are interested in stimulating actions to address water crises in a practical, preventive manner.
- Now let me give the floor to Kevin Rudd, who served as Australia's 26th Prime Minister, and is current Chair of the IPI Board of Directors as well as inaugural President at the Asia Society Policy Institute. Kevin also Chair of Water and Sanitation for All, the global multi-stakeholder partnership working to catalyze political leadership and improve accountability in sanitation, water, and hygiene.

- Before I introduce our distinguished speakers, let me say a few words about the topic of today's policy forum.
- As some of you may remember, last year, IPI held a similar event on water titled "**Water and Peace: A Matter of Survival**". We discussed the critical linkages between water, peace, and security. Today's occasion will

enable us to gain a deeper understanding of the important linkages between people and water.

- **The 2017 report “Matter of Survival”** published by the High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, and the recent **initiatives undertaken by UNICEF** to generate national and international political support for upholding international humanitarian law to end attacks against water infrastructure are invaluable bases for today’s discussion.
- This forum will also focus on how the international community can respond to specific water crises through more effective water cooperation mechanisms and initiatives.
- By 2030, **Two-thirds** of the global population is predicted to be living in cities. Out of the **65 million** people who are forcibly displaced, **75%** live in urban areas.. Due to such population growth, economic development and the impact of climate change, global demand for water are expected to grow **by 50%**.
- When wars are fought in **cities**, the vital infrastructure that makes communities function is damaged or destroyed. There is often no safe water to drink, no electricity to power homes and businesses, or health services to vaccinate or cure disease.
- The challenge of water scarcity to sustainable development as well as the **nexus between water and security** are increasingly debated by the UN Security Council and various UN fora.
- Unaddressed, all these challenges will leave many people behind.

Let me briefly introduce the distinguished panel we have assembled for you today. You have their full bio in the blue hand out.

Let me start with his Excellency Mr. **Danilo Türk**, Former President of the Republic of Slovenia, Chairman of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace and Lead Political Advisor of the Geneva Water Hub.

Next to him is **Ms. Laurence Boisson de Chazournes** who is full Professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Geneva and former member of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace.

Next to her is **H.E. Ms. Lise Gregoire-van Haaren**, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations in New York since 2016.

Mr. Manuel Fontaine, is Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes at UNICEF since 2017. *Has he confirmed?*

Questions

It is my great pleasure to give the floor to **Danilo Türk**. Danilo, you recently wrote an article in the Fair Observatory titled “Refining the UN’s Approach to the Water-Security Nexus”. Could you share with our audience what these approaches are and how they be refined by the UN? What UN member states can do to support activities related to protection of water as a way of confidence-building and peace?

I am now pleased to turn to **Laurence Boisson de Chazournes**, who has a rich legal experience and has been involved in numerous negotiations regarding international watercourses.

Recently, the University of Geneva hosted the Geneva Water Hub Platform for International Water Law to draw a List of Principles protecting water infrastructure during and after armed conflicts. Can you give us more details about this document? How can it be used by practitioners working in the humanitarian and development fields?

Lise Gregoire-van Haaren, we know that the Netherlands have been actively involved in various water issues. In fact, one of the topics on the agenda of your mission’s presidency last March was the identification of the potential causes of

conflict and war, such as competition over water resources, water scarcity, and climate change. Could you tell us a bit more on what the Netherland has been doing to address these complex issues? What challenges and opportunities you see as regards the protection of water infrastructure in fragile part of the world?

Manuel, UNICEF has been actively engaged in developing preventative measures to promote and support regional cooperation on water. Could you talk a little about the progress your office has achieved under your leadership and where further efforts need to be invested?

Concluding remarks

Please join me in warmly thanking our distinguished panel. I wish you all a great weekend and hope to see you again at IPI.
