

## Planetary security workshop outline: Water diplomacy, security and justice

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The Hague Institute for Global Justice (lead convener), SIWI (co-convener), UNESCO-IHE (co-convener)

When: Monday 5 December, 13:30-16:30 hours, Main Hall, PSI Conference

TOPIC: South Asia / Water

TITLE: South Asia: Water diplomacy, security and justice

This workshop is a first in a series of three, linking the conferences from 2016-2018. In particular, we aim to track the progress of the conflict resolution in a specific case-study (e.g. Brahmaputra Basin) over the 3-year period of the planetary security conferences. The main objective of the workshop is to foster exchange on how to improve multi-track water diplomacy and transboundary water cooperation. The main target groups are the larger communities of practice on water diplomacy, transboundary water cooperation, governance, security and justice.

Specific objectives:

- Reflect on key challenges to water security and justice that relate to the interface between global change (climate change, resource depletion, population growth, economic development) and conflict / state fragility
- Sharing experiences and lessons learned on effective/ineffective water cooperation at different levels (local to transboundary)
- Identifying and operationalizing the key factors affecting effective/ineffective water cooperation
- Development of concrete recommendations on how to foster effective water cooperation.

RATIONALE:

The availability, allocation and access of water resources determine the well-being, prosperity and stability of societies worldwide. Currently, the demand for freshwater is increasing everywhere, which is leading to situations of unbalanced distribution and tension among users. As such, water issues may deepen the divide that parties have on other issues. Water issues (local as well as transboundary) are complex because of their intricate coupling with multiple issues within the natural and societal domains. In cases of (potential) conflict, involved parties will need to find ways to address the tensions, in order to prevent escalation. In our highly interconnected world, water should be an integral part of any discussion on agriculture, energy, public health, transportation, environment and the future. While innovation in science and technology can expand the availability of quantity and quality of water, it cannot solve water problems that intersect with the value-laden needs of individuals, industries or ecosystems. To address these complex water problems, a new approach that goes beyond applications of technology or implementation of management policies is needed. Water diplomacy is expected to play an increasingly important role in preventing, mitigating and resolving the growing water conflicts.

## WORKSHOP AGENDA

**13:30-13:35:**           **Opening by chair:** *Patrick Huntjens, The Hague Institute for Global Justice*

**13:35-13:45:**           **Short movie** “*The Flow of Water – The Flow of Ideas*”, produced by Ventoux Productions from the Netherlands

**13:45-14:00:**           **KEYNOTE:** *Ambassador Tariq Karim, Former High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India, Vivekananda International Foundation; World Bank*

**14:00-14:15:**           **KEYNOTE:** *Anamika Barua, Executive Director of SaciWATERS (South Asian Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies), Hyderabad, India*

**14:15-15:00:**           **Parallel Roundtables**, focusing on approaches and different dimensions of water diplomacy, experiences and lessons learned (see roundtable descriptions below)

**15:00-15:30:**           **Coffee break**

**15:30-15:50:**           **Plenary feedback:** i.e. after the parallel roundtables individuals are invited to share insights or other results from their conversations with the rest of the large group.

**Moderator:** *Patrick Huntjens, Head of Water Diplomacy, The Hague Institute for Global Justice*

**15:50-15:55:**           **Official launch of new publication:** ‘*Multi-track Water Diplomacy Framework*’ by The Hague Institute and partners, hand-over to *Henk Ovink, Special Envoy International Water Affairs, Kingdom of The Netherlands*

**15:55-16:30:**           **Panel discussion**

**Moderator:** *Henk Ovink, Special Envoy International Water Affairs, Kingdom of The Netherlands*

**Panelists:**

*Ambassador Tariq Karim, Former High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India*

*Anamika Barua, Executive Director of SaciWATERS*

*Ashok Swain, Professor of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, Sweden*

*Lieutenant-General Tariq Waseem Ghazi (Ret.), Former Defense Secretary, Government of Pakistan (2005-2007)*

## ROUNDTABLE DESCRIPTIONS

### ***Roundtable 1: Stepping out of the 'water' box: Institutional political economy perspectives of the Brahmaputra, current and future***

**Moderator:** Dr. Douglas Hill (University of Otago, New Zealand)

**Presenters:** Dr. Yumiko Yasuda (The Hague Institute for Global Justice & ICWC) and Mr. Dipankar Aich (IUCN, Asia, tbc)

Roundtable 1 aims to identify and discuss key factors affecting transboundary water cooperation over the Brahmaputra river and in doing so explore possible areas of cooperation. The most recent findings from the [Water Diplomacy research project](#) by The Hague Institute for Global Justice and partners will be presented as a starting point for discussion. The analysis involves understanding institutional political economy perspectives associated with the various uses and values associated with the Brahmaputra basin. Opportunities for transboundary water cooperation in conjunction with regional socio-economic development cooperation will be discussed. Cross-sectoral solution oriented approaches will be used to discuss and identify possible areas of cooperation in the future. The session suggests that by creating neutral grounds for open dialogue, there are various entry points towards stakeholders stepping out of the pre-existing water box and forging new grounds for cooperation.

### ***Roundtable 2: Judicial settlement mechanisms for water-related disputes: India-Pakistan case***

**Moderator:** Prof. Ashok Swain, Uppsala University

**Presenter:** Zaki Shubber, UNESCO-IHE

Disputes between states can be solved in different ways under international water law, which includes judicial settlement. There are examples of disputes decided by the International Court of Justice and by arbitration such as the case of the Kishenganga dam between India and Pakistan, which will be briefly presented. The goal of this roundtable is to discuss the role of these means in relation to the broader context of water security and water cooperation.

### ***Roundtable 3: Private sector involvement in water conflict management***

**Moderator:** Rens de Man, The Hague Institute for Global Justice

**Presenter:** Nika Salvetti, UPeace Centre The Hague

The reduced availability of fresh water increases the competition among stakeholders and creates potential conflicts. In this context, businesses often have to tackle legislative demands or claims from local communities about fresh water availability. These demands may appear against the backdrop of other forms of pressure, such as political sway, public media portrayals and lobbying by various stakeholder groups. Many business activities directly relate to and depend on the use of water. This implies that their competitiveness strongly relate to the availability of and access to good quality water resources. However, businesses wanting to know what has to be done, when operating in complex water-related environments, need to conduct their own research. A helpdesk for the business sector would bridge that gap. The aim of this Roundtable is to identify the demand and requirements of an independent focal point that would support the operational and strategic decision-making of the business sector.

#### **Roundtable 4: Water Accounting Plus: a tool to facilitate water diplomacy**

**Moderator:** Julie van der Bliet, IWMI

**Speaker:** Poolad Karimi, UNESCO-IHE

Water Accounting Plus (WA+) is a novel framework that provides the foundation that is needed for a systematic, operative, standardized, and reliable platform for communicating water related information to users such as scientific community, policy makers, water authorities, basin managers and general public. WA+ is designed to use public available satellite measurements as main input. WA+ offers a transparent, independent, replicable method to provide information on water resources in internationally shared river basins even where data is scarce or hard to access. Such information platform can be used as basis to facilitate water diplomacy and encourage dialogue among involved parties.

#### **Roundtable 5: Feminist perspectives on water diplomacy and cooperation**

**Moderator:** Dr. Marian Patrick, International Centre for water Cooperation at SIWI

**Speaker:** Prof. Margreet Zwarteveen, UNESCO-IHE

Gender inequity is prevalent in transboundary water issues at multiple scales. Most commonly this is articulated through the recognition of the role that women play in collecting and safeguarding water for domestic use. Gender inequity is however also present at the policy and decision making levels at national and transboundary levels. The laws and organizations responsible for transboundary water management currently do not reflect a gendered approach, despite international recognition given to the necessity of including women in water management structures at all levels (Earle & Bazilli, 2013).

Women have rights to participate on equal terms as men in peace, security and transboundary negotiation processes. However statistics on peace processes indicate that 93% of participants in peace negotiations and 98% of signatories to peace agreements are men (UNIFEM, 2010). The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 recognises the importance of a gender perspective on peace and security and the role that women play in sustainable peace and security.

#### **Roundtable 6: Water diplomacy, media and science**

**Moderator:** Matt Luna, Institute for Environmental Security

**Presenter:** Emanuele Fantini (UNESCO-IHE)

This roundtable addresses the role of media (both traditional and new media such as social networks) and their interaction with science and politics in advancing narratives that not only shape perceptions, but also contributes to define the scope of water debates and negotiations.

The following questions will be addressed:

1. How do media and ICT contribute to transforming specific water issues into water diplomacy matters? How do water communicators resort to different scientific disciplines and knowledge to uphold their stories and legitimise their narratives?
2. How do different water scientists and disciplines perceive their role in this process, particularly in terms of communicating their research? How could the interaction between media, science and policy makers be improved in order to facilitate water diplomacy?

#### **OUTPUT**



The Hague Institute  
for Global Justice



**UNESCO-IHE**  
Institute for Water Education

Recommendations from roundtables and panel discussion will feed into the Policy Brief which has been shared as an input to the working group.

**SPEAKERS AND MODERATOR**

See above

**Contact details lead convener:**

Dr. P.M.J.M. Huntjens

Theme Leader Water Diplomacy & Climate Governance

The Hague Institute for Global Justice

E: [p.huntjens@TheHagueInstitute.org](mailto:p.huntjens@TheHagueInstitute.org)

T: +31 (0)70 30 28 144

M: +31 (0)6 10336660