

Ghana marks World Water Day



Ghana dedicated three days to celebrate the 2009 World Water Day under the theme: “Shared Waters, Shared Opportunities”.

The celebrations in Ghana were aimed at drawing attention to the use of integrated water resource management tools to promote cooperation among nations with shared water basins. The issue of transboundary waters is particularly important since Ghana shares the Volta River Basin with five other West African countries including La Côte d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin and Mali. As a result, Ghana stands to gain from collaborating with the other five countries within its shared water basin.

The Minister for Water Resources, Works and Housing, Mr. Albert Abongo reiterated the proper management of transboundary water to development at a flag hoisting event held as part of the World Water Day celebrations. Mr Abongo said the way transboundary waters are protected, sustainably managed and used will affect the successful

achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as safeguard human security and development. Mr. Abongo drew a close link between access to water and poverty reduction.

He said “Indeed, access to water for domestic use and productive agricultural and other economic activities has a direct impact on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger in our country.”

Speaking at the symposium to commemorate the day, Mrs. Bernadette Araba Adjei of the Water Resource Commission said a holistic approach to harnessing water on a sustained basis is required in addressing Ghana’s transboundary water management. Her paper on the topic, ‘Shared Waters, Shared Opportunities’, in the context of transboundary administration, called for specific attention to be placed on promoting the implementation of the National Water Policy with emphasis on international waters. Mrs Adjei also encouraged the involvement of all actors including civil society

and the private sector in the management of shared waters.

As part of the celebrations, a procession, dubbed “the End Water Poverty Street Procession” was held on Saturday March 21, 2009 through some principal streets of Accra. Over three hundred people from both private and public sector joined in the eight kilometer march to demand their water rights.

The World Water Day celebration was climaxed with a quiz contest on Ghana Television, the national broadcaster. Six participants answered questions on World Water Day, transboundary waters within Ghana and on the continent as well as questions on general knowledge. After exhibiting in-depth knowledge on water, through three rounds of gruelling questioning, Mr. Legend Al-hassan Abdul Hannan, emerged the overall winner followed by Victor Amartey in the second place and Israel Yao Dzantor third place. Each contestant received a plaque and certificate of participation. ■