

Training Workshop on “Water Governance and Integrated Water Resources Management for Lake Chad Basin Countries”

19-22 October 2020, 11:00 AM Turkey Time

Opening Statement of H.E. Mr. Nebil DABUR Director General of SESRIC

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**Excellencies, Dear Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

I wish you all a very Good Day

- I am very pleased to welcome you all to this training workshop on “Water Governance and Integrated Water Resources Management for Lake Chad Basin Countries”, which we organize it within the framework of SESRIC Water Resources Management Capacity Building Programme (Water-CaB).
- On this occasion, I would like, first, to express my sincere thanks to Prof. Dr. Jalal HALWANI, Director of Water and Environment Science Laboratory of the Lebanese University and Dr. Maher TAHSALDAR, Chief Financial Officer at the North Lebanon Water Establishment of the Ministry of Energy and Water of Lebanon for accepting our invitation to provide this training course for the benefit of participants from the National Water Resource Institutions of the Lake Chad Basin Countries.

- My deep thanks are also extended to Mr. Alio ABDOULAYE, Technical Director of the Executive Secretariat of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), for accepting our proposal to partner with SESRIC for this training workshop as the primary intergovernmental organization that oversees water and other natural resources usage in the Chad Basin.

Dear Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- We are glad today to organise this training course in cooperation with Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) as per the relevant resolution of the 44th Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), which was held in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire in 2017. The Session called on the OIC institutions and the OIC Member States to support measures adopted by the Governments of Lake Chad Basin countries towards addressing humanitarian and developmental needs of displaced persons and communities in the Lake Chad Basin area.
- In this context, SESRIC has planned to organise this training workshop physically in N'Djamena, Chad. However, due to the outbreak of COVID-19 Pandemic and the restrictions on international travel, we preferred not to postpone this training workshop to a later date. Therefore, today I am pleased that we are conducting this training workshop virtually through a distance-learning platform.

Dear Participants,

- The Lake Chad Basin, which is shared by Algeria, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Libya, Niger, Nigeria, and Sudan, is one of the largest freshwater bodies in Africa. The lake is also a source of water supply for drinking, sanitation and development. It also offers a unique social and cultural environment contributing to the rich diversity of the region.
- However, a number of risk factors, such as climate change, pollution, variability, and aquifer contamination, are threatening the Lake's socio-ecological system and the public health. Moreover, diminishing water levels of the Lake since the late 1960s due to increased human activities and series of droughts has resulted in the loss of biodiversity and ecosystems functioning, deterioration in fishing environment and irrigation activities, food insecurity, decline in income and consequent deterioration of living conditions.
- This state of affairs of the Lake Chad Basin necessitates the need for strengthening the technical capacities of the national relevant institutions working the domain of water in the region, particularly using the strategic and integrated water resources management approaches and techniques.

- Unlike the traditional fragmented approaches in addressing water related challenges, the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is an advanced framework for the development and management of water, land and other related resources. The accurate implementation of this approach helps maximizing the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.
- In recognition of the need for enhancing the human resources capacities of the national water resources institutions in our member countries, we, at SESRIC, has initiated many years ago, the Water Resources Management Capacity Building Programme (Water-CaB).
- This Programme aims at facilitating the sharing and exchanging of knowledge, experiences and best practices among the OIC member countries in the domain of water resources management. Within the framework of this programme, we organise training workshops (like this one), short-term training courses, and study visits on a wide range of technical aspects such as water storing and irrigation techniques, groundwater management, water monitoring network and early warning systems.
- Availing this opportunity, I would also like to inform you that we have recently reactivated the “OIC Portal on Water Resources” in order to enable OIC member countries to share their own water information,

success stories, initiatives, innovative techniques and new mechanisms on water related issues. The portal, which, can be considered as an information and knowledge hub platform on OIC member countries in the domain of water, can be accessed through the website of SESRIC.

Dear Participants,

- I believe that this training workshop, which aims to provide insights on how to analyse, formulate and implement water policies, plans and programmes by using an Integrated Water Resources Management approach, will make a positive impact and add value to the work and expertise of all participants.
- Before concluding, I would like to thank you all once again and wish you a fruitful exchange of experiences and a successful training throughout the upcoming days.

Thank you all for your kind attention, Wassalamualeykum