

WELCOME SPEECH

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to this International Symposium on the Quality of Groundwater, organised by the Netherlands' National Institute for Water Supply and sponsored by a number of international organisations.

A special word of welcome to Dr. L. Ginjaar, Netherlands' Minister of Health and Environmental Protection who within a few minutes will officially open this symposium, to the representatives of the EC, WHO, UNESCO, the International Association of Hydrological Sciences, the International Association of Hydrogeology and to the members of the Advisory Board.

In the next few days we will be here together with about 300 participants and about 20 accompanying persons from 36 countries, which makes this symposium really an international event. In spite of the fact that the funds for international travel in most countries are becoming scarce, about 60 persons from 18 countries outside Europe still succeeded in making the necessary arrangements for participation and among these are 23 persons from 13 developing countries. We are indeed very happy that the symposium received such large international attention, and in particular we are happy that a fair number of representatives from developing countries are present, because it is of great importance that the costly mistakes in the field of groundwater pollution which have been made in the industrialized world can be avoided in the developing countries.

The organising committee with the valuable assistance of the Advisory Board and, last but not least, with the cooperation of the numerous authors, succeeded in making up an interesting but rather full programme in which in 20 sessions, covering 7 topics, more than 120 papers will be presented; in addition to this there will be more than 40 poster presentations. In view of these large numbers and in view of the fact that various activities will take place simultaneously, you are strongly advised to study the programme - which is in your papers - carefully, and to make a plan of the activities you wish to attend. In particular I wish to draw your attention to the pages 4 to 6 where you will find much information in a condensed form. Furthermore,

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I have to ask for your cooperation and discipline to adhere to the programme and the time schedule. The chairmen will be very strict in this respect. The authors are therefore strongly advised once again to select carefully the essential elements of their contribution which they can present within the limited time allowed to them. I trust that on the other hand there will be ample opportunity to discuss the subject in greater detail in smaller groups outside the scheduled meetings.

Although perhaps a bit peculiar to mention at the beginning of a conference, I would like to invite you to reflect during the coming days on the follow-up to this symposium. The proceedings of the present symposium will appear in the third quarter of this year.

Furthermore, the organizers together with one or more of our European sister organisations are certainly willing to take up the subject again for another symposium over a number of years. In the meantime there could perhaps be another in some part of the world. In this connection I would like to mention the system which was introduced a number of years ago for the subject 'Aquatic Pollutants' to the effect that symposia are organised in a systematic way every one or two years in Europe and North-America alternately.

A national or international agency with practical responsibilities in the field of groundwater quality / pollution / protection might be in the best position to take the responsibility of organising a follow-up activity. Once again, a matter you might reflect on during the coming days.

Before inviting Minister Dr. L. Ginjaar to deliver his opening address I would like to express my gratitude to the EC, UNESCO and the KLM for their financial support, which made things so much easier and to all those who by joined effort made this symposium possible.

A few names should be singled out in this connection: Mr. W. van Duyvenbooden
Mr. H. van Lelyveld
Mrs. W. van Dommelen
Mr. D. Mos and his staff and
the Congress bureau

who made a major contribution to the necessary preparations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish you a couple of interesting days and a pleasant stay in this country.

Dr. L. Ginjaar may I invite you to take the floor.