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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque**

Addendum<sup>\*</sup>

**Mission to Jordan: comments by the State on the report of the Special  
Rapporteur**

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<sup>\*</sup> Reproduced as received.

GE.14-09127 (E)



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## Annex

*[Arabic and English only]*

### **Comments of Jordan on the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque, following her mission to Jordan (11-16 March 2014)**

#### **General comments:**

- We suggest expanding and editing the summary section which does not reflect most of the subjects mentioned in the report.
- Part of the recommendations that has been mentioned in the report is already tackled or will be by MWI in different interventions.
- Jordan worked on mitigating the impact of the tariff system on poor citizens by:
  - a) Adopting a raised block system that heavily subsidizes the poor (low consumption)
  - b) Exemption from the occupation permit that is needed for apartments in Jordan to get second or third water meter which reduce the tariff impacts.

**Page GE... Summary section, Lines 7- 9.....** The current water and sanitation tariff system and unregulated informal water and sanitation services put an unjust burden on the poor and marginalized, including those who live in informal settlements and remote areas, nomads and refugees.

**Comments:** this is a very critical statements related to water and sanitation tariff system in Jordan!

The tariff system is using a raised block system; poor citizens usually reside in the heavily subsidized blocks (low consumption), other interventions have been adopted including exempting the poor from occupation permit that is needed for apartments in Jordan to get second or third water meter which reduce the tariff impacts.

**Page 3... Context of extreme water scarcity section, Paragraph 2, Lines 1-2.....** Water scarcity has been exacerbated by drought, depletion of groundwater reserves, overuse by agriculture and population growth.

#### **Comments:**

Agriculture sector in Jordan used only 56% of the resources; part of this water (22%) is treated water, so we are not overusing our resources by agriculture.

Page 4... Context of extreme water scarcity section, Paragraph 2, Lines 16-18.....the human rights framework demands States to realize economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to water and sanitation.

#### **Comments:**

More than 96% of Jordanian has access to sanitation through different means including 63% who are connected to wastewater networks, the remaining are using septic tanks.

**Page 4: Legal framework section, Paragraph 3, Lines 4-6.....** Water Authority of Jordan Law No. 18 of 1988, the Jordan Valley Authority Law No. 30 of 2001 and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation Law No. 54 of 1992. The other relevant laws are Environmental Protection Law No. 85 of 2002 and Groundwater By-law No. 85 of 2002.

**Comments:**

Adjust the following laws:

- Water Authority of Jordan Law No. 18 of 1988 and its amendments.
- Ministry of Water and Irrigation By-Law No. 54 of 1992 and its amendments.
- Groundwater By-law No. 85 of 2002 and its amendments.
- Environmental Protection Law No. 85 of 2006.

One of the main laws we have in Jordan and it protects the public human health and environment is public health law 47/2008, should be mentioned here.

**Page 4: Legal framework section, Paragraph 3, Lines 11-15.....** The new law should recognize fully the human rights to water and to sanitation and their normative content. It should be also recalled that the human right to water and sanitation should be guaranteed for all, including non-citizens. Furthermore, and especially in a water-scarce country like Jordan, it should clearly state that priority is given to the allocation of water for personal and domestic uses over other uses.

**Comments:**

The priority to the allocation of water for domestic uses over other uses is already part of MWI policy.

**Page 5: Institutional and policy framework section, Paragraph 1, Lines 3-5.....** the Water Authority of Jordan and the Jordan Valley Authority manage water and sanitation issues in their respective areas: the Water Authority of Jordan constructs, operates and maintains domestic water supply and sewage systems and manages the national water resources,

**Comments:**

Jordan Valley Authority JVA has no role in managing water and sanitation in its respective area it is the responsibility of WAJ for all Jordan.

**Page 6: Institutional and policy framework section, Paragraph 5, Lines 10-12.....** Neither the standards nor the Policy attribute explicitly a mandate to any institution for overall coordination and guidance if a public health issue arises owing to improper practices in the use of treated wastewater.

**Comments:**

In Jordan public health law 47/2008 regulates it.

Page 6... The human rights to water and sanitation section, Paragraph 2, Lines 2-3..... 68 per cent of them are connected to the sewerage network, and 98 per cent of collected wastewater is being treated.

**Comments:**

Rephrase this sentence to the following:

68 per cent of them are connected to the sewerage network and all the collected waste water is being treated, and 98% of the treated wastewater is being reused.

**Page 6: Water availability section, Paragraph 2, Lines 9-10.....** The implications for health are significant, given that between 50 and 100 liters of water per capita per day are needed to ensure personal and food hygiene.

**Comments:**

According to WHO house hold survey of the Minimum amounts of water requirements for health protection that is around 40 l/c/d.

Report title “To identify minimum household water security requirements for health protection” prepared by Royal Scientific Society submitted to CEHA and WHO.

**Page 7... Intermittent supply for personal and domestic uses section, Paragraph 2, Lines 5-6.....** According to Oxfam, poor, refugee and migrant households are most affected by the intermittent supply of water because they do not have large storage capacity or they do not have community networks.1 personal and food hygiene.

**Comments:**

Most of the Syrian refugees are getting support from the international NGO's to increase the their water storage capacity, but the problem is now with the poor Jordanian who used to get water from the water network for more frequent hours and duration and now with the burden of Syrian refugees it is not easy for them to fill up their roof top tanks or increase its capacity.

**Page 7: Intermittent supply for personal and domestic uses, Paragraph 3, Lines 1-3....** According to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, for the water supply to be “continuous”, one of the requirements of the right to water is that the regularity of the water supply must be sufficient for personal and domestic uses.

**Comments:**

The intermittent supply in Jordan has been practiced since years and it is working well and all the water sector future plans were supposed to enhance some deficiencies in the system. Unfortunately the massive amount of Syrian refugees has burden the water sector and the supply of water.

**Page 7: Intermittent supply for personal and domestic uses section, Paragraph 4, Lines 13-14.....** Solutions could include reducing leakages so as to increase the volume of water available.

**Comments:**

The government already has plans to reduce the leakage through proposing different programs and projects, but again the limited financial capacity of the government is an issue!

Page 7... Intermittent supply for personal and domestic uses section, Paragraph 4, Lines 15-16..... and also assistance in the installation and maintenance of storage capacity and the regulation of alternative water provisions, such as tanker trucks (see paras. 21-25 below).

**Comments:**

This is not the responsibility of the government, even so, many initiative supported by the government and implemented by deferent NGO's is supporting the communities in rehabilitation of their plumbing system, establishment of water harvesting cisterns etc.

**Page 7: Non-revenue water section, Paragraph 1, Lines 3-5.....** According to a recent study, the amount of physical leakage is estimated at 76 billion liters per year, an amount that could meet the needs of 2.6 million people (or more than a third of the population).

**Comments:**

How much this will cost a country like Jordan with limited financial capacities!

**Page 7: Non-revenue water section, Paragraph 1, Lines 13.....** The law is currently under review to increase fines and prison terms for water.

**Comments:**

This law is now official and published in the national gazette.

**Page 8: Non-revenue water section, Paragraph 1, Lines 14-15.....** The Special Rapporteur encourages the Government to accelerate its efforts to reduce water loss and to meet its targets. Encouragingly

**Comments:**

The government realizes that loss reduction is a priority area, and many plans are towards this direction even within the proposed projects in the NRP...This will improve cost recovery, energy consumptions.

**Page 8: Recycling and reusing water section, Paragraph 1, Lines 12-14.....** At the same time, further efforts should be made to raise awareness of the benefits of wastewater reuse among farmers and the general public.

**Comments:**

A comprehensive wastewater supply chain monitoring scheme exists in Jordan. That encounters all the national authorities who have different mandates on the supply chain from the point of generation of treated wastewater, through the farms to the produced crops to the markets till the customer ends. A comprehensive plan was developed under the GIZ technical support entitled "Towards the safe use of treated wastewater, The National Plan for Risk Monitoring and Management System for the Use of Treated Wastewater in Irrigation, November 2011.

**Page 8: Affordability of water and sanitation section, Paragraph 1, Lines 1-3..... 22.** To realize the human rights to water and sanitation, the price of water and sanitation and the direct and indirect costs and charges associated with them must be affordable.

**Comments:**

Water pricing is not within MWI.

**Page 8: Affordability of water and sanitation section, Paragraph 3, Lines 1-3.....** One problem posed by the increasing block tariff system often observed by the Special Rapporteur during her missions is that the poor are often charged a higher tariff because of their larger families and shared water meters.

**Comments:**

There are national efforts to facilitate installing water meters for citizens (poor families) such as.

- In special cases there is no need for the occupation permission to install the water meter, it is possible to do it through the energy bill report.
- Installment of the water meter cost when required.

**Page 9: Water quality section, Paragraph 1, Lines 4-6.....** They also found that, while household water was safe to drink, nitrate levels in household water samples indicated a degree of contamination occurring between the pipes and household taps.

**Comments:**

Not true statement, impossible to observe nitrate levels in household sample!

**Page 10: Water quality section, Paragraph 2, Lines 1-3.....** Despite the above-mentioned positive assessment, a socioeconomic survey conducted by the authorities found that approximately 60 per cent of people were dissatisfied with water quality, and bought bottled water despite its high price.

**Comments:**

It is more a public perception issue, many awareness campaigns are taken place to regain the trust of citizens in the water quality issue. 99.3% of water quality samples are compliance with the Jordanian Standards.

**Page 10: Water quality section, Paragraph 3, Lines 25-27.....** It is therefore important that the Government inform the public in a plain manner and to make the results of water sampling available and accessible. Reliance on bottled water as the main source of drinking water raises affordability concerns

**Comments:**

The government tackled this issue, since many years all the monthly reports are issued and distributed to all concerned stakeholders.

**ملاحظات وزارة الصحة الاردنية على تقرير المقررة الخاصة المعنية بحق الانسان في الحصول على مياه الشرب المأمونة وخدمات الصرف الصحي الخاص بزيارتها الى الاردن**

لقد اورد التقرير معلومات عديدة ومفصلة حول الاطر القانونية والمؤسسية والسياسات المتعلقة بهما، والوضع

المائي في الاردن بما في ذلك نوعية المياه وتوفرها، والحق في حصول المواطنين على المعلومات المتعلقة بالمياه والصرف الصحي، وغيرها من الامور ذات العلاقة. ولكن اغفل تقرير المقررة الخاصة دور وزارة الصحة الاردنية فيما يتعلق بالاطار التشريعي الناظم لعملها في مجالي مياه الشرب والصرف الصحي، كما اغفل التقرير دورها الرئيسي كطرف ثالث محايد ومستقل في الرقابة على نوعية مياه الشرب المزود للمواطنين في المملكة لضمان وصول مياه مأمونة للمستهلكين وذلك من خلال برامج الرقابة المكثفة وكادرها ومختبرات المياه المنتشرة في مديريات الصحة في المحافظات.

ان ما ورد في تقرير المقررة الخاصة في الصفحة السادسة الفقرة المتعلقة بتوفر المياه، حول الحاجة الى 50-100 لتر للشخص يوميا لضمان النظافة الشخصية ونظافة الغذاء، وكذلك ما ورد في الصفحة رقم 16 الفقرة الاولى حول الكمية الدنيا المطلوبة يوميا لضمان النظافة الشخصية ونظافة الغذاء خلال الازمات والبالغة 50 لتر للشخص، قد يكون مبالغاً فيه بالنظر الى الوضع المائي في الاردن، منوها الى ان دراسة قد اجريت في عام 2013 بعنوان "تحديد الحد الأدنى للاحتياجات المنزلية من المياه لحماية الصحة" من قبل الجمعية العلمية الملكية ومن ضمن مشاريع البرنامج المشترك "التكيف مع التغير المناخي لضمان ديمومة انجازات اهداف الالفية للتنمية في الاردن" الممول من الحكومة الاسبانية، والذي نفذت فيه الجزء الصحي منه منظمة الصحة العالمية، قد خلصت الى ان كمية المياه اللازمة من النواحي الصحية، تبلغ 41 لتر للفرد يوميا وذلك بزيادة 9 لتر للفرد يوميا كهامش سلامة.

مرفق طيا معلومات عن دور وزارة الصحة الاردنية في تزويد المواطنين بمياه شرب مأمونة وصرف صحي امن.