



Introduction to Water Diplomacy

21 October - 17 November 2013

Background

Water is every living organism's common denominator. Societies depend on it for their own subsistence and growth, and go great lengths to ensure water secure futures. But freshwater is not, in essence and in practice, an egalitarian resource and its accessibility to some often means inaccessibility to others. With unprecedented population growth, new emerging economies and the effects of climate change, pressures on our finite freshwater resources are increasing. Meanwhile, the ability of some nations to secure their aqueous requirements is being severely challenged, causing great and legitimate concern that tensions around water hotspots will intensify among water users. Yet, water holds an immense potential for cooperation which has still to be understood and empowered. Water is and will remain at the heart of international peace and security, the defense of human rights and the imperative for sustainable development paths. An increasingly strong and coordinated response is therefore expected from the international community in order to raise awareness, mitigate conflict, and build cooperation from the growing challenges posed by water between sovereign states.

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course will first be to raise awareness on the current state of freshwater resources worldwide and the need for adequate diplomatic solutions to stimulate cooperation around the way the resource is managed. It will provide knowledge resources, circumstantial experiences, and a cadre of tools to water-relevant stakeholders so as to enhance their ability to assess, prevent, and respond to the tensions arising from situations of water scarcity and mismanagement worldwide. This approach will be relevant to the great water stressors of our time and will serve to promote both short and longer term cooperation through shared benefits, inclusive multi-stakeholder agreements, and sustainable transboundary institution building.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, participants should be able to:

- Describe major contemporary stressors influencing freshwater availability and their impact on achieving national security goals;
- Understand water's potential for conflict and identify some of the world's main water "hotspots";
- Recognize water's cooperation potential and the benefits to be drawn from collaborative transboundary water management between state actors;
- Apprehend how diplomatic methods based on dialogue may be used towards mutually-beneficial problem-to-solution processes;
- Comprehend the importance and structure of transnational water management institutions in their role to consolidate and sustain the benefits of cooperation around water.

Audience

The course primarily targets diplomats accredited to the United Nations and government officials seeking to enhance their knowledge of contemporary water-related geopolitical issues. International civil servants, including non-governmental organization representatives and private sector professionals working in the multilateral field of water are also highly welcome. In addition, scholars and graduate-level students with a focus on international relations and a specialisation in water-related issues are also encouraged to join.

Methodology

This activity will be conducted entirely in English and will be delivered online using UNITAR's Virtual Learning Environment. This will allow participants to work following a self-paced routine, supported by multimedia lesson materials, required and optional readings, discussion forums, assessment quizzes, a transboundary basin management simulation and a wealth of other theoretical and practical tools and information.

Registration and Course Fees

The course participation fee is **600 USD**. Participants from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are eligible to apply for a fellowship. Please contact the Multilateral Diplomacy Programme for more details. Registration will be closed as soon as the course is full and your place will be secured once your payment has been confirmed.

Further information regarding the course content and the registration procedure can be found at www.unitar.org/event/introduction-water-diplomacy

Contact

For more information, please consult the UNITAR [Multilateral Diplomacy Programme](http://www.unitar.org/mdp) website (www.unitar.org/mdp) or contact mdp-elearning@unitar.org / +41 22 917 87 16



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research



www.unitar.org/mdp

