

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2011

*PREPARING FOR THE 6TH WORLD WATER FORUM*

## FORUM FOR "SOLIDARITY FOR WATER IN NIGER BASIN COUNTRIES"

October 17 and 18, 2011 in Bamako, Mali

The Fondation Chirac alongside Malian authorities and the Niger Basin Authority are calling for a mobilization in support of the right to water and sanitation in the region of the Niger River and to encourage the joint management of river resources. To implement this initiative, they are organizing on October 17 and 18, 2011 in Bamako, the Forum "Solidarity for Water in Niger Basin Countries".

Member of the World Water Council and the French Water Partnership, the Fondation Chirac invites the heads of state of the nine countries bordering the Niger River, the individuals involved with development, those concerned with water, as well as members of civil society, in order to revitalize existing projects that already address the issue of access to water and sanitation in the region.

This initiative is part of Africa's Regional process of preparation for the World Water Forum, led by AMCOW (African Ministers' Council on Water). Its findings will be formally presented as the Niger Basin countries' contribution during the 6th World Water Forum in Marseille, from March 12 to 17, 2012.

In July 2010, the United Nations recognized the right to drinking water as a fundamental right. Today, **nearly 900 million people worldwide still lack access to improved water sources; over 337 million of them live in sub-Saharan Africa**<sup>1</sup>. This situation is particularly alarming in the Niger River Basin, because, in addition to these fundamental issues, there is also the challenge of managing shared resources.

The Forum for "Solidarity for Water in Niger Basin Countries" has dedicated two days to the following four goals:

1. Highlight and **promote operational solutions, especially in a framework of decentralized cooperation, and exemplary field efforts that meet the challenges of access to water and sanitation;**
2. Call to mind the **importance of increased mobilization around the Niger Basin Authority** to promote the strengthening of transboundary cooperation for the balanced and sustainable development and management of shared water resources;
3. Accompany the region's countries in the **ratification of the UN**

1

Source : the WHO's 2010 Report, "Progress on Sanitation and Drinking-Water".

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**Convention on International Watercourses (1997)**, which is currently signed by 24 States, of which two border the Niger River: Nigeria and Burkina Faso.

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