



(U//FOUO) A Growing Security Challenge: Competition for Water

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(U//FOUO) Today, March 22nd, is the UN's World Day for Water. Around the globe, today, like every day of the year:

- Women and girls will spend over 200 million hours collecting water;
- 14,000 people will die from water-related disease;
- Diarrhea and dehydration will kill over 10,000 children.

(TS//SI) **Competition for potable water is a growing security challenge.** NSA reporting has followed the ongoing tensions surrounding the India-Pakistan Indus Water Treaty and construction of Baglihar Dam, providing our customers with unique information as they monitor this volatile region. As competition for water grows among the Nile Basin countries in Africa, analysts continue to report on contentious water extraction projects that could potentially lead to conflict in this area.

(TS//SI) NSA's broad access to government officials, multilateral organizations, and NGOs has yielded unique perspectives on water availability for internally-displaced persons (IDPs) in Sudan, flooding in Afghanistan, and contaminated water sources in Baghdad. **SIGINT has provided critical insight on issues** ranging from inter-state water disputes and food security, to economics and technology sharing, health infrastructure, and natural disasters.

(U//FOUO) Water is crucial for sustainable development, the alleviation of poverty and hunger, and the preservation of the natural environment. The global community is increasingly recognizing the importance of water in all areas of life including: health and sanitation, trans-boundary tension and political stability, gender disparities, capacity-building, financing, environment and bio-diversity, disaster prevention, food and agriculture, pollution, and energy.

(U//FOUO) While the world's population tripled in the 20th century, the use of water resources has grown six-fold. At this rate, more than 2.7 billion people will face severe water shortages by the year 2025 and another 2.5 billion will live in areas where it will be difficult to find sufficient fresh water. Less than 3% of the earth's water is fresh and most of it is the form of polar ice or is too deep underground to obtain; fresh water accessible in lakes, rivers, and reservoirs makes up less than a quarter of 1%. The semi-arid regions of Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia are most at risk of growing water scarcity. Even in regions around the world with plentiful water supplies, sources are increasingly threatened by pollution and rising demand.

(U//FOUO) Infectious, water-related diseases are a major cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. At least 1 out of 6 people lack access to safe drinking water and 2 out of 6 lack adequate sanitation, resulting in 1.8 million deaths each year from diarrhoeal diseases; 90% of which are children under 5 years of age. Another 1.3 million people die of malaria each year, which is spread by mosquitoes relying on stagnant water for part of their life-cycle. Health issues also arise from pollution and contamination; arsenic contamination of ground water has been detected in many countries including China, India, Thailand, Chile, and the United States. In Bangladesh alone, between 28 and 35 million people consume water containing elevated arsenic levels.

(U//FOUO) The global community, recognizing that water is indispensable for human health, social well-being, and economic productivity, has committed to improving the supply and quality of global freshwater resources. Much work remains to be done, however. The implementation of aggressive policies, with a global mindset, will be necessary to preserve our water resources for future generations.



*(U) Mexican boys pour water into containers before the 5 km (3.1 miles) journey back to their village of Xaxamayo in the Mexican state of Puebla, March 13, 2006. Xaxamayo has no running water supply so villagers, often children, have to walk many kilometers to collect water.
(Reuters)*

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