

Opening Statement
By: Dr. Reza Ardakanian

(Iranian National Committee, Chairman)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Guests,

On behalf of the Iranian National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage (IRNCID), I would like to welcome you all for participating the first International Technical Workshop on “Drought Management Strategies” which has been organized by the Working Group on “Irrigated Agriculture Under Drought and Water Scarcity Conditions” under the supervision of the Iranian National Committee.

I am indeed honored to address you some words this morning on the occasion of this International Workshop.

Dryness and drought is the result of special interaction between natural and social environment. Man and society play active as well as passive roles in this process which determines the global development of a region. In the last period of time it can be clearly recognized that the rhythm of the changes in the natural and social environment became more and more rapid, and the effects of the changes become increasingly bright, complex, and permanent. All these processes influence the everyday and future of human life more and more directly compared to previous time.

It is also obvious that the effects of drought, influence not only agriculture and plant production, but at the same time all living organisms including domestic and wild species of plants and animals, and also human beings. This means that damages can occur not only in cultivated fields but also in non cultivated and nature protected areas and in human society as well. Consequently there is a global need to find out the means and measures against the harmful effects of drought and to create some variables in space and time due to influence the preparedness of the whole society. Including politics, economy, ecology, justice, and ethics, as well as the private and public behaviour for the sustainable development of the society.

However, the concept of drought is complex. It is important to define it clearly to avoid misunderstandings and different interpretations. First of all it is necessary to distinct dryness from drought. In spite of both expressing the situation of strong water scarcity in a region, they are not synonymous terms: dryness has some general meaning, not specified to the different elements of the environment,

while drought is expressing the effect on living organisms, mainly on plants and plant stands, but also on micro – organisms, animals, and human beings. As it has been determined by famous scientists (1995), dryness is a geo – socio – ecological term, while drought is an agro – ecological and social one, and the numerical expression of the two phenomena is different as well. Making these definitions clear right at the beginning will help to establish a uniform and for everybody acceptable concept on the basis of which the practical means can be determined more easily.

One of the most promising tools in the hand of all responsible parties of the society would be a well developed national – or even international – drought strategy, in which all the necessary concepts, methods, steps, and sources of the fight against drought should be summarized.

Today we are trying to summarize all the necessary information which is important to drought strategy in which all the necessary concepts, methods, steps and sources against drought should be summarized.

The theme of today's workshop has been well chosen for the discussion of drought mitigation strategies everywhere and for sharing expertise among scientists, engineers, practitioners and experts. We all expect to have a great presentation and productive discussion during this two day workshop. We more or less all have to deal with this theme in different ways in our practice, by finding the fulfillment of the needs of society and acceptable environmental impacts.

I must also take this opportunity to express my great appreciation to Mr. Assadollahi the General Secretary of the Iranian National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage for his great efforts in organizing this fruitful technical workshop, today.

Before I end my address. I must thank, on behalf of the Iranian National Committee, Tossab Consulting Engineering Company, particularly Dr. Nairizi who is playing an important role in finding solutions for the global challenges related to the critical solution of Drought Management Strategies, not only in Iran but by far beyond regional and international levels. Special thanks to the international lecturers coming faraway from the United kingdom, South Africa, India and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Last but not least my warmest welcome and sincere thanks to all of you attending this international event for the success and fruitful contributions.

Our staff has done their utmost to facilitate your participation and to ensure that your stay here will be a memorable one for ever.

Thank you.