



Nunzio Scibilia
District Governor
2016-2017

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My dear friends in Rotary,

Access to secure, clean, potable drinking water resources is essential for communities to develop. While access to water and to hygienic sanitary centres is often taken for granted in developed countries, this fundamental right is daily denied in several parts of the world. Sustainable development within the coming twenty years has a mission that seems ambitious but is attainable: 'Guaranteeing to all people the availability and sustainable use of water and health centres'. This is to be attained through four principles:

- The separation of drinking water from waste water as a most important step towards longevity in mankind. The creation of sanitary infrastructure has allowed communities, hence economies, to progress being rid of the weight of disease that is watered carried. Yet, today, although there is a decrease in disease and infant mortality, a billion human beings still do not have access to hygienic sanitary services. Therefore, it is fundamentally important that investment is made in such infrastructure.
- The availability of water in the home or within close distance avoids the need for transport from founts that are frequently distant. As a direct consequence of closer accessibility of water, there is an increase of free time to be devolved to productive activities, to instruction, to the development of business and to family life. This is of particular importance to the women and children who, otherwise, spend a good part of their time in search of water.
- Particular treatments must be applied to water so that it is safe for human consumption. This challenge can be easily overcome by means of filter and disinfection systems. Appropriate gadgets which require little maintenance and are efficient and trustworthy can be applied to small water treatment plants which are absolutely necessary in order to create barriers against pathogenic agents and to offer better protection against infection.
- For the wellbeing of humanity, a correct ecosystem must be achieved. Much of the sweet water on our planet has been impoverished by over use, by contamination, by climatic changes, by pollution, by fertilizers and other human activity. As a result of this human abuse, water quality has been worsened and quantity impoverished. It is therefore imperative that the ecological integrity of our rivers and lakes, of our wetlands and underground water reservoirs be protected from contaminating agents.

It is a fact that economic development inevitably taps water resources. It is however absolutely necessary that progressive governments take into consideration the needs of all users, including communities, agriculture, industry mineral activities and the environment. All changes for development have their inevitable consequences and, as the demand for water for agriculture and industry is on the increase, it is necessary that water be equally shared in order to guarantee accessibility to all users without omitting the requirements of the environment itself.

Water sustains life but it is clean water that defines civilization. If we admit that accessibility to clean drinking water is a fundamental human right, it is our responsibility to provide the instruction and the infrastructure necessary to sustain and guarantee the improvement of the quality of life and longevity in third world countries.

For several years, Rotary has stated that "Water is a human right. When people, especially minors, have accessibility to clean water and sanitation, when they abide by hygienic regulations, they live a healthier and more productive life". This is why Rotary has challenged all Rotarians to work together to improve the quality and availability of water plants and sanitary services while teaching the practice of hygiene.

It has been calculated that 24 dollars are necessary to provide clean water for a single person. Today 23 million persons can access clean water and sanitary equipment thanks to Rotary.

Here's the new challenge: ***Guaranteeing clean drinking water worldwide.*** We aim at providing clean water and sanitary and hygienic structures to the whole world within the year 2030.

Nothing is better than hearing kids shout Hurray! Hurray! When water sprouts out of a newly dug out well', says one who has been for years working towards achieving this goal.

Attaining such an objective is a result that no organization can reach single handed, not even Rotary with its 34,000 clubs and its 1.2 million members. In order to succeed it is necessary that we work in partnership with other organizations who share our same objectives ... working together for serving Humanity.

My kindest regards to all.

District Secretariat 2016-2017

90144 Palermo - Via Giuseppe Giusti, 3 - fax +39 091 6261740
95131 Catania - Via San Tommaso, 5 - fax +39 095 2501210

e-mail: segreteria@distrettuale1617@rotary2110.it