



Rotary

Inter-Country Committees  
Comités Inter-Pays

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Advisor on water and sanitation issues to the Chair of the Executive Council of the ICCs

Water and Sanitation Symposium of the ICCs worldwide in the framework of

WATEC 2015- October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Tel-Aviv, Israel

**"WATER FOR LIFE IN A CHANGING WORLD"**

October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Dear Chair Gwenael de Bergevin,

It is my pleasure to send you a brief report of the successful symposium held on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in Tel-Aviv which was attended by 100 guests approximately.

Among the Rotary representatives who honored us with their presence were DG Emil El-Asmar of District 2490 Israel, PDIR 2012-14 Gidi Peiper, PDG Shaul D'Angeli who is currently serving as National Chair of Israel ICCs, PDG Moshe Idelman. Members of from more than 20 local Rotary clubs shared in this event together with representatives from Hungary, Ukraine, Serbia and the USA.

A large delegation of Israeli high-school students from Jewish and Arab schools joined too in the symposium in the framework of a special educational water program "Hands Across Water" and they added much interest to the event.

The symposium started with your welcome message which was read in the English translation by Chairman Rotarian Michael Pascal, followed by the greetings of DG Emil El-Asmar and myself's.

The program was very interesting and succeeded in expounding clearly the issues the ICCs are focusing on, namely the water crisis affecting the whole world, the possible solutions technology can offer today, and the contribution ICCs can give by working together.

The sessions started with my presentation of the ICC's distribution worldwide, followed by a very good presentation on a practical example of ICC cooperation in a water project submitted by NC Dr. Istvan Grafjodi from Hungary. Prof. Noam Weisbrod of the Ben Gurion

University and Mr. Oded Distel of the Ministry of Economics both gave excellent description of the global water and sanitation stresses as well as of the various solutions offered by the Israeli technology and know-how.

PhD Gerald Sussman from the USA talked about the "Hands across Water" program, which initiated a few years ago on the basis of PhD Amnon Shefi's educational program "Youth Water and Knowledge" and is being carried out very successfully in a few Israeli mixed Jewish-Arab schools. This project is being financed by a GG sponsored by Israeli and American Rotary clubs and districts and TRF.

Phd Amnon Shefi too gave a short address on this project and the young students present gave us a brilliant demonstration of their skills and innovative spirit linked to present and future water challenges and also proposed clever solutions of their own.

PP Itzhak Abt chaired the closing panel, which focused on how the ICCs could promote water and sanitation issues. The main conclusion, which was reached almost unanimously by the panel participants, was that education is the basis to the solution of water and sanitation problems. Education meaning creating awareness that water is a universal and basic right of all fellow humans and that understanding and cooperation between different communities everywhere will succeed in at least alleviating – if not solving – this urgent and crucial issue.

The role of the ICCs in helping educate and in assisting the needy communities in this process is therefore very important and we must do whatever possible in order to achieve our goals.

Promoting international conferences on the subject is therefore a must since they will pave the way to cooperation in much needed life saving initiatives and projects.

We believe that our symposium succeeded in giving a satisfactory presentation of some of the ICC's activities and that it will inspire more Rotarians to join in future water and sanitation programs .

Best regards,

PDG Avner Fuchs, Symposium Chair

PS.: I'll be glad to supply a more comprehensive report later on.