

Via Electronic Mail and Air Mail

March 26, 2010

Catarina de Albuquerque, Esq.
Independent Expert
ESCR Section, Special Procedures Division
UNOG-OHCHR
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva, 10 – Switzerland

Dear Ms. Albuquerque:

On behalf of the Water Environment Federation (WEF), I write to encourage you and your United Nations colleagues to consider the critical role that members of the private sector can play in enhancing the sustainable provision of water and sanitation services in areas of the world where it is currently lacking.

Established over 80 years ago, WEF has 36,000+ members from both the private and public sectors in over 73 countries, and we are honored to be an accredited organization to both the United Nations' UNEP and ECOSOC programs. Because of our involvement with these two U.N. activities, WEF has become aware of various discussions re the involvement of the private sector in the provision of water and sanitation, and that the involvement of the private sector in these areas is somehow contradictory to the basic human dignity water and sanitation represent. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Access to reliable, sustainable supplies of clean water is a matter of human security. And as pressing as water issues may be now, they will become even more critical in the future: U.N. and other expert bodies predict that by 2025 two-thirds of the world's countries will be water stressed, and some 2.4 billion people will face water scarcity. The challenge of making access to clean water for all is much too large for one nation - - or one sector - - to tackle alone. The need to work together, to leverage the efforts of other nations, non-profit organizations, and the private sector is critical.

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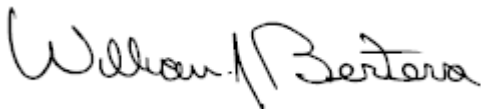
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

William J. Bertera
Alexandria, VA

When it comes to the provision of sustainable clean water supplies, the private sector has a long and successful track record of improving water access, water standards and efficiency of water delivery in some of the most challenging parts of the world. Working with their counterparts in the NGO, nonprofit and governmental communities, private sector interests bring their technical skills and capital to bear in addressing a broad spectrum of challenges facing the water sector. In countless projects, on many continents, it has been demonstrated that private sector involvement in expanding the provisioning of clean water supplies and sanitation services is critical to fostering innovation, building effective partnerships, empowering communities, and achieving sustainable results.

As an international lawyer with experience in complex mediations on a broad range of human rights issues, you know first hand the inherent value that the private sector brings to a global coalition effort like the one which is necessary to expand clean water supplies. The resources necessary to tackle this enormous issue requires all of the tools, talent, and proven strategic partners that it can muster. Excluding the expertise and resources of the private sector from efforts to address current and future clean water and sanitation needs would severely impede the goal that we all are working to achieve: clean water and basic sanitation services for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "William J. Bertera". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" and last name "Bertera" clearly distinguishable.

William J. Bertera
Executive Director
WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION