

EPSU joins global coalition in support of unique Global Water Operators Partnership Alliance

(20 September 2017) Faced with an attempt to reduce the role and unique charter of the Global Water Operators Partnership Alliance, EPSU, many affiliates, water movement groups and activists have addressed an [Open letter to UN Habitat](#). We criticize the attempt by the UN organization to replace the organization with a far less transparent and inclusive body, and attempting to change the mission of the GWOPA. GWOPA is focused on seeking the participation of public water entities in addressing the challenges to provide people with safe drinking water and sanitation services. This reflects that over 90% of water services in the world are run by public companies. GWOPA reaches out specifically to local public utilities, civil society, workers and their trade unions. UN Habitat wants to reduce it to a project within its organization something we reject. It is a blatant attempt to demolish the unique focus on public-public partnerships. It will destroy a core principle of the GWOPA that water services should be run on a non-for profit basis. [Water is a human right](#).

The letter addresses several of the problems UN-Habitat is creating. We seek clarity in the relationship between UN-Habitat which has provided secretarial support and the GWOPA therefore. PSI is one of the co-founders of the GWOPA and part of the Steering Committee.

From the open letter

“We shared the conclusions of the “Hashimoto Action Plan”: over 90% of water and sanitation operators are public entities, and thus represent the same proportion of the available experience in running water services. By providing a vehicle to mobilise and share the expertise

embedded in public water utilities, the GWOPA has held great potential for improving the institutional and human capacity to increase access to water and sanitation. The GWOPA has been a unique international platform to support public utilities through not-for-profit peer-to-peer

partnerships.”

“Another unique and important aspect of the GWOPA is its open and participatory governance as a global alliance.” (...) we are a part of this history and are determined to promote not-for-profit partnerships to achieve universal access to water for all through the Global WOPs Alliance.

“The GWOPA has demonstrated its success and enjoyed broad support - more than 300 WOPs projects have been implemented globally. (...) Unlike other global forums, the GWOPA reaches out specifically to local public utilities, civil society, and workers and their trade unions. “

The letter asks for “ renewed acknowledgement of GWOPA’s mandate for strengthening public water operators

through Water Operators’ Partnerships and uphold the participatory and inclusive nature of

GWOPA as a multi-stakeholder Alliance with full recognition of the leadership of the International Steering Committee, Chair, and the principles and decision-making processes.”

[For the Open Letter](#)

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