

An International Summit:

The Water of the Middle East



Role #1: The American Officer of the World Bank

- You are told by the Board of the World Bank that, based on the problems of involvement with Indian and Chinese megadam projects, you cannot commit World Bank funding for large-scale solutions.
- You are asked to suggest localized, less expensive solutions to this water resource problem.
- You are under enormous pressure from the United States government not to commit too much United States funding to any proposed solution. However, you do recognize that it is in the United States' best interest to have ongoing peace in the Middle East region.

Role #2: Member of the Syrian Security Council

- You believe that you have the right to use the water of the Yarmouk for your exploding population numbers.
- You oppose Turkey's plans for the Euphrates River because they would mean that Turkey could cut off your main water supply for up to eight months.
- Your government cannot afford to fund megaprojects within the next 15 years.
- Syria demands the return of the Golan Heights area before any peace treaty can be negotiated.

Role #3: CEO of a major Jordanian food corporation

- You wish to maintain and increase water supplies for the southern King Abdallah Canal zone where lands require a growing amount of water for irrigation.
- You are concerned about Syria's use of the Yarmouk where diversion dams are being built.
- You would support an independent state of Palestine, which would help to alleviate the number of refugees entering Jordan.
- Jordan is committed to a massive infrastructure development within Amman and cannot afford to contribute to megaprojects to solve this water problem.
- Jordan would like to build dams on the Yarmouk to amass water during the time when there is an increased flow.
- Jordan is upset with Syria for building small dams along the tributaries of the upper Yarmouk, as these are depleting the water supplies downstream and are adding to pollution.

Role #4: Designated Minister of Resources and Development for the Palestinian People's Authority

- You are unhappy with Jordan's claims to the Jordan River.
- As a potential "nation-state", you are desperate for financial help and cannot afford a huge financial commitment to megaprojects (desalinization plants, dams, and so on).
- You believe that Israel overpumps aquifers during droughts.

Role #5: Chair of the Israeli Water Commission

- Your task is to secure water supplies for the tremendous growth in population (including new settlements on the West Bank), industry, domestic use, and irrigation of the southern, arid areas of Israel, which are needed for future food supplies. You do not wish to be dependent on other countries for food.
- Because of a large military expenditure, you are not able to contribute any future megaprojects to solve the water problem.
- Israel is unhappy that the King Abdallah Canal takes water from the Yarmouk to irrigate southern Jordan.
- You think that drip irrigation and cloud seeding will help the situation in the future.

Role #6: Senior Executive Officer to the Iraqi Foreign Office

- You wish to establish better trade relations with the outside world.
- You need help in repairing the infrastructure that was destroyed during the Gulf War, and you maintain that the United States should bear the cost.
- You are very concerned about the Turkish water developments on the Euphrates River.
- You accept that megaprojects are required to prevent future conflict over water.
- You believe that it is the world's responsibility to help finance any large scheme for future canals, dams, or desalinization plants.
- You seek an agreement with the international community ensuring that water from upstream countries cannot be held back from downstream countries.

Role #7: Turkish Foreign Minister

- You seek to protect Turkey's right to harness and use the Euphrates River's water flow.
- You defend the right to continue with a large agricultural development in southeast Turkey (the South Anatolia Project), which will use even more water than current plans originally estimated.
- You oppose Syrian support of the Kurds and have the capacity to respond to this by severely reducing the flow of Euphrates water in Syria and Iraq.
- You are not willing to contribute to any project outside of Turkey.
- You are very reluctant to jeopardize Turkey's long-range water needs, even though Turkey has more than it currently needs.