

DISTINGUISHED ASSOCIATE AWARD 2008

Chusei YAMADA

The Distinguished Associate Award of the International Association of Hydrogeologists is presented annually to a person who, while not being a groundwater professional, has made an outstanding contribution to the understanding, development, management and protection of groundwater resources internationally. It is with great pleasure that the Award for 2008 is presented to Ambassador Chusei Yamada.

Ambassador Yamada has had a distinguished career as both a lawyer and a diplomat. He has served as the Ambassador of Japan to the Conference of Disarmament and to Egypt and India and he is currently a special assistant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Japan. Since 1992 he has been a member of the United Nations International Law Commission (ILC) and he was re-elected to serve on the Commission for a fourth consecutive term in November 2006. In 2003 he was appointed Special Rapporteur to study the topic of Shared Natural Resources, including transboundary groundwaters, oil and gas. He adopted a step by step approach starting with transboundary groundwaters.

In this capacity Ambassador Yamada has submitted five Reports to the ILC setting out Draft Articles for the sound management of transboundary aquifers in which he had been strongly supported throughout the process by experts group organised and lead by UNESCO IHP in coordination with FAO and the IAH Transboundary Aquifer Resources Management Commission, and others. The fifth Report was submitted to the ILC at its 60th session (May and July 2008). The results adopted by the ILC will then be commented at the 6th Committee (legal) of the UN General Assembly in October/November 2008. In previous debates UN Member States have strongly welcomed the Draft Articles and their scope.

The work of providing a durable legal framework for transboundary groundwaters, which takes proper account of the scientific principles governing its occurrence and flow, is of great importance in ensuring the sustainable and peaceful management of groundwater resources in many parts of the world. We are pleased to acknowledge Ambassador Yamada's leadership and personal contribution with this award.

Stephen Foster
President

Wilhelm Struckmeier
Secretary General