

# AquaFed

Draft comments by AquaFed at the occasion of the last side-event of Catarina de Albuquerque during the HRC session of September 2014

Draft 2014-09-10 (TVW) / v1./ check against delivery

Chair,

Excellencies

Colleagues,

Dear Catarina,

I represent AquaFed, The International Federation of Private Water Operators;

On behalf of our members, and on behalf of all the colleagues in my team, I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate Catarina on her latest publication.

**In your book**, you'll outline, clarify best practices. /guidelines for the implementation of the human right to water, that we as service providers welcome very much as guidance. Responsible authorities now have a clearer view on how they can develop sustainable access to safe drinking water, and sanitation services that satisfy all dimensions of the human right.

**(IWA handbook)** As private water operators, together with a number of other practitioners, we are also contributing to guidelines for utilities, on how to better implement the human right. This will be highlighted in a book to be published shortly by the International Water Association. We believe your publication and the IWA handbook will be very useful tools for authorities, citizens, operators of all types and stakeholders to further advance the right to water.

**In the years of Catarina's mandate**, the water and the human rights world has undergone significant change. We would like to congratulate her for her tireless campaigning these past (8) years.

AquaFed has – since the start of her mandate as Independent Expert, and later as Special Rapporteur, been working at her side; to try to advance our common goals of pushing for **first** the recognition and **second** the implementation of the human right to water and sanitation.

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Today we are joyful for the dynamic that Catarina was instrumental in setting into motion, together with so many committed organizations from civil society, and with the support of government. We feel very privileged in being part of this dynamic and firmly believe that it was only when we all came to Catarina's table, that we made real progress; resulting in the adoption of the human right in 2010.

**Catarina**, we are thankful for your leadership, yet saddened to acknowledge that your mandate comes now to an end. At the same time, we commit ourselves to continuing to collaborate in the same, respectful and constructive manner with the next Special Rapporteur.

Looking forward we identify the following challenges:

- **The implementation of the RTWS in the post-2015 agenda necessitates a dedicated SDG** on water and sanitation, and at the same time a mainstreaming into various other goals! The year of negotiations ahead will challenge the water community to keep its unified front and to galvanize visionary governments to adopt this goal next year in September
- We all know that billions of people in this world today, do not have their right to water and sanitation satisfied. Access to safe drinking water, nor to a sustainable public service, nor to sanitation facilities and systems that satisfy all the components of the human right to water and sanitation. The campaign to end open defecation will be a significant step ahead, yet we all know that "just toilets" is not enough for the billions whose rights are infringed on a daily basis.
- We call upon governments and the water community to tackle these challenges head on and to take into account all sustainable options that are available for them.

Thanks to Catarina, we all understand much better what our respective roles and responsibilities are. We now understand the rights itself, the barriers and obstacles down the path to realize them. Thanks also to Catarina, so many different stakeholders have been brought to the table, and understand much better how we can cooperate. We wish for this constructive spirit to continue for years to come.

Muito Obrigado y Parabens!