

## **Dr Jakob Granit, remarks at Friends of GWP event**

- I am pleased to be invited to provide a few remarks at this historic event for integrated management of water resources at the shift of GWP HQ from Stockholm to Windhoek and Cape Town.
- I had the opportunity to be part of the establishment of the GWPO as a young Sida staffer in 1995. I carried the briefcase of my first real boss, Head of the Department Johan Holmberg, who was part of the design of the GWP. I will always remember when the global community met in Nacka for the design meeting when the rules of procedure of the GWP was established.
- During the early 90s the water community of academics and practitioners grow strong in Sweden. Much thanks to Professor Malin Falkenmark. I remember her seminal article in Ambio about water stress and challenges in Southern Africa. It made me and many others aware of this precious resource. Many other colleagues such as Prof Jan Lundqvist and Prof Hubert Savenije played important roles bringing water management to the forefront in public debate.
- Mid 1990s marked also a major transition period in Southern Africa with the end of apartheid in South Africa. This provided an opportunity for Sweden to engage on water resources management to support local leadership and build also on South Africa's experience in this field. Water resources were seen as an opportunity to strengthen regional collaboration based on the major shared river basins such as the Zambezi, Pungwe and Okavango. Colleagues such as Phera Ramoeli has been part of this journey from the start.
- The GWP partnership has learned so much from the experiences from Southern Africa. This region has established, with some support of Sweden, key international river basins organisations that are operational today. In Southern Africa Prof Kader Asmal spearheaded a very strong and innovative water resources management legislation. A model for many other countries.
- The work led by Southern African colleagues and with GWP network has helped institutionalise regional water cooperation in Southern Africa and also focused on benefits beyond the river such as energy production. Experiences that I as a World Bank staffer also could bring to colleagues working in the Nile Basin.
- As GWP now enters a new era I would like to congratulate Namibia and South Africa for taking up the leadership of the GWP for the benefit of this global organisation. Based on all the experiences from Southern Africa in water resources management, that also we in Sweden has learned from, for example in the management of the Baltic Sea Basin, you will be the right countries to take the GWP forward. Water, after all, is still under-invested and under-managed so there is much to do.
- Thank you and I hope to stay connected with you.