

Water as a Human Right

I am pleased to introduce a special paper published in this issue of the Journal. The paper is entitled The Global Challenge for Adequate and Safe Water, and was delivered as a lecture by Professor Menachem Elimelech on the occasion of his receiving the 2005 Athalie Richardson Irvine Clarke Prize on July 7 2005. Menachem Elimelech is the Roberto C. Goizueta Professor of Chemical and Environmental Engineering at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut (USA).

The Clarke Prize is awarded annually by the National Water Research Institute (USA) for “outstanding achievement in water science and technology”. Quoting from the 2005 Clarke Prize Program and Lecture pamphlet, Professor Elimelech is recognized for his “contributions to the basic understanding of the physical and chemical processes for improving drinking water quality. His research on the fate of and transport of colloidal particles and microbial pathogens, like viruses and *Cryptosporidium*, in aquatic environments has proven critical in the removal of such contaminants from water. He has also significantly impacted the areas of water recycling and pollution control

through his research on the effective use of membrane technologies for removing contaminants from water.”

I am pleased that the Journal has published this stimulating paper by Professor Elimelech that was his lecture for the Clarke Prize. The paper describes three challenging cases of providing adequate and safe water. The first case describes the production of potable water from reclaimed wastewater in Namibia. The second case is about water scarcity in Israel, and how development of alternative water sources such as wastewater reclamation and desalination are being used. The last case deals with the tragic problem that over 1 billion people in the world are without safe drinking water, and describes some simple low technology water treatment methods that can be used in the developing world for producing potable water. Professor Elimelech closes with a presentation and discussion of *water as a human right*. I invite you to read this important paper.

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Editor, The Americas

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