



PHOTOS □ TODAY'S ZAMAN, MEHMET ALI POYRAZ

Princess Sumaya of Jordan speaks at the water conference. Above, she tries water marbling with the help of an artist during the event.

Princess Sumaya of Jordan warns against water scarcity

The guest of honor at the Blue Peace in the Middle East Conference held in Istanbul on March 18 and 19, the princess of Jordan, warned against water scarcity in the region.

Speaking at the gala dinner of the conference held at Zaman daily headquarters on Monday, Princess Sumaya bint el Hassan of Jordan defined water scarcity as one of the most important challenges for the region. "In 20 years, 300 million people will live under conditions of water scarcity," said the princess, adding that "very little has been done to deal with this regional challenge."

Although the princess mainly talked about water issues, she also touched upon the "just" frustration of the young people in the Middle East. "So many of our young people are frustrated by an absence of opportunity and hope," she stated.

According to her, "Water sits at the very nexus of our region's pressing challenges." However, the princess said that it receives little diplomatic attention.

scarcity, the princess said, "We must promote cooperation and integration between social and natural science." For her, it is "essential that communications with politicians are managed and promoted."

Regarding the Blue Peace in the Middle East project, the princess said, "We must ensure that the findings and recommendations of Blue Peace are properly aired and that our mission is open and inclusive." She described Blue Peace as a response to the "shared condition" of the region, a condition that "combines inequality, scarcity of resources and human insecurity."

The event was co-hosted by the journal Turkish Review and India-based think tank Strategic Foresight Group (SFG) in partnership with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Participants praise event for creating awareness of water

Participants at the international water conference said the event was extremely significant as it created awareness among the

Yavuz Selim Çubukçu, water consultant at the Foreign Ministry, said the conference was meaningful as it brought the water issue to the government's agenda. Speaking to Cihan news agency, Çubukçu also noted that establishing wastewater treatment plants is urgently needed in Turkey as well as in the rest of the world. He further emphasized the importance of cooperating with neighbors on the issue and praised the organizers of the event.

Former Foreign Minister Yaşar Yakış also commented on the event, stressing the importance of inviting crucial media representatives in the Middle East to the conference. "It has been viewed in the international media for years that Turkey has cut off the water resources of Syria and Iraq. We need to fix this incorrect impression. And such events as the conference can help us to fix this," he said.

Turkish Water Institute President Ahmet Saatçı said what he learned at the conference is that the media needs to be informed about the water issue.