Dams, decisions, discourses and developments in Nile Basin Countries

Workshop 2 November 2017

Everyone welcome and no registration or fees

Venue Part 1: Conference hall at the Nordic house (Norræna húsið)

09.00-0930: Welcome and opening
- Opening welcome by Permanent Secretary of State, Mr. Sturla Sigurjónsson
- Opening remarks by Inna Soiri, director of the Nordic Africa Institute
- Introduction by Kjell Havnevik, Terje Oestigaard, Atakilte Beyene and Helga Ögmundardóttir

09.30-10.00: What are rivers for? Some theoretical issues of building dams and nations
Dr. Helga Ögmundardóttir

10.00-10.30: The Old Aswan Dam in Egypt – A useful pyramid? Imperialists and archaeologists, cotton and complaints
Dr. Terje Oestigaard

10.30-11.00: Coffee

11.00-11.30: Storing Nile waters upstream: the hydropolitical implications of dam building in Sudan and Ethiopia
Dr. Ana Cascão

11.30-12.00: Large-scale irrigation dams and collective management: the case of Koga Dam and Irrigation scheme, Ethiopia
Dr. Atakilte Beyene

12.00-13.30: Lunch

Venue Part 2: Conference hall at the National museum (Þjóðminjasafnið)

13.30-14.00: A billion dollar ritual? Diviners, disputes and spirit appeasement ceremonies behind the Bujagali Dam, Uganda
Dr. Terje Oestigaard

14.00-14.30: The Stiegler’s Gorge Dam in Tanzania - the dam that never was built
Prof. Kjell Havnevik

14.30-15.00: Coffee

15.00-16.00: Round table discussion
Dr. Pétur Skúlason Waldorf, Dr. Jón Geir Pétursson, Dr. Sanna Ojalammi and Dr. Shilpa Asokan

16.00-16.30: Summary and conclusions
Kjell Havnevik, Terje Oestigaard, Atakilte Beyene and Helga Ögmundardóttir
Background and aim of the workshop

Dams and irrigation systems are gaining renewed political and development priority across many countries in Africa. The reasons for this are multiple. African countries have been struggling to 1) supply nutritious, healthy and sufficient foods to its citizens, and 2) provide energy to industrialization and the rapid urban growth. Moreover, global processes such as climate change impacts are also requiring changes in agricultural systems. In this regard, climate resilient and green-growth strategies are championed as Africa’s main policy alternatives. As a result, African countries that aspire to accelerate their economies are heavily investing in water infrastructures. Large-scale and multipurpose dams and irrigation systems are being built across the continent. The aim of this workshop is 1) to deepen the understanding of the role of dams in development strategies in Africa and 2) to address some of the key gaps in knowledge in these areas and why some dams are implemented while others are not, and the rationale in the decision-making process when choosing irrigation, hydropower or multi-purpose dams. The workshop brings together researchers working on dams from theoretical perspectives and from different Nile Basin countries with a rich experience in large-scale dam and irrigation infrastructures.