

Latest Bond film pits agent vs. villain who seeks water monopoly: Water becoming a commodity

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James Bond is back, and in his latest action thriller film *Quantum of Solace*, the famous spy is battling a villain trying to control strategic water resources in a developing country. The plot does not seem farfetched to a church-related network based in Geneva.

“With water scarcity increasing and demand for water rising steadily in many countries around the world, control over water translates more and more into profit and power,” says Maike Gorsboth, the coordinator of the Ecumenical Water Network, an initiative of churches, Christian agencies and movements campaigning for people’s access to water.

The British spy’s new adventure, *Quantum of Solace*, started showing in many theaters worldwide before it hit U.S. screens in mid-November. The movie stars Daniel Craig in his second appearance as Bond.

In the film, Bond battles Dominic Greene (Mathieu Amalric), a member of the Quantum organization who, posing as an environmentalist, intends to stage a coup d’état in a South American country to take control of its water supply.

“Already today we are witnessing struggles over the control of water supply and resources,” notes Gorsboth. “Companies are buying water rights and land in order to secure their access to water resources. Often they do not care much about the rights of communities or environmental consequences, and deplete and pollute this precious resource.”

While corruption does play a major role in the water sector, what is actually happening in some countries is often not illegal, she points out. “Legal provisions ensuring public control and regulating private ownership and use of water resources are in too many cases lacking or insufficient.”

According to the Ecumenical Water Network, public and community control of water supply has diminished drastically in recent decades. Increasingly, clean water is treated as a commodity subject to market conditions.

In the Bond movie, Gorsboth says, "The villain almost succeeds because he is working in secret and because he uses other people's greed and corruption."

The fictitious spy tackles the problem gun in hand. Church-related groups are taking a different approach: "They speak up for the poor and most vulnerable and thus help them to defend their right to water against more powerful interests." *-Ecumenical News International*