

**Ethiopia's Statement**  
**Preparatory meeting of the United Nations Conference on the Midterm**  
**Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the**  
**International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–**  
**2028**  
**25 October 2022**

Thank you, Mr. President!

Allow me to start by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. Water remains one of the most important items in our deliberations on development. This is true for my country Ethiopia as well as my continent Africa.

Having less than ten percent of the world's fresh water resources and the most underdeveloped water infrastructure, Africa faces chronic water scarcity.

Drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene reports by UNICEF and WHO indicate 73% of the total population in sub-Saharan Africa lacks access to safely managed drinking water services.

Furthermore, 2022 United Nations SDG 7 tracking report indicates that from the 20 countries with the largest access deficits in clean energy, which mainly comes from hydroelectric power, 15 are in sub-Saharan Africa.

The impacts of climate change are also primarily manifested in water-related challenges. Countries face, mostly simultaneously, drought and excessive flooding.

Lack of access to clean water exacerbates all aspects of societal vulnerability ranging from poverty, lack of access to education and health services, inequality between men and women and all other development challenges we pledged to overcome through the SDGs.

**Mr. President,**

It must be clear that the solution mainly lies in ensuring sufficient level of water infrastructure. According to the UN Water Development report 2020, water scarcity in Africa is normally caused by lack of water infrastructure.

For Africa, water infrastructure development is the most critical intervention needed to distribute its limited water resources for sustainable use.

Closing the infrastructure gap demands addressing the financing gap at the global level. At the same time, it requires countries to prioritize the water sector and augment national infrastructure.

Accordingly, we call for equity in access to international finance for water development. Empirical data show countries in sub-Saharan Africa receive the most minimal level of financing for the implementation of SDG 6, while countries in the most advantageous situation enjoy greater level of support.

We therefore call on states to treat the “water sector development” as a cross cutting imperative that informs our discussion on all thematic dialogues. Experience sharing and possible inter-state cooperation in water sector development could be one of the most substantive deliverables of the Water Conference. We also reiterate our call to avoid politicization and securitization of discussions to make sure our efforts yield concrete outcome.

**Thank you, Mr. President!**