

Thank you Chair

I am ElsaMarie DSilva delivering this statement on behalf of Red Dot Foundation and the Global Diplomacy Lab, under the aegis of the German Federal Foreign Office and the Republic of Slovenia's Ministry of External Affairs

Water is the source of life yet its value is not very much understood or appreciated by people in power and out of power. As our population grows to unmanageable levels, this valuable resource will be scarce and become a source of conflict. Therefore it is critical that we understand the "science of water" in simple and tangible terms. The climate crisis too does not give water its due importance and so reframing of the problem is critical.

In our recent work at the Global Diplomacy Lab, we have further realised that the water science and diplomatic practice are on parallel tracks and there is a need to inculcate "water intelligence" in training programs for not only diplomats but also a broader audience. This would deepen the water literacy that is needed for sustainability of life on our planet.

Further in order to be relevant and tangible, it is important to engage youth and other stakeholders like women, low income and indigenous populations so that their needs can be addressed as well as broaden the discussion. As a start we would like to propose that water commissioners and other municipal bodies offer internships for youth leaders and partnerships with civil society to develop local projects for water conservation, management and access.