THEMATIC CONCEPT PAPERS Water for Cooperation

DRAFT OUTLINE

I. Introduction

This section will introduce the thematic topic in the context of the UN 2023 Water Conference and set the scene for the concept paper.

As part of the organizational arrangements mandated in A/RES/75/212, paragraph 9 (d), the Secretary-General of the UN 2023 Water Conference will prepare concept papers on the themes of the interactive dialogues, finalized during the one-day preparatory meeting for the Conference convened by the President of the United Nations General Assembly on 25 October 2022. This concept paper is on the theme: [name of theme].

The world is not on track to achieve SDG 6 and related goals and targets by 2030. The COVID-19 pandemic has further increased the challenge, and the world must quadruple the rate of progress to ensure water and sanitation for all by 2030. Water is inextricably linked to the three pillars of sustainable development, and it integrates social, cultural, economic and political values. It is cross-cutting and underpins the achievement of many SDGs through close linkages with climate, energy, cities, the environment, food security, poverty, gender equality, and health, amongst others. With climate change profoundly affecting our economies, societies and environment, water is indeed the biggest deal breaker to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

II. Overview of the challenge, current status and interlinkages

This section will highlight the current status, trends and the need for progress on the theme. In doing so, it will also highlight interlinkages across the theme, in particular the relationships inherent between the theme and the most relevant SDGs, with emphasis on the most relevant targets.

• According to OECD State of Fragility Report, 2022, the report arrives during an 'age of crises', where multiple, concurring crises are disproportionately affecting the 60 fragile contexts identified. Chief among these crises are COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, and climate change, with the root causes of multidimensional fragility playing a central role in shaping their scale and severity. At the halfway point of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is more critical than ever for development partners to focus on the furthest behind: the 1.9 billion people in fragile contexts that account for 24% of the world's population but 73% of the world's extreme poor. Over 80% of member states had clearly clarified that they're unable to cover the costs of advancing the SDGs through domestic funding. The increasing fragility is further

exacerbating the situation and different business models are needed should the WASH SDG be advanced.

- Headline from the OECD is an alarm or red flag for Agenda 2030 commitment Leave no one behind.
- For Water, fragile settings are also far worse off in trends for SDG progress. Extremely fragile contexts compared to non-fragile contexts: In 2017, people living in extremely fragile states were...

> over 8x as likely to lack basic drinking water services

- And just 1 in 10 countries are on track to achieve universal access to basic sanitation, while coverage is actually decreasing in 9 countries – JMP Global Database 2019.
- Over the last decade humanitarian emergencies requiring international response have become more frequent, affect more people and last longer.
 - In 2020, nearly 170 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance half were children
 - The average consecutive humanitarian annual appeal lasts around **9 years.**
 - The number of crises that demanded a response from international partners **doubled** over the last decade.

III. Overview of opportunities for progress and transformative solutions

The existing and future water-related challenges we face require the rapid development and deployment of innovative and transformative solutions that go beyond business-as-usual. The international community must strive for concrete recommendations that can foster progress and transformative solutions. The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework aims to deliver fast results at an increased scale. The themes of the interactive dialogues will be addressed through the lens of five cross-cutting and interdependent accelerators namely: Financing, Data and information, Capacity development, Innovation, and Governance.

- The 2030 Agenda embodies the dictum that "there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development".
 - Since water is central to development, we think "*there can be no water without peace and no peace without water*"
- The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are set out not just to meet needs, but to reduce risk, vulnerability and overall levels of need to realize a future with *no one left behind*.
- Humanitarian response, sustainable development and sustaining peace are three sides of the same triangle.

- Several global agendas including the "New Way of Working" agreed at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), the *Agenda for Humanity* and others stresses that the theme, *Leave no one behind* –cannot be achieved <u>without progress in Fragile, Conflict and Violence contexts</u>.
- While the situation for water is dire, water is also a solution.
- <u>"Water Sector is an area where there is high potential to make the link between the Sustainable</u> <u>Development Agenda 2030 and the Agenda for Humanity Core Responsibilities and there are</u> <u>already emerging examples of where this is being done with promising models that can be</u> <u>replicated and scaled-up".</u>
- Specifically, Water cooperation for peace and stability- that equitable management of water resources and WASH services contribute to increased social cohesion, political stability and peace dividends;

1. Financing

This section will examine how to improve targeting, better utilization of existing resources and mobilization of additional domestic and international funding for delivery and implementation of all SDG 6 targets, bearing in mind the interlinkages with other goals. It may also explore the barriers that preclude finance mobilisation to date and offer action-oriented solutions.

2. Data and information

This section will discuss how data generation, validation, standardization and information exchange can build trust and support leaders in making informed decisions and increase accountability. It will discuss how to ensure that high-quality information on SDG 6 indicators is shared and can be easily accessible by any decision maker.

3. Capacity development

This section will explore how inclusive human and institutional capacities at all levels can enable improved service levels, operating and maintenance technology, increased job creation in the water sector and the retaining of a skilled work force.

4. Innovation

This section will discuss how innovative practices and technologies can be leveraged and scaled up to ultimately lead to improved water resources and sanitation development and management at the country level.

5. Governance

This section will focus on the need for cross-sector and transboundary collaboration, clear roles, stakeholder involvement and effective and inclusive institutions to make SDG 6 everyone's business.

IV. Recommendations

This section will outline the main recommendations for the theme, including possible voluntary commitments that would be relevant to address the global water challenges, specifically with respect to the theme of this concept paper. Please build as appropriate on and with reference to the three principles of the Conference:

- 1. Inclusive (e.g., who are the actors that should work together)
- 2. Cross sectoral (e.g., what are the sectors that need to be mobilized)
- 3. Action oriented (e.g., what needs to be done).

Due consideration may be given to contributions from other water-related meetings that served to provide input for the preparatory process for the Conference.

- **Global pact for action** provide a global vision of the future, commitment to action up to 2030, but also a vision beyond 2030.
- UN system- water action across all streams, but yet rarely becomes a priority itself for example the December 2020 resolution for the *Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review* primary policy instrument of the General Assembly to define the way the UN development system operates to support programme countries in their development efforts, as just one example.

V. Guiding Questions

This section will present the guiding questions that will shape the discussion during the relevant interactive dialogue at the UN 2023 Water Conference.