



**25th of October – Preparatory Meeting – NGO Intervention
Freshwater Action Network Mexico / Redes del Agua Latin America / Women's mayor
group
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Full Statement

Water reality has drastically changed since the last UN water conference more than 40 years ago, we need to think and act differently. We've heard during the stakeholder consultation meeting the call for changing the mindset. With this, commitments aligned with human rights have to be taken in the Water Action Agenda in March 2023 by member States and stakeholders. Starting and urgent commitments should be to increase national budgets for WASH, conservation of sources and ensure the rights of participation in budget's decision making of those that have been left out for too long and that the Human right to water and sanitation rapporteur has just listed:

1-In that line Women must be included through effective participation mechanisms to achieve gender equity and help to change the mindset on how decisions are taken in this sector for urban and rural projects.

2-It's Important to recall in this room, that Information and knowledge are not exclusive from the western science and rich countries, local knowledge and common goods community management models, need to be taken into consideration very seriously. Actions must be urgently taken by members States for Public and Private sector compliance of indigenous peoples rights. It has already been proven that indigenous people are responsible for most of the biodiversity and ecosystem conservation on the planet. Partnerships between the public sector and rural communities, known as Public-Community Partnerships should be included and promoted in this Water Action Agenda.

3-Water Action Agenda should include systematically in all WASH projects in rural and peri-urban areas, community participatory diagnostics where inhabitants of those communities, lacking of WASH services, can share their needs, and possible solutions.

4-Water is just one, groundwater, superficial and atmospheric water is the same and has no political boundaries. We have to stop fragmentation and take commitments to share information to adopt a real sustainable, integrated and transboundary water management model. Climate is not the only reason for water scarcity, it is the obsolete water management model that still in use today. member States should declare the water crises at the same level of climate change and articulate an intergovernmental panel that analyzes information, accelerates actions and ensures compliance of international commitments.

5-Water can no longer be seen isolated, it should be included in all adaptation plans within the UNFCCC and recognized its fundamental role in the Convention of Biological Diversity. Those climate adaptation plans have to be developed with a human right approach with the participation of rural and communities in risk by climate impacts.

6. We can no longer let economic activities make profit over life and human rights. We urge to include in this outcome agenda, actions to ensure the respect to the human rights to safe water and sanitation, to safe environment and to health, strengthen the accountability of this actors and ensure legal consequences for activities such as grasping and extractives industries that irresponsibly deplete aquifers, pollute water, destroy ecosystems, harm livelihoods and violate human rights.

7-Access to information is at the core of human rights, data systems should focus on disaggregating and analyzing data, so the vulnerable groups can be identified. But it is as important that citizens can be informed about the quality of water they have been provided and the quality of waste water that industries are dumping in the water systems.

Member states must include specific and concrete measures to ensure human rights principles such as transparency and accessibility to make information reach the local levels for better decision making.

8-Actions such include the prioritization of budgets to technology and infrastructure aligned with informed community priorities. Budgets allocation should be differentiated and adequate to specifically respond to the needs of the community, with decentralized approaches and not necessarily big and centralized infrastructure

Finally, the explicit mention of the HRWS in the preparatory final document is welcomed but it is not enough, concrete acceleration activities for implementation of these rights need to be included in the Water Action Agenda. International commitments should be reflected in the national legislation and public policies, with its respective mechanisms and budgets to be implemented at the three levels of governments. Stronger political will can only be translated in concrete actions if there are budgets allocated.

Thank you for your attention