Name of Organization:
International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD)

Presenter: Katerina Schilling, Head of IAWD Secretariat

Distinguished Co- Chairs,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I deliver this statement on behalf of my association IAWD as well as the national water associations of Albania SHUKALB and Bosnia and Herzegovina AQUASAN Network.

We represent the Danube region, which hosts the world's most international river basin.

Although access to water and sanitation services in the Danube region is high compared to the rest of the world, some areas still suffer from inadequate water service provision.

To address these challenges, the World Bank and IAWD have been co-implementing the Danube Water Program, with a 17 million Euro, four-phased financing from the Government of Austria since 2013.

One of the key consistent challenges identified in the frame of the program is related to the capacity building needs of professional staff working in the water service sector.

As a result, IAWD and its members, the national water associations in the region, have designed the Danube Learning Partnership (D-LeaP) to provide a comprehensive training offer to the staff of water utilities.

D-LeaP presents a unique game changing model in its organisational set-up, as it uses the know-how of private sector to develop training programs at the regional level, and the expertise and resources of national water associations to deliver the programs with their national experts in local language.

In addition, the governance model of D-LeaP provides a shared ownership among the national water associations, that are implementing the programs.

In total, 487 utilities in 13 countries have been trained since D-LeaP's launch in 2017.

We are pleased to announce our commitment to the Water Action Agenda to further advance the implementation of D-LeaP in the Danube region, and to promote the D-LeaP expertise in other regions to achieve safe and reliable water services for all.

Thank you!