

STATEMENT

**by H.E. Mrs. Iordanca – Rodica Iordanov, Minister of Environment
of the Republic of Moldova**

at the general debates of the 2023 UN Water Conference

(New York, 22nd March)

Mr. Secretary-General

Mr. President of the General Assembly

Excellences

It is an honor for me to speak at this important event today.

Today we are talking about the fundamental right of people, which in everyday life sometimes goes unattended or taken for granted, even neglected or not adequately defended.

Agenda 2030 gives us the milestones. All 17 sustainable development goals create a pattern of human life: a fair attitude toward everybody, nature, and the Earth. And although the entire palette of 17 SDGs colors is essential, we recognize that it is impossible without the color of the water.

After all, there isn't much left until 2030, when we have to assess how much we did and whether we made a difference and record the positive changes for the progress. Then it will be time to write the report for future generations.

Today, I would like to pay special attention to the synergy of 6th and 17th Goals. To join forces, cooperation, and determine whether the response of joint actions to the global water crisis is sufficient to achieve the expected results.

The International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028 continues joint efforts for efficient and sustainable global water resources management, cooperation, and partnership at all levels to support achieving internationally agreed water-related goals and targets.

And today, at the midway, we have an excellent opportunity to look at where we stand and discuss what else should be done for common goals, which we indeed implement at the

national levels, yet facing different challenges and having different possibilities to deal with. Especially, taking into account that last few years enriched us in crises and their consequences.

New Global Network is an instrument for cooperation that will enable countries to investigate and assess water data to generate their own chemical, biological, and isotopic water data.

Moldova follows the direction of the European Green Deal and supports the EU on climate neutrality goals and the EU Blue economy concept. It is a matrix of sustainable policy solutions and development together with actions towards Agenda 2030: to take essential decisions to respond and control of outcomes of multi-crisis together with laying the background for sustainable long-term solutions, including tackling environmental and climate issues.

Focus on the Green economy also means focusing on the Blue economy. And that is not only about the seas but also about their blood veins- rivers and other surface bodies of water, wetlands forming one ecosystem that is vital for landlocked countries, such as Moldova.

An integrated, collaborative response to socio-economic issues caused by various crises, including climate change, resilience, and effective adaptation mechanisms, also requires investments in innovative technologies, exploration of new niches to harness the opportunities of green transition, and practical actions of multi-crisis response.

It is imperative to support developing countries with limited capacity to address the challenges, protect the most vulnerable groups of society, and enable their own resilience and self-efficiency mechanisms while contributing to global goals.

The pandemic and subsequent recovery gave all of us a vital lesson of joint efforts to respond to the challenge accurately and to protect essential elements of human life: to assess and address possible risks of the virus to drinking water, to detect traces of the virus in wastewater, which may allow in some instances to obtain the earliest information about the possible danger and to prepare in time. That was a power of joint actions.

Indeed, Moldova has limited water resources – a significant amount of drinking water comes from the surface water bodies - rivers. Underground water resources of Moldova are limited and specific, requiring careful evaluation of the condition and other particularities to collect reliable data to identify possibilities and technologies for sustainable, integrated management of public water resources.

Moldova has experienced particularly negative impacts of climate change in recent decades, especially droughts, scarcity of water, and loss of ecosystems, with a negative effect on the country's economy.

We mainly depend on joint neighborhood actions in the region. 2 rivers connect us with neighboring countries. One of the neighbors is currently experiencing the horror and consequences of the war. And here, we also need to address war-caused pollution, including on water bodies.

The energy crisis also required solutions to look for the diversification of the energy market, promote renewables, and mobilize natural resources.

Nevertheless, it is imperative to carefully assess the degree of sustainability of each step through a multi-perspective prism, ensuring sustainable development and integrated water resources management to promote the efficient use of water and protection of ecosystems to achieve social, economic, and environmental goals.

Joint efforts towards knowledge generation and dissemination, facilitation of access to technologies, and accumulation of expertise and financial resources are crucial to implementing the targets to ensure a country-oriented response, resilience, and sustainability.

Moldova, like other countries, puts all efforts into implementing Agenda 2030. Among other aspects, it remains particularly important:

- access to safe drinking water for all, especially accent on rural communities;
- to extend and modernize the sanitation systems;
- improve water quality by reducing pollution, promoting smart farming and other eco-friendly activities and policies;
- implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation;
- to protect and restore water-related ecosystems and address climate mitigation and adaptation.

Therefore, today I think we need to focus on strengthening international cooperation and support in activities and programs related to water and sanitation, especially for developing countries, to address the particularities and vulnerability of those countries, to support the way that international commitments are achieved despite different challenges and

opportunities and to ensure that everyone can enjoy the fundamental right to a clean environment and water.

In closing, I express my country's readiness and willingness to contribute to the important deliberation in the next few days to advance an ambitious Water Action Agenda.

Thank you.