

**STATEMENT BY H.E MR. ENKHBOLD VORSHILOV, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MONGOLIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE UNITED NATIONS WATER CONFERENCE**

New York, 23 March 2023

Mr. President,  
Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

At the outset, let me congratulate the Governments of the Netherlands and Tajikistan for co-hosting the UN 2023 Water Conference, which is being a watershed moment to mobilize Member States, the UN system, and stakeholders to take an action and bring successful solutions to a global scale.

Distinguished delegates,

Due to its unique geographical location, Mongolia is affected by climate change twice as much as the global average, and as a country that has an uneven distribution of rainfall and water resources, the issue of protecting and restoring the water supply and its sources is crucial for the Government of Mongolia.

Groundwater provides about 90% of water consumption in Mongolia. Since 2012, Mongolia has successfully implemented integrated water resource management (IWRM) and established 21 basin authorities for 29 water basins.

These basins significantly contribute to protecting water resources, increasing nutrients, carrying out the integrated management of available resources, achieving economic development, and implementing climate change mitigation and adaptation methods.

In the Sustainable Development Report of 2022, Mongolia's implementation of SDG-6 is evaluated as follows:

1. Population using at least basic drinking water services 85.5%;
2. Population using at least basic sanitation services 67.7%;
3. Freshwater withdrawal (3.4 % of available freshwater resources)
4. Anthropogenic wastewater that receives treatment 3.3%;
5. Scarce water consumption embodied in imports 1823.8 (m3 H2O eq/capita).

Let me briefly introduce the water management solutions that are being implemented in Mongolia:

First: Implementation of economic incentives in the water sector through water use and pollution payment mechanism. This payment mechanism adopts the principle of stakeholder

participation which is a good practice in bringing together the public-private sector, civil society, and interested parties and promoting their cooperation.

Second: Development of a portal system for monitoring and management of groundwater, using Machine Learning, a sub-field of Artificial Intelligence. The portal system provides an opportunity to optimally implement the management of water resources distribution, restoration, and monitoring.

Mr. President,

The world is recognizing that it is challenging to achieve SDGs without addressing water issues. Therefore, to meet the criteria of SDG-6 by 2030, Mongolia is implementing optimal planning and policies.

The international community must strive to pursue environmentally friendly and nature-based solutions while revitalizing its economy and ensuring sustainable development, especially by promoting green and sustainable investments.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation is not only an environmental issue, but it has also become a global health issue.

We continue to understand that it is impossible to talk about environmental protection issues without addressing water, environmental pollution, and sanitation issues, hence it is essential for international cooperation to emphasize in supporting developing countries in addressing the underlying drivers of problems.

Distinguished delegates,

As part of the national campaign, initiated by the President of Mongolia, to plant a billion trees in Mongolia by 2030, we are working hard to introduce environmentally friendly and nature-based solutions to provide the sustainable water supply required for planting and growing trees and shrubs.

Within the framework of this national campaign, it is expected that by planting trees, shrubs, and sedges in the Gobi Desert and steppe areas, which are severely affected by the desertification of Mongolia, nutrients in surface and groundwater and soil moisture will increase in the region.

In addition, it is my great honor to inform that the Government of Mongolia will host the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in Ulaanbaatar in 2026.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Mongolia's continued commitment to enhancing its cooperation in introducing water-efficient, advanced techniques and technologies, international good practices, and know-how.

Thank you.