



PERMANENT MISSION OF SAINT LUCIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

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to the

UN 2023 WATER CONFERENCE

NEW YORK

March 22, 2023

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Mr. President,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government
Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

We arrive at this UN Water Conference, at the mid-point of the international decade of action for Water for Sustainable Development, against the backdrop of cascading crises, putting the processes of multilateralism to its greatest test to date.

Saint Lucia applauds you Mr. President for convening this urgent and necessary conference, and commends the co-hosts, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, for taking on the task of guiding our deliberations. Member states and the world have the opportunity to assess our progress on sustainable development goal 6; and to identify actions needed to meaningfully achieve the internationally agreed water related goals and targets.

Mr. President, Saint Lucia like all other Small Island Developing States, face multiple challenges in relation to water supply, sanitation and hygiene which are compounded by climate change impacts.

The water climate change nexus generates multiple threats which compromise our vulnerable water supply systems, jeopardise water security and impact sewerage services. As a result we are forced to contend with among others, inadequate climate resilient water supply and sewerage systems, lack of co-ordination of key stakeholder functions, lack of adequate data and information for decision making purposes, lack of adequate concessional financing, including access to grant funding, lack of integrated water resources management approaches, inadequate trained water sector personnel, inadequate public education and awareness.

Our reality in Saint Lucia is that more than half of the water that passes through our national distribution system does not reach consumers; due to aged infrastructure compounded by the adverse impacts of climate change. Saint Lucia recognizes that there is much work to be done nationally and internationally, to achieve reliable and safe water supply for all citizens around the globe.

In this regard, we are encouraged that our focus during this conference is to highlight water's inextricable link to the three pillars of sustainable development and its cross cutting impact across our social, cultural, economic and political values.

It is within this context that the Government of Saint Lucia developed its Water Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (SASAP) placing water and its management at the core of development and climate policies. It also ensures that current and future decisions on investments and actions involving water resources take climate change considerations into account and are based on careful, informed and strategic sectoral and cross-sectoral planning.

This 10-year framework for action is aimed at reducing water-related risks induced by climate change in Saint Lucia, and building capacities of relevant actors to facilitate the sustainable management of water resources and the adequate supply of water and wastewater services under current and future conditions.

The overarching goal of the Water SASAP is to drive the implementation of effective adaptation

actions across all sectors and at all levels of society to safeguard Saint Lucia's water resources and services under a changing climate.

Mr. President,

The magnitude of the interventions that are required at the national level to address the multiplicity of challenges to the water sector necessitate targeted and robust resource mobilization. One of the major obstacles that Saint Lucia faces in pursuit of the implementation of our water policies is that of adequate funding.

There is need at the national, regional and international level to address this concern, through stronger partnerships, new sources of finance and increased action to leverage more public and private capital.

Saint Lucia takes this opportunity to invite member states and development partners to join the ***Call for Action on Water Security and Climate resilience in Small Island Developing States towards the SDGs and Samoa Pathway achievement.***

The call seeks to strengthen existing collaborations, mobilize partnerships and commitments for tangible sections to enhance water security in SIDS, with a view to reducing our vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and strengthening our adaptation and resilience capacities.

Mr. President,

We do not have the luxury of time to act to protect our water resources and assure our citizens a reliable and safe supply of water. Saint Lucia echoes calls for a robust action agenda to close our deliberations this week, one that would enable meaningful action for a sustainable water future for us all.

Thank you.