

STATEMENT ON THE UNITED NATIONS 2023 WATER CONFERENCE 1

Chair of UN-Water Conference

Excellency's',

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am enthused to join you at this preparatory meeting of the United Nations Conference on the "Water for Sustainable Development", March 22-24 year 2023.

It is heartwarming to say that since 1977, when the first UN Water Conference was held in Argentina. .

As these numbers are soaring, at the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic heightened the critical need for access to clean water and sanitation.

Misuses of resources over the past decades has lead , to poor management and the over-extraction and contamination of freshwater and groundwater supplies have exacerbated water stress and deteriorated water-related ecosystems.

As a result, human health, economic activities, food and energy supplies are affected.

Your Excellencies,

It is against this backdrop, the UN 2023 Water Conference will be a major milestone to propel the progress on water and sanitation at the middle point of the Water Action Decade.

The objective of today's meeting is to finalize the themes of the interactive dialogues, ensuring the participation of all relevant stakeholders in this round.

We all may know the inherent cross-cutting nature of water, the background note before you, presents the following suggested themes for the five interactive dialogues:

Theme 1 is Water for Health: addressing - Access to safe drinking water, hygiene and sanitation, including Water quality, Poverty reduction, Good health, Quality education, Gender equality, and Partnerships.

Equitable access to safe drinking water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) is critical for global public health, a healthy environment, and social and economic development.

Clean water, sanitation and hygiene are essential to the realisation of all human rights. To achieve universal access to safely managed water and sanitation by 2030, we must quadruple our current efforts to put the progress back on track.

Theme 2 is Water for Development: addressing - Valuing water, the Water-energy-food nexus, and Sustainable economic and urban development, including Water quality, Integrated water management, Zero hunger, Decent work, and Industry, innovation and infrastructure.

Theme 3 is Water for Climate, Resilience and Environment: addressing - Source to sea, Biodiversity, and Disaster risk reduction, including Integrated water management, Affordable clean energy, Life below water, and Life on land.

Water-related ecosystems have significant economic, cultural, aesthetic, recreational and educational values to society.

But climate change is affecting our water resources and driving water-related disasters.

To enhance the resilience of critical water infrastructure, we should promote and explore multi-purpose usage and nature-based solutions, strengthen institutional collaboration and governance and account for water-related management and extreme weather events in our climate change adaptation strategies

Theme 4 is Water for Cooperation: addressing - Trans boundary and international water cooperation, Cross-sectorial cooperation, and Water across the 2030 Agenda, including Integrated water management, Partnerships, and Peace, justice and strong institutions.

Countries must work closely to optimize the benefits from shared river and aquifer systems in collaboration with all stakeholders.

Effective legal and institutional frameworks at global, regional and basin levels can play a crucial role in cooperative water management.

Collaboration between policy makers, practitioners and academia is also key to provide the highest level of food and energy security, regional stability, and economic growth.

Theme 5 is the Water Action Decade: Accelerating the implementation of the objectives of the Decade including through the United Nations Secretary-General's Action Plan.

The UN Secretary-General's Plan for the Water Action Decade outlines the capabilities of the United Nations system and helps Member States implement the Excellencies,

The themes presented here, aim to leverage the interlinkages between water and other goals of the 2030 Agenda, to generate momentum towards sound policy and urgent action.

I would like to take this opportunity to also draw your attention to the outcomes of a global online stakeholder consultation, led by UN DESA, which gathered substantive inputs and messages from stakeholders on the proposed themes.

As the Secretariat of the Conference, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) with the support of UN Water, stands ready to support the co-hosts and make the Conference a success. I look forward to a productive discussion today.

I thank you.

Date File:

Thursday, March 25, 2023

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