

Interactive Dialogue 1 - Water for Health:

Access to WASH, including the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation

Wednesday 22 March 2023, 10.00 am

Conference Room 4, UNHQ

Intervention of Finland (TBC)

to be delivered by Ms. Jaana Husu-Kallio, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Max. 3 min – around 350 words [to be adjusted for the speaker, as needed]

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

- SDG 6 is an essential enabler of the 2030 Agenda. Water and sanitation are also central human rights and central to living a life in dignity. Ensuring the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation is one of Finland's main priorities for the conference.
- Here in this Conference we must give a clear signal and concrete recommendations on the fulfillment of rights to water and sanitation, following a human rights-based approach, and paying attention to the role of States as duty-bearers in providing water and sanitation services to people. We must ensure that water, sanitation and hygiene systems are designed and implemented using a gender and disability inclusive approach.
- We share a collective commitment to support the unserved and underserved to ensure the equal enjoyment of the human rights to water and sanitation. Finland's current main development cooperation projects in WASH take place in Nepal and Ethiopia, which from 2019 to 2021 provided access to safe drinking water to some 1.5 million people.
- The Protocol on Water and Health to the UNECE Water Convention provides an important framework to translate into practice the equitable access to water and sanitation and to implement SDG 6. Although the Protocol targets the pan-European region, the numerous guidance documents provided by the Protocol can be utilized globally.
- Only 25 per cent of countries are on track to achieve their national sanitation targets and only half of the people of the world use safely managed sanitation services. This needs to change rapidly. We would need to see more and more villages, regions and countries declared as Open Defecation Free.
- Financing the necessary maintenance of existing and development of new water supply and sanitation infrastructure is a common challenge to developing and developed countries. Water supply and sanitation should be based on the cost-recovery principle to ensure

sustainability and to encourage water use efficiency. With aging Finnish water services infrastructure, we are facing growing renovation and investment needs as well as pressure on tariffs to maintain the excellent service quality.

- While investing in water services, either in new or existing, innovation and the advances in technology enable important transformations to accelerate SDG 6 achievement, and public-private partnerships can help realize their full potential:
 - Firstly, digitalization and data provide for more timely and better-targeted management of assets and planning of development.
 - Secondly, reducing energy intensity of water services contributes to economic efficiency.
 - And thirdly, circular economy approaches - including nutrient recovery - improve the quality of waters and reduce environmental impacts.
- Excellencies, dear colleagues, Finland stands ready to share experience on solutions and to cooperate to achieve Sustainable Development Goals on Water and Sanitation worldwide.

Thank you

Background

Water for Health: Access to WASH, including the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation (SDG 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 17)

As outlined in General Assembly resolution 75/212, the interactive dialogues shall be collaborative and multi-stakeholder in nature, with due regard for gender and geographical balance. Each interactive dialogue will be presided over by two co-chairs, one from a developing country and one from a developed country, to be appointed by the Presidents of the Conference. The panel discussions, facilitated by the moderator, will be followed by an interactive debate among States and other relevant stakeholders. Summaries of the interactive dialogues should be submitted to the Conference at its closing meeting.

Co-chairs

- **Hon. Miguel Ceara Hatton**, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Dominican Republic
- **The Rt. Hon. Lord Zac Goldsmith of Richmond Park**, Minister for Overseas Territories, Commonwealth, Energy, Climate and Environment at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom

Moderator

- **Ms. Catherine Russell**, Executive Director of UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

Panellists

- **(Keynote) Honourable Abida Sidik Mia**, Minister of Water and Sanitation of Malawi
- **Mr. Vikas Sheel**, Assistant Vice-Minister and Additional Secretary at Indian Administrative Service
- **Mr. Filippo Grandi**, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- **Mr. Jagan Chapagain**, Secretary-General of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Lead Discussants

- **Ms. Boluwatito Awe**, President of the Nigerian Youth Parliament for Water
- **Ms. Andrea Carmen**, Executive Director, International Indian Treaty Council
- **Ms. Maria Neira**, Assistant Director General, World Health Organization (WHO)
- **Ms. Eva Muhia**, Deputy President, Pan-African Association of Sanitation Actors
- **H.E. Laura Chinchilla**, Former President of Costa Rica and Sanitation and Water for All Global Leader