



**Statement of the United Arab Emirates
At the Multi-stakeholder Informative Webinar on
“2026 UN Water Conference”
Delivered By:
His Excellency Mohamed Abushahab
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
New York, 18 March 2025**

Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I also wish to welcome you all to the first multi-stakeholder informative webinar on the 2026 UN Water Conference.

This webinar takes place two weeks after the convening of the Organizational Session at the UN Headquarters in New York, which marked the official kick-off of our journey to the 2026 Water Conference – a journey that we look forward to taking together, towards bold, transformative, and lasting global action on water.

We gather here today united by our unwavering commitment to water --- the cornerstone of a more sustainable and resilient future for all.

Water is central to our continued survival, growth, and prosperity for people and planet, connecting communities worldwide and fueling human dignity.

The United Arab Emirates has a unique relationship with water given our arid environment in one of the world’s most water-scarce regions.

Our acute understanding of the true value of water has fostered resourcefulness and ingenuity, as we strive to live in balance with nature and sustain life, while continuing to innovate and evolve to strengthen our water resilience.

And though water has been elevated on the global agenda at the 2023 Water Conference and at COP28, we know there is much more work to be done.



The UAE is committed to accelerating innovative and inclusive global water action, through expanded knowledge sharing and international cooperation, harnessing the power of increased investment, and scaling technological solutions for the benefit of all.

We are honored to co-host the 2026 UN Water Conference, in partnership with Senegal, to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6 on ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Despite progress, almost 1 in 4 people worldwide lack access to clean drinking water and 4 billion people still experience severe water scarcity for at least one month per year.

No nation is immune to water stress that can exacerbate food security and public health, as well as economic and political stability.

Ultimately, water is the key enabler to achieving the entire 2030 Agenda, and SDG 6 is the lynchpin to unlocking all 17 goals.

Based on the last review of SDG 6 in 2023, we require a 6-fold increase in current global rates of progress on drinking water, a 5-fold increase for sanitation, and a 3-fold increase for hygiene to reach our 2030 targets.

These alarming rates call for urgent, decisive, and coordinated global action.

As co-hosts of the 2026 Water Conference, we see tremendous opportunity to bring the world together to enable collective progress on water.

The UAE and Senegal invite and call on all stakeholders across the international community - including governments, international organizations, financing and investment actors, NGOs, civil society, academics, local communities, youth and Indigenous Peoples - to join us in raising our collective ambition to accelerate global water action, together.

On the road to 2026, we will collaboratively lead an extensive and inclusive preparatory process to drive an impact-oriented Conference.



We started this consultation process, gathering insights from numerous stakeholders, since May of last year and we are eager to continue building upon these conversations to inform the important preparatory work ahead.

The Organizational Session, held on 3 March at UNHQ, represented the first mandated meeting in the lead up to the Conference. The session heard contributions from 72 participants, including 27 stakeholders, and was followed by over 4000 people online.

During the session, we listened to recommendations for the themes of the six interactive dialogues, and we look forward to continuing the consultations on the themes in the next few months.

We will be using the stakeholder consultation that was launched on the UN Water Conference website last week as a critical source of input, so we urge you all to contribute to this platform.

Looking ahead to next steps, our friends at UNDESA will share a background note capturing the summary of these consultations.

This will be circulated ahead of the one-day meeting convened by the President of the General Assembly, President Philémon Yang, on 9 July where the themes will be adopted.

Following the adoption of the themes, we will set our sights on identifying the co-chairs for the interactive dialogues, who will remain involved in the preparatory process, working collaboratively with all stakeholder groups, in the lead up, to the conference.

We will aim to maintain momentum all the way to the upcoming high-level meeting in Dakar.

Let me end here by thanking the international community for entrusting the UAE and Senegal to take this forward.

We look forward to the 2026 Water Conference serving as an opportunity to have your voices heard and foster partnerships, to increase aspirations, and push boundaries to scale innovative, impactful solutions for all.

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Together, we can accelerate global water action for the well-being of the planet and all its people.

Thank you.