



**Statement by His Excellency, Mr. Matete Paul Nena**

**Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Lesotho to the United Nations During the Organizational session for the 2026 United Nations Water Conference to Accelerate the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**

**United Nations Headquarters, New York**

**ECOSOC Chamber**

**3 March 2025.**

## Co-Hosts of the 2026 United Nations Conference

### Excellencies

I align my remarks with statements delivered by Iraq on behalf of G77 and China, and wish to make the following submission on my national capacity.

At the outset, the Kingdom of Lesotho would like to make three recommendations for the themes of the proposed interactive dialogues for the 2026 Water Conference. Firstly, on **Transboundary Water Cooperation and Governance**. Secondly, on **Water-Food-Energy Nexus**, and lastly though not least on **Financing Water and Sanitation**.

### Excellencies

The Kingdom of Lesotho strongly believes that **Transboundary water cooperation and governance** is a crucial global issue because water bodies such as rivers, lakes, and aquifers often cross political boundaries, affecting multiple countries. By virtue of Lesotho's location, all water resources are transboundary by nature. Therefore, addressing this theme is essential for several reasons. For instance:

- Water scarcity and competing interests can lead to tensions and even conflicts between nations. Therefore, cooperation fosters diplomacy, mutual trust, and peaceful resolutions to disputes, and thus reduce the likelihood of water wars.
- It can also bring about economic and development benefits as joint water projects such as hydroelectric and water transfer dams as well as irrigation systems can promote economic growth, trade, and energy security. Cooperation can also unlock financial investment and technological advancements that benefit all parties.
- Again, International laws and agreements provide a structured approach to managing transboundary waters. Therefore, promoting this theme encourages nations to engage in treaties and establish governing bodies for effective collaboration.

### Excellencies,

**Water-Food- Energy Nexus** is another theme that is highly encouraged. For Lesotho this approach is crucial due to the country's reliance on water resources, the need for energy security and challenges in food production.

By leveraging its water resources, expanding renewable energy and improving agricultural practices, Lesotho can enhance its self-sufficiency and reduce its reliance on imports.

As I conclude, I wish to highlight another proposed theme on Financing Water and Sanitation and or Equitable Access to Safe Water and Sanitation. Lesotho has made progress in improving access to safe water and sanitation but rural-urban disparities, climate change and governance challenges remain obstacles. Strengthening infrastructure, governance and community engagement will be key to achieving universal and equitable access in line with SDG 6. Current investment levels in water and sanitation are far below what is needed particularly on sanitation issues. Therefore, innovative financing models are needed to mobilise resources efficiently.

**I thank you for your attention!**