



Geneva Water Hub

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Multi-Stakeholder reflections on the themes of the ID and accelerating SDG6

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Dear Colleagues,

I would like to commend the Co-Hosts of the 2026 Conference, **Senegal and the UAE**, together with **UNDESA**, for the background note. It builds upon the outcomes of the 2023 conference while offering a clear, forward-looking vision. It sets the tone of ambition that this preparatory process demands.

Please allow me to share three reflections:

First, as the note rightfully underscores, **peace** must be a cross-cutting theme of the conference and its interactive dialogues. This Conference — and the process leading to it — is a crucial opportunity to show how water can serve not only as a source of tension, but as a **vehicle for peacebuilding** - from **conflict prevention** to **long-term peace**. The **Geneva Water Hub** — together with key partners — plans to produce a policy brief and to convene a **high-level event** at the **Dakar preparatory conference**, to deepen the conversation and identify concrete actions.

Second, on the Dialogue “Water for People”. We welcome the proposed topic and encourage a stronger emphasis on **the protection of water** and the **preservation of water sources**: before, during, and after armed conflicts. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, such as Ukraine, Gaza, Yemen, **protecting water is essential to upholding IHL and for realizing the human right to water and sanitation – for all**. A coordinated international effort to protect water resources from the impacts of armed conflict is needed.

Third, on ID “Water for cooperation”, we appreciate the focus on transboundary water cooperation and the reference to **peace and SDG 16**. We should recognize that, amidst challenges, water holds extraordinary potential to build trust, promote dialogue, and inspire resilience. We should build on this and work towards greater recognition of water’s role in peacebuilding and strengthen the linkages between SDG6 and SDG16.

Finally, I wish to reaffirm Geneva Water Hub’s full commitment to supporting the preparatory process and the Conference, including through our contributions to the Water Action Agenda and the Collaborative Implementation Plan of UN-Water.

We call on all stakeholders to ensure that the role of water for peace is not only acknowledged but also translated into tangible outcomes. We look forward to advancing this work together.