

## **MINISTERIAL DECLARATION**

### **AN URGENT CALL FOR DECISIVE ACTION ON WATER**

*We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation assembled in Brasilia, Brazil, on 19th and 20th March 2018, during the Ministerial Conference of the 8th World Water Forum - "Sharing Water",*

*Recognizing that:*

*The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, adopted in 1992; the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development entitled "The Future We Want", adopted in 2012; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015; the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted in 2015; the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015; and the "New Urban Agenda" (Habitat III), adopted in 2016, all represent major milestones for addressing global sustainable development challenges;*

*Countries have reaffirmed, in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, their commitments regarding the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, to be progressively realized for their populations with full respect for national sovereignty;*

*Water is a cross-cutting element of sustainable development, and in the challenge of eradicating poverty;*

*Water resources are indispensable for all living beings and for living in harmony and in balance with the planet and its ecosystems, recognized by some cultures as "Mother Earth";*

*All countries need to take urgent actions to tackle water and sanitation-related challenges;*

*Cooperation at all levels and across all sectors and stakeholders including the sharing of knowledge, experiences, innovation and, where appropriate, solutions is key to promote sustainable water management and to explore synergies with the several water related aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;*

*The key role of the United Nations in promoting international water cooperation at the global level. Several of the principles of the relevant global Conventions on water can be useful in this regard;*

*Efforts and initiatives taken at all levels should promote the adequate and inclusive participation of all relevant stakeholders, particularly the most vulnerable and including local communities and indigenous peoples, youth, girls and women and those affected by water scarcity;*

*The global hydrological cycle, geological processes, climate, oceans and ecosystems are highly interdependent and all of them must be taken into consideration in the adoption of interdisciplinary, integrated and sustainable approaches for water management;*

*The Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace has issued its report;*

*The World Water Forum, since its first convening in Marrakesh, in 1997, has contributed to the development of common understanding and to international dialogue on water, and has promoted local, regional and national action on integrated and sustainable water resources management worldwide.*

*We welcome:*

- 1. The momentum provided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular SDG 6, to the 8th World Water Forum to foster action on initiatives related to water and sanitation;*
- 2. The establishment of the High Level Panel on Water, co-convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations and the President of the World Bank and its contribution, and note the issuance of its report inspiring and promoting an integrated approach across governments and a new agenda for water action;*
- 3. The adoption on 23rd December 2016 of UN General Assembly Resolution on International Decade for Action, Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028 and note the convening, pursuant to its paragraph 12, of two working-level dialogues to discuss improving the integration and coordination of the work of the United Nations on the water-related goal and targets;*
- 4. The significant contributions of the 7th World Water Forum in the Republic of Korea, the Budapest Water Summit and the Stockholm Water Week to the preparation of the 8th World Water Forum;*
- 5. The adoption in 2017 of UN Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme Resolution "Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems";*
- 6. The contribution made by all relevant stakeholders, including governments, civil society, academia, indigenous people and local communities and private sector, towards the development and implementation of positive and pro-active policies and cooperation on water issues, as well as of solutions that can be shared among countries and across stakeholders, with the source to sea perspective and using water as a connector;*
- 7. The work of the National Governments; Local and Regional Authorities; Parliamentarian; and Judges and Prosecutors Subprocesses of the 8th World Water Forum and their contribution to the dialogue on water issues;*
- 8. The development of potential strategies to improve means of implementation, such as finance, capacity building, education and voluntary technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, to support the development of sustainable water uses, including non-conventional water resources;*
- 9. The engagement of the private sector and public owned companies to continue or improve the adoption of efficient water and sanitation related sustainability measures including through concrete commitments and in accordance with national water laws;*
- 10. The formal participation of judges and prosecutors, for the first time, in the World Water Forum, enriching discussions that have benefitted from participation of national governments; local and regional authorities as applicable; and parliamentarians;*
- 11. The results and the follow up of voluntary actions of the "Implementation Roadmap" adopted during the 7th World Water Forum;*

12. *The convening of the 8th World Water Forum Ministerial roundtables, and we note the moderators' reports, prepared under their own responsibility.*

*We present an urgent call for decisive action on water and declare that now is time to:*

13. *Renew and reinforce the political commitment to ensure implementation of immediate and effective action towards overcoming water and sanitation-related challenges in particular water scarcity in the context of climate change adaptation and achieving related Sustainable Development Goals and targets;*

14. *Invite the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) to note, in its review of Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 6, the outcomes of the political, thematic, regional, sustainability and citizens processes of the 8th World Water Forum;*

15. *Invite the UN system to strengthen its support to countries in water matters and to improve the integration and coordination of the work of the United Nations on the water related goals and targets under its sustainable development pillar;*

16. *Encourage Governments to establish or strengthen national integrated water resources management policies and plans, including strategies for adaptation to climate change, with a view to achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water, to adequate and equitable sanitation and to reducing water pollution, and to protect and restore water related ecosystems, in line with SDG 6;*

17. *Support the strengthening of transparent, effective, inclusive and accountable national and, where appropriate, subnational water institutional arrangements, with participation of all relevant stakeholders and consideration of local circumstances in the policy-making process, while fostering necessary partnerships, confidence building, exchange and sharing of information and experiences among public, private and civil society actors;*

18. *Mobilize and allocate sufficient financial resources from multiple sources for the promotion of and investment in integrated and sustainable water management, especially oriented towards developing countries and addressing their specific challenges, vulnerabilities and risks, including disaster risk reduction;*

19. *Develop and share solutions including Integrated Water Resources Management and nature-based solutions, where applicable, to address the most pressing water and sanitation challenges, through research and innovation, upscaling cooperation on capacity building and technology transfer and other means of implementation and considering the impact of climate change;*

20. *Encourage transboundary cooperation based on win-win solutions, in accordance with applicable international law, namely relevant bilateral, regional and international instruments countries are party to;*

21. *Reinforce the urgent need to respect the right of every human being, irrespective of their situation and location, to safe drinking water and sanitation as fundamental human rights, provided for by the international human rights law, the international humanitarian law and the relevant international conventions as applicable.*

*22. Promote the potential of the young generation as agents for change and innovation in the search for solutions for water and sanitation challenges and implement and share water education policies and best practices on water and sanitation, benefiting from existing international centers as well as from UNESCOs expertise and network, including the International Hydrological Programme;*

*23. Take advantage of the networks and partnerships formed during the 8th World Water Forum, under its various processes, to promote the implementation of this declaration.*

*We thank the people and the Government of Brazil, the Government of the Federal District and the World Water Council for the hosting of the 8th World Water Forum and its participants.*

*Posted on Tuesday, March 20, 2018*