

**Statement by the Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine
H.E. E. Stavitsky at the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the
Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes
(29 November 2012, Rome, Italy)**

Distinguished Chair!

Ladies and gentlemen!

First of all please let me extend appreciation to the Government of Italy and to the Secretariat of the Water Convention for organizing this meeting, hospitality and support.

Ukraine, as the Party to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes since 1999, and a number of other international agreements, declared water protection and rational use of water resources as a top priority of the state policy in the field of environment on the national level.

This is enshrined in the Water Code of Ukraine, the Laws of Ukraine “On environmental protection”, “On the Basics (Strategy) of the State Environmental Policy up to the year of 2020”, as well as the National Action Plan for Environmental Protection for the period up to the year of 2015.

In recent years, Ukraine has made a significant progress in the field of harmonization of the national environmental legislation with the EU standards. Efforts on implementation of the integrated water resource management on the basin approach, as foreseen by the EU Water Framework Directive are undertaken. The quantity of permits has been significantly reduced, the authorization procedure has been simplified while reinforcing the functions of monitoring compliance with environmental legislation and supporting incentives for the introduction of advanced energy saving technologies.

There are 10 basin water resource management agencies in Ukraine already effectively working today. The process of improving the institutional and legal structure is in progress.

Ukraine takes active part in the bilateral and multilateral international cooperation. With active and direct involvement of Ukraine the Integrated River Management Plan for the Tisa River basin was developed and approved by the Ministers of Environment of the Tisa River basin countries. The development of river basin management plans for transboundary rivers of the lower Danube and the Bug River basins is in process.

Ukraine confirms its commitment to strengthen cooperation with the neighboring riparian states by signing today the Treaty with the Government of the Republic of Moldova on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Development of the Dniester River Basin. The signing of this Treaty is indeed a significant event bearing in mind that it is the first comprehensive bilateral river basin agreement in the post-Soviet area. It is even more pleasant to sign the Treaty in the Convention's 20th Anniversary.

This Treaty marks an important practical step in further development of bilateral cooperation between our states in the interests of all people living in the Dniester River basin, its ecosystem, water and other natural resources.

We call upon Contracting Parties to the Convention to follow the example of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova which will assist us in achieving the goals of sustainable development, protection and rational use of transboundary water resources.

We hope that the entry into force of Amendments to the Convention will extend possibilities for many countries around the world to apply its best practices.

Using this opportunity, let me express sincere gratitude to the Water Convention Secretariat, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, United Nations Environmental Program, Environment and Security Initiative for the long-term support of the bilateral initiative of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova on the elaboration and finalizing the Treaty text.

Thank you for your attention!