

Friday 21 September

Adoption of Conference outcomes

Plenary session, Friday, 23 September, 4.30–5.30 p.m.

Summary of commitments on the Astana Water Action and acknowledgement of participating States

Intervention S. Vermont, Chair of the UNECE Water Convention Bureau

- Excellencies, heads of delegations and organisations
- May I ask you to stream onto the stage!
- Excellencies,
- I am sure some of you feel a bit drained and some others are still bubbling
- You wonder what we are going to splash at you
- Well, we are here to celebrate the cascade of Astana Water Actions, your actions!
- We would like to pour all our thanks to you
- We know you are not waterproof to acknowledgement
- We would like to sprinkle you with a small gift.
- This token is to recognize your undiluted commitment. We know: your heart is melting for water
- The water actions you channeled to us before and during this week and I hope after this meeting are very transparent and concrete
- They must be implemented on firm grounds, not on ice.
- They need to be sown, watered to spring, surge and bloom
- Isn't this the motto of this conference Save water-Grow green
- Well, this is exactly what the gift is all about: seeds of a plant which can be found in the whole region of the UNECE and which is drought resistant. It is good for everything: as a herb in food, medicine, in cosmetics, ...
- This plant is *Salvia officinalis* – sage
- Sage is a nice word: in French and in English “sage” means wise.
- So Excellencies, be wise,
- *Salvia* also means to cure/save: so please save our waters
- And you cannot to let your Astana Water Actions evaporate because with sage you

cannot forget: sage is known to be a memory enhancer.

- Water still needs to be diverted towards the highest political spheres of governments.
- So my advice, flood your colleagues, do not freeze when they disagree, do not dilute, do not go dry, keep them afloat with information on the importance of water in all the sectors.
- All this activity might cloud your voice. We have the solution, In the envelop, you will find a tea bag with another Sage species which cures sore throats. But if you have to prepare tea, better have potable drinking water so do implement the protocol on water and health.
- Thank you again, and as you are going to leave Astana all pumped with recharged enthusiasm some upstream, some downstream of transboundary rivers and lakes, do not forget that the water convention, its Bureau and its secretariat are there for you.
- We might shed a tear to see you go away, but we are already looking forward to the fountain of results from your actions that you will supply us with at a next meeting .
- Thank you again