



Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

MEETING OF THE PARTIES

Seventh session

Budapest, 17-19 November 2015

Items 1 to 3 of the provisional agenda

Provisional programme of the high-level segment

17 November, Budapest

1. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

Tuesday, 17 November, 10–10.50 a.m.

Opening of the meeting by Ambassador Csaba Kőrösi, Director for Environmental Sustainability, Office of the President on behalf of Mr. János Áder, President of the Republic of Hungary

Video message by the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson

Speech by Mr. Sándor Pintér, Minister of Interior of Hungary

Speech by Mr. Francesco La Camera, Director General of the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea

Speech by Mr. Christian Friis Bach, United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Cultural programme

Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties, will invite of the Parties to adopt the agenda.

2. Status of ratification of the Convention and its protocols and report on credentials

10.50–11 a.m.

The secretariat will inform the Meeting of the Parties about the status of ratification of the Convention, the Protocol on Water and Health, the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters (Protocol on Civil Liability) and the amendments to articles 25 and 26 of the Convention.

3. Special session on the global opening of the Water Convention and its contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global commitments

11 a.m.–4 p.m.

The high-level segment will focus on two key dynamics that will shape the future of the Convention and its activities: the Convention's opening to all United Nations Member States and its role in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global commitments.

The high-level segment will foster a strategic discussion between Parties, other States — including prospective Parties from outside the ECE region — international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academia on these dynamics, as well as the resulting implications, challenges and opportunities ahead, and the partnerships needed.

The high-level segment will consist of two parts, both organized in the form of a moderated high-level panel discussion followed by interventions from the floor with guiding questions.

Due to the limited time available, interventions should not exceed three minutes. To facilitate the running of the high-level segment, delegations planning to make a statement from the floor are invited to inform the secretariat in advance and to send the statement to the secretariat.

(a) Part 1 — the global Water Convention

11 a.m.–1 p.m.

Since the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties (Rome, 28–30 November 2012), major developments have taken place towards the universal application of the Convention. The amendments opening the Convention for accession to all United Nations Member States entered into force in February 2013. More than 100 countries have been involved in the Convention's activities, including 60 countries from outside the ECE region, and several countries from outside the region have expressed their interest in acceding to the Convention and have started national processes to that end.

Transboundary cooperation has been recognized as a global challenge and has been included in the water and sanitation Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). The entry into force of the Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (Watercourses Convention) in August 2014 is another important milestone for international water law that will impact global practice on water.

Against this background, and building on the experience with the Water Convention's implementation and with transboundary water cooperation in general, representatives of Parties, other States, international organizations, NGOs and academia will discuss perspectives linked to new global nature of the Convention, around the following questions:

- (a) What have been your major achievements in strengthening transboundary water cooperation and what challenges do you face or foresee? How have the Water Convention, its intergovernmental framework and its activities been beneficial in building such cooperation? How can they help in addressing future challenges?;
- (b) What direction should the Convention head in for the next 15 years? What should be done to best respond to the growing need for transboundary water management and the potential risks at the basin, regional and global levels?;
- (c) What are the main opportunities and challenges related to the global opening of the Convention? How should the process of globalization move forward? What partnerships are needed and how should the Convention's institutional framework develop, including in relation to relevant processes, initiatives and other treaties — in particular the Watercourses Convention? How do you see the specific role of your country or organization?

Moderator: Mr. Christian Friis Bach, Executive Secretary, UNECE

Panellists:

Ms. Marina Seliverstova, Head of the Federal Agency of Water Resources, Russian Federation

Mr. Fadi Comair, Director General of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources of Lebanon

Ms. Hannele Pokka, Permanent Secretary of the Finnish Ministry of the Environment

H.E. Eng. Mohsin Asfoor Lafta Al-Kurd, Minister of Water Resources of Iraq

Mr. Yerlan Nyssanbaev, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Kazakhstan

Mr. Ylber Mirta, Head of department for water , Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia speaking on behalf of Mr. Izairi, Minister

Mr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

1-3 p.m.: Lunch break

Lunch break: High-Level side event on the EU Water Initiative National Policy Dialogues

(b) Part 2 — the Water Convention in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global commitments

3–4 p.m.

During the course of 2015, the international community is adopting a series of key global commitments that will shape global action for sustainable development until 2030: the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, adopted at the United Nations Summit in September; and the expected outcomes of the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (COP 21). All these frameworks stress the need for collective approaches to global challenges and to respond to them in a coherent and integrated manner.

Water is at the core of sustainable development as it is inextricably linked to human health, agriculture and food security, energy, climate change, disaster risk reduction, the integrity of ecosystems, equality and social inclusion. The achievement of the global commitments being adopted this year will depend heavily on water actions and their coherence with other policies. As most water resources are transboundary, cooperation will be crucial.

In this part of the high-level segment, Parties, other States, international organizations, NGOs and academia will discuss the role of the Water Convention in this new international context, around the following questions:

(a) How will the adoption of the SDGs, the Sendai Framework, the COP 21 Paris agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda impact on your water policies, initiatives and programmes? How will they impact transboundary cooperation? What will be the main challenges you foresee?;

(b) How can the Convention, its institutional structure and its activities best support the implementation of these new commitments, including their monitoring and review? What partnerships and synergies need to be built?

Moderator: Ambassador Csaba Körösi, Director for Environmental Sustainability, Office of the President of the Hungarian Republic

Panellists:

H. E. Sergii Kurykin, Acting Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ukraine

Mr. Nicholas Hanley, Acting Director for International Policies, Global and Regional Challenges, DG Environment, European Commission

H. E. Mr. Kwaku Agyemang-Mensah, Minister for Water Resources, Works and Housing, Ghana

Mr. Marco Toscano-Rivalta, Chief, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

Mr. Thai Lai Nguyen, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam

Mr. Xavier Sticker, French Ambassador for the Environment, France