**Talking Points for the RCC SG for International Workshop on ``Integrated Transboundary Water Resources Management in SEE``**

* To express gratitude to the partners in the organization of the event: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean and International Sava River Basin Commission; the Governments of Sweden and Switzerland that financially supported the realization of the event; and all the distinguished speakers and participants.
* The event is organized within the framework of the UNECE Water Convention and in line with the RCC`s objective to promote regional cooperation in SEE in this extremely important area of Integrated Transboundary Water Resources Management.
* To express expectations that this event will be conducive to accession to the UNECE Water Convention (valuable international legal framework for transboundary water cooperation) of the RCC members from SEE that have not acceded so far as well as promote cooperation on ecologically sound management of transboundary waters and their reasonable and equitable use as a way of avoiding conflicts and promoting development and a crucial component of the stability and prosperity of the region. Water needs to be equitably and sustainable allocated, with the view to protect biodiversity and to ensure the functioning of ecosystems, and to meet basic human needs and different economic uses by means of allocating mechanisms that balance competing demands and take into account the social, economic and environmental values of water.
* In addition to conflict that exist among different water uses, there are still numerous obstacles in achieving the level of cooperation among the countries in all of the basins in the SEE linked to the various levels of infrastructure, legal and institutional frameworks, policies, priorities, interests of each country and bilateral relations between countries. The involvement of the EU, several UN agencies and other international organisations, WB and NGOs as well as donor community is crucial for filling gaps and supporting regional initiatives, investments and projects.
* The preparation of common agreed strategies at the basin level and the commitment of governments to work together for their promotion are of utmost importance, followed by the provision of the necessary resources.
* Taking into account prospect of EU accession in many SEE countries, the EU Water Framework Directive that provides a suitable framework for water management will be considered together with the Water Convention. Discussing gaps in the existing legal and institutional framework for transboundary cooperation, identification of further needed actions and possible synergies are real added value of this event.
* Additionally, this event will be an important step in the preparation of the second assessment of transboundary waters what is of substantial importance for rational decision-making. Compared to first one, the second assessment will be broader in ambitions and scope and integrate, among other aspects, impacts of climate change and adaptation to climate change.
* The RCC being aware of the fact that the region of SEE is the most jeopardized part of Europe and even on the wider scale, supports such an approach of integration of climate change issues into decision-making what proves Ministerial Conference ``Combating Climate Change in SEE`` from November last year, co-organized with REC and that resulted in adoption of the Joint Ministerial Statement and the Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation.