

Statement of the Delegation of Hungary
(by Mr. Gyula Holló, Head of Delegation)
Meeting of the Parties to the UNECE Water Convention
(Bonn, November 20-22, 2006)

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I also wish to start by joining the welcoming of the 10th years anniversary of the entering into force of the convention and the related cooperation in the field of international waters which is well illustrated by the reach poster session outside this room. There are some of us at this meeting who are witnesses of the evolution of this process from the very beginning. A lot has been achieved by the Pan-European community but it is always good to reinforce our commitments in such meetings like this event.

As far as the progress since the last meeting of the parties is concerned Mr. Belka gave already an overview of it and also the Secretariat prepared an excellent description and evaluation of the activities of that period in the meeting materials - it is difficult to add too much to it.

Hungary usually emphasizes in such statements her special geographical location with seven neighbours and shared waters. Doing this again we just wish to underline that we have been coping with these special problems for a long time and therefore we are aware of the high relevance of such tools of international cooperation like the Convention and its Protocols.

Since the last meeting of the Parties Hungary fulfilled all related obligations including the ratification of the Liability Protocol and that of the Amendment to the Convention as decided in Madrid. We continued leading the Water and Heath Protocol related activities with special emphases to the preparation for the first meeting of the Parties in January 2007. We hold the co-chairmanship in the ad hoc joint "water and industrial accidents" expert group, and the vice chairmanship in the Monitoring and Assessment, working group. On bilateral level progress was made in the upgrading of the existing transboundary water agreements with our neighbours. The latest development is that the updated agreement entered into force with Romania in 2004. The text of the new agreement with Slovakia has been prepared but not signed yet. We prepared the national report required by the EU WFD. In 2005 Hungary hold also the Presidency of the ICPDR.

We are pleased to inform the 4th Meeting of the Parties about the progress in the Tisza river basin cooperation. The 5 countries concerned took the challenge to implement the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2004 aiming at joint actions in the fields of flood control, river basin planning and transboundary risk reduction. The cooperation's results are planned to be presented at the Belgrade Pan-European Ministerial conference in October 2007.

We could also report about some ongoing joint projects with our neighbours as well as about joint harmonisation activities related to the EU WFD implementation but the limited time available for such an intervention doesn't allow it now.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the end I wish to express our hope that the number of countries becoming Parties to the Convention will further increase in the near future, the Protocol on Water and Health will start a successful self standing but harmonised with the Convention life and the ratification of the Protocol on Civil liability will progress. We also stress the importance of compliance with and the enforcement of our legal documents by further improving the legislative, implementing and control mechanisms.

International bodies can only be catalyst of the processes. The key to further progress is increased country commitment, strengthening cooperation between neighbouring countries, developing sub-basin cooperation. Also further steps have to be made to further develop cooperation with the stakeholders and external supporting partners.

I wish to conclude my statement by expressing our thanks to the Secretariat and to the Bureau for the preparation of this Meeting of the Parties and to the government of Germany for hosting it. And at the very end to express thanks and appreciation to Mr. Rainer Enderlein for his invaluable enthusiastic and professional work done for the convention and congratulate to Francesca Bernardini for becoming his successor. Wish you both further successes.

Thank you for your kind attention.