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On 27 September 2012 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, the second meeting of the Steering Committee of the National Policy Dialogue (NPD) on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) committed to further progress towards the implementation of IWRM in Turkmenistan following the country's accession to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) in August 2012.

"Accession by Turkmenistan to the Water Convention is of great importance not only for the country but for the whole Central Asian region and the wider community of Parties to the Water Convention", said Andrey Vasilyev, UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary. "It contributes to the strengthening of transboundary water cooperation in the region and advances the role of international law in governing inter-State relations on water resources management and protection."

The Steering Committee empowered the NPD inter-ministerial expert group to develop proposals for strengthening national legislation in line with IWRM principles and to review the opportunities for river basin management in the country. It also specified capacity building activities which would be instrumental for the advancement of IWRM in Turkmenistan.

The UNECE-led NPD in the framework of the European Union Water Initiative started in Turkmenistan in December 2010. Co-chaired by Ahmet Muhammedov, Deputy Minister of Water Economy, and Djumamurad Saparmuradov, Deputy Minister of Nature Protection, the policy dialogue enhances inter-sectoral cooperation on water resources management and protection. The NPD Steering Committee brings together over 20 ministries and agencies involved in various aspects of water policy development and implementation.

For further information please visit: http://www.unece.org/env/water/npd

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Note for Editors:

National Policy Dialogues on integrated water resources management (IWRM) and water supply and sanitation (WSS) are the main operational instrument of the European Union Water Initiative (EUWI) Component for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The EUWI was launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2002). UNECE is the strategic partner to support the policy dialogue process on IWRM, whereas the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is the strategic partner for WSS and financial aspects of IWRM. National Policy Dialogues are under way in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine. The National Policy Dialogue on IWRM in Turkmenistan is supported by the European Commission and the Government of Norway. Organizational support to this policy dialogue is provided by the United Nations Development Programme in Turkmenistan.

The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (1992) aims to strengthen national measures and transboundary cooperation for the protection and ecologically sound management of transboundary surface waters and groundwaters. On 29 August 2012 Turkmenistan has deposited its instrument of accession to the United Nations Secretary General. The country will become the thirty-ninth Party to the Convention on 27 November 2012.