

Statement of the Republic of Belarus

Беларусь уделяет значительное внимание вопросам реализации Конвенции по охране и использованию трансграничных водотоков и международных озер, а также международному сотрудничеству в этой области.

За период с шестого совещания Беларусь активизировала взаимодействие с государствами соседями через проведение двухсторонних консультаций и регулярных встреч по вопросам охраны и использования трансграничных водных объектов.

В Беларуси начал реализовываться принцип бассейнового управления водными ресурсами, в соответствии с положениями нового Водного кодекса, который вступил в силу 21 мая 2015 года. В рамках международного проекта ЕС «Охрана окружающей среды международных речных бассейнов» в 2014-2015 годах разработан проект Плана управления водными ресурсами верхнего Днепра на территории Беларуси. За счет бюджетных средств Беларуси начата разработка Плана управления водными ресурсами бассейна Западного Буга.

Вопросы адаптации водных ресурсов к изменению климата, нашли свое отражение в Государственной климатической программе на период 2013-2020 годы и в Водной стратегии Республики Беларусь на период до 2020 года. Реализация Программы и Стратегии нашла свое отражение через совместные усилия представителей власти и экспертов в бассейне реки Неман. В 2012-2014 гг. с участием Беларуси, Литвы и с проведением консультаций с экспертами и представителями органов управления Калининградской области Российской Федерации в рамках программы Европейской экономической комиссии Организации Объединенных Наций выполнен международный проект «Управление водными ресурсами бассейна реки Неман с учетом адаптации к изменению климата».

В ходе проекта разработаны «Стратегические направления адаптации управления водными ресурсами бассейна р. Неман к изменению климата», которые будут опубликованы в виде монографии до конца 2015 года. Основные результаты проекта:

- выполнена оценка современного состояния водных ресурсов и изменения климата и стока за последние 50 лет с учетом анализа воздействия на них хозяйственной деятельности;
- разработан прогноз изменения климата и стока на период до 2050 г.;
- выполнена общая оценка современного состояния качества поверхностных вод в бассейне реки Неман по согласованной (Беларусь — Литва) системе оценки и ее общий прогноз с учетом изменения климата;

- выполнен анализ систем гидрометеорологического и гидрохимического мониторинга и разработаны предложения по оптимизации этих систем для проведения мониторинга изменения климата;
- разработана общая информационная платформа (база данных в Интернете) для управления водными ресурсами и по адаптации к изменению климата для каждой из стран бассейна реки Неман;

Беларусь организует внедрение мероприятий, предложенных в Стратегических направлениях адаптации управления водными ресурсами бассейна р. Неман к изменению климата. Например, на трансграничном участке реки Вилия на территории Беларуси уже установлена и функционирует автоматизированная гидрометеорологическая станция (АГС), что значительно повышает уровень мониторинга гидрологического режима реки Вилия.

По результатам реализации этого проекта подготовлено и согласовано новое проектное предложение по продолжению трансграничного сотрудничества для совместного управления водными ресурсами и адаптации к изменению климата в бассейне реки Неман.

Основными ожидаемыми результатами нового проекта станут совершенствование системы управления бассейном р. Неман с учетом новых экологических рисков, обусловленных изменением климата путем налаживания диалога и согласования нормативно-правовой базы трансграничного сотрудничества, эффективности систем взаимного информирования, совместной реализации мер по адаптации к изменению климата. Новый международный проект важен и актуален для Республики Беларусь, также как и для других государств бассейна реки Неман - участников проекта.

Через Программу развития ООН (ПРООН) в Республике Беларусь реализуется международный проект инициативы «Окружающая среда и безопасность» (ENVSEC) «Взаимосвязь между проблемами окружающей среды и безопасности». В 2015 году в рамках проекта для студентов высшего образования разработан и опубликован в виде монографии учебно-методический комплекс «Изменение климата: последствия, смягчение, адаптация».

Мы надеемся на дальнейшее успешное сотрудничество с ЕЭК ООН, поддержку новых международных проектов в области охраны и использования водных ресурсов трансграничных речных бассейнов.

Statement of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the 7th Meeting of Parties of the Water Convention, 17th November 2015, Budapest

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Ministers, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Transboundary water cooperation is an issue of global importance. Every day we are facing with more and more challenges related to environmentally sound, equitable and rational water use. These challenges will make 21st century as century of struggle for water. This requires introduction of mechanisms of cooperation that will result with full implementation of the principles of sustainable water resources management and creation of platforms for the prevention and resolution of potential conflicts. This is particularly important for the activities that might have transboundary adverse effects.

In this respect Water Convention should become universal global tool introducing key principles and minimum requirements related to transboundary water cooperation. It is clear that Water Convention is on the way to become globally accepted act.

Implementation of the Convention should be done throughout activities at regional and national level, taking into account specific issues and problems of every macro and micro region.

Following this principle Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with their neighboring countries, had signed and actively implementing multilateral agreements such as Danube River Protection Convention and Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin. Both documents are in full conformity with Water Convention. Throughout these two formats of cooperation we established joint commissions ICPDR and Sava Commission under which we are dealing with the issues of joint River Basin Management, Flood Risk Management, navigation, climate change etc. In coming years we shall further focus on sediment management and industrial accidents issues as well.

All the activities are based primarily on the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive, Flood Protection Directive and other Water Related Directives and best available techniques.

Mechanisms of the cooperation established throughout bilateral agreements are equally important. Bosnia and Herzegovina signed bilateral Agreements with Republic of Croatia tackling issues of transboundary water management as well as issues of operation and maintenance of the joint transboundary water supply and sanitation systems. In 2016 and 2017 we expect to finalize bilateral agreements with Montenegro and Republic of Serbia respectively.

Catastrophic floods we experienced in May 2014, and earlier flood events showing us that joint actions are needed. In this respect we are implementing several projects at regional and national level, related to strengthening of meteorological and hydrological monitoring networks, improving our forecasting capacities, establishing system for the exchange of real time data and setting up national and regional early warning systems.

Positive experiences and lessons learned have to be introduced and replicated in other regions. Convention with its mechanisms of communication and cooperation need to facilitate this and where it is necessary to provide additional technical support.

Following our mutual understanding of the global importance of the Water Conventions we support introduction of reporting mechanism under the Convention, as a tool for the effective planning of the further activities and assistance and as a tool for the identification of potential bottlenecks in the implementation of the Convention.

Thank you very much!

Seventh session of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and
Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes
Budapest, 17 - 19 November 2015

High-level segment

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

INTERVENTION

**of Mr. Iulian JUGAN, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Environment,
Water and Forests
Budapest, 17 November 2015**

Romania cooperates on transboundary waters issues with all neighboring countries under the agreements signed with them: Serbia (1955), Ukraine (1997), Hungary (2003), Republic of Bulgaria (2004) and Republic of Moldova (2010). Our priorities at bilateral level are represented by developing/elaboration of new technical regulations on specific issues or reviewing the existing ones, as well as on organizing the annual meetings of the joint bodies. The completion of the negotiation of a new agreement with Serbia is also a priority for us. Providing the financial and human resources is essential for a good cooperation and for implementation the necessary

measures for the protection and use of water resources. The Convention and its products (methodologies, guidelines, etc) are a good basis for developing/strengthening the cooperation on transboundary waters with our neighboring countries.

The projects and activities on ground will provide support to countries and parties to Convention in increasing their capacity at the level of transboundary basin on addressing transboundary issues. Results of the first pilot reporting exercise as well as the requirements/needs of countries outside of ECE region and not only will help us in defining the future activities of the Convention. As we already underlined at the meeting of the Parties in Rome in 2012 it is necessary to continue to make efforts to create a funding mechanism for carrying out activities at national, regional and international level.

The opening of the Convention for accession to countries outside the ECE region offers the opportunity to promote the activities and products of Convention, an exchange and a transfer of experience that will support/assist countries in developing or enhancing cooperation on transboundary waters. We are convinced that we also learn from countries that will join the Convention and new activities will be included in the future Programs of Work. A challenge remains the assuring of the resources (both human and financial) for the realization of activities in the context of globalization of Convention.

Statement

by Mr. Andrian Delinschi, Deputy Minister of Environment of the Republic of Moldova, at the seventh Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

(17 - 19 November 2015, Budapest, Hungary)

Distinguished Ministers, Ambassadors, Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Hungary and more specifically the Ministry of Interior for organizing this event and for hospitality.

I'm pleased to participate in this meeting as I believe that cooperation on water can lead to strengthened cooperation in many more areas.

Cooperative, rational and efficient management of regional water resources is a precondition for sustainable development.

The global opening of the UNECE Water Convention comes at a moment when a number of important global commitments addressing water related issues are being negotiated by the United Nations Member States.

The upcoming Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for the period 2015-2030 follow and expand on the millennium development goals (MDGs) which are due to expire at the end of this year. The world has met the target of halving the proportion of people without access to improved sources of water. Therefore, the new proposed goal on water - Goal 6 "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all" – is proposed to reflect new challenges of the water agenda such as: water, sanitation and hygiene; wastewater and water quality; water efficiency and governance of water resources; reducing the risk of water-related disasters.

In this regard, the role of the UNECE Water Convention becomes even more important serving as a legal instrument to help countries in the implementation of SDG on water.

Being a party to the Convention since 1994, the Republic of Moldova made significant efforts in developing the legal and institutional framework for water management, an area which is being considered as a priority of the state policy in the field of environment on the national level.

In 2014 the Republic of Moldova signed the Association Agreement with European Union aimed to deepen political and economic relations between Moldova and the EU and establishing a comprehensive programme of Moldova's approximation of its legislation to EU norms.

The new Water Law, partially harmonized with the European Union standards, promotes the integrated water resource management on the basin approach as foreseen by the Water Framework Directive. Other 19 regulatory documents approved by the Government, support the implementation of this important Law. Currently, the drafts of River Basin Management Plans are elaborated on a district level for the country's 2 main water arteries Nistru (Dniester) and Prut.

As the country's main water arteries are transboundary, the international cooperation in the area of water is, and will remain, an important issue. In this regard the UNECE Water Convention provided to our country a unique legal and institutional framework for transboundary water cooperation.

An important achievement of this cooperation is the bilateral Treaty on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and sustainable Development of the Dniester River Basin signed by Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, in 2012 during the 6th Meeting of Parties of the UNECE Water Convention hold in Rome, Italy. The signing of a Dniester Treaty is a result of participation and strong involvement of authorities from various sectors, non-governmental organization, academia as well as the international community.

We strongly believe that Ukraine will complete soon the ratification procedure of this important Treaty and we count on the support from our international partners in evolving the Dniester cooperation.

The Republic of Moldova confirms its commitment to improve the transboundary cooperation in the region and we hope to extend the cooperation also in the Prut River basin, where a trilateral dialog between the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine is needed.

In conclusion I want to stress the effective cooperation with many stakeholders working together: authorities in the countries and outside the basin, academia, non-governmental organizations, and of course international organization and donors.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, I express sincere gratitude to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Secretariat of the Water Convention, to international organizations and Governments of countries that provided funding for supporting various activities in the frame of implementation of the Water Convention in the Republic of Moldova and I hope that this cooperation will continue to be successful.

7th Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Budapest, 17 - 19 November 2015)

STATEMENTS BY THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES

Here below you'll find the final statements for the two parts of the High Level Segment as well as for the selected topics of the General Segment.

High Level Segment

(a) Part 1 — the global Water Convention

Monsieur Chairperson of the Convention, honourable Ministers, Excellences, high Representatives of the UN ECE, ladies and gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The EU and its MSs welcome the global opening of the UN ECE Water Convention and the entering into force of the UN ECE Watercourses convention. Herewith significant progress has been made towards overarching global water governance.

With regard to strengthening transboundary water cooperation, the major EU achievements concerning inland waters have been the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the Flood Risk Management Directive as both focus on transboundary cooperation in rivers and river basins, being aware that those ecosystems do not have frontiers and have to be protected and managed jointly among neighboring countries.

Both directives have helped setting up new cooperation structures, on national and international level, improved mutual understanding and favored trust building. Existing international river basin commissions have hence been strengthened as successful cooperation and coordination platforms. The experiences gathered in these processes are and will be shared in the framework of the UN ECE Water Convention.

With regard to international transboundary cooperation, other major EU achievements have been the National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) within the framework of the EU Water Initiative (EUWI) implemented jointly with UN ECE. The NPDs have supported implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in 10 countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The activities assist countries amongst others in setting and implementing targets and target dates on sustainable water management, safe drinking water and adequate sanitation and have also the potential of facilitating the achievement of the water related sustainable development goals.

EU policy promoting water cooperation across the world builds on a long tradition of cooperation and therefore vast experience and knowledge of the management of transboundary waters. The EU will continue sharing this know-how.

For the future, the EU, together with its Member States, also strongly commit to implement their respective obligations related to transboundary cooperation and will continue supporting the implementation of global Water Conventions.

As regards the next 15 years, the UN ECE Water Convention should continue its successful work as a strong legal instrument, with an adaptive working structure, a governing body and a dedicated secretariat as well as based on the real needs of its Parties. It will be vital to promote and improve the knowledge about the UN ECE Water Convention's provisions, its work and products, which are useful also for countries beyond the UN ECE region. The development of the Convention into a real global instrument should be promoted, side by side with the UN Watercourses Convention, joining forces and resources and avoiding duplication of work. The success of the UN ECE Water Convention is evidenced by the interest of countries outside the pan-European region. The UN ECE Water Convention has already served as an exchange platform, bringing since long more than only the Parties together. Countries from many parts of the world as well as other organizations, agencies and NGOs have been able to benefit from this platform. The latter should therefore be strengthened and other countries and stakeholders be invited to join and share their knowledge and experiences.

During the next decades, conflicts over access to water are likely to become more frequent and could endanger stability and security in many parts of the world. Furthermore, if it comes to adaptation strategies to climate change, water issues will play a central role. The Convention is already anticipating these likely developments and they should continue to be taken into account when preparing its future work programs.

The Convention should also promote prosperity and human rights to water and sanitation, entitling everyone without discrimination to sufficient, safe, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use as well as to physical and affordable access to sanitation. In this regard the Protocol on Water and Health to the UN ECE Water Convention is of great importance since it aims to attain an adequate supply of safe drinking water and sanitation for everyone as well as to reduce water born diseases.

The work under UN ECE Water Convention should contribute to global processes and particularly to integrated implementation, follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant global processes. This subject will be discussed more in detail this afternoon.

With reference to challenges related to the global opening of the Convention, we need to consider that the UN ECE Water Convention is not the only global convention in the water sector. The UN Watercourses Convention has entered into force in August 2014 and there are other regional instruments, such as the SADC (Southern African Development Community) Water Protocol as well as many river or river basin agreements. The UN ECE Water Convention and the UN Watercourses Convention are however compatible and complementary and a lot of regional instruments are based on similar principles and approaches as both Conventions. For the instruments to co-exist and work together in an efficient way, strong cooperation is needed among all stakeholders, hence avoiding duplication of work with limited resources and ensuring consistency, including at legislative level.

Thank you Monsieur Chair.

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

Monsieur Chairperson of the Convention, honourable Ministers, Excellences, high Representatives of the UN ECE, ladies and gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Regarding the new global commitments, EU water policies, initiatives and programs, alongside Member States actions, will be of utmost importance to effectively reach the newly established objectives. This is especially true for the Sustainable Development Goal on water, comprising one specific target calling for transboundary cooperation to implement integrated water resources management, as well as for all other water related goals and targets.

Upcoming needs, such as adaptation to climate change and the requirements set by the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development as well as other global commitments, will be taken into account by the EU when further developing its water policies, initiatives and programs. We encourage international river basins, its Parties and all other stakeholders to proceed in the same direction.

On EU and global level, the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development needs to be given high priority. Effective participation and engagement of all stakeholders, including the civil society and the private sector, will be the key to a successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The UNECE Water Convention together with its Protocol on Water and Health and the UN Watercourses Convention are instruments that have the potential to play an invaluable role in such an integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Already in its former work programs, the UNECE Water Convention has taken care of monitoring, flood protection, climate change and adaptation as well as nexus aspects. There are many useful products on the table, available for everybody. Among other ongoing processes can for instance be mentioned the climate change exchange platform on pilot projects and the nexus assessments. The outcome of such work will be of utmost importance for a successful implementation of the new global commitments.

Concerning monitoring and review of the implementation of the new commitments, the UNECE Water Convention has the potential to play a special role, together with its Protocol on Water and Health, in the regional review process on one hand (which is envisaged at UN regions levels and will require EU – ECE cooperation in the future) and in supporting the national level implementation on the other. The reporting mechanism to be implemented, together with the one already existing under the Protocol on Water and Health, could facilitate this process.

We strongly encourage the UNECE Water Convention to reflect the new global commitments in its future work programs and to continue providing its very effective institutional structure, expertise and valuable tools to successfully implement the new global commitments. The EU and its Member States are ready to work with the Convention's bodies to this effect.

Thank you Monsieur Chair.

General Segment

Item 4a) Assessing benefits of transboundary cooperation

We appreciate this new area of work realized under the UNECE Water Convention and welcome the elaboration of the policy guidance note on identifying, assessing and communication the benefits of transboundary water cooperation. This policy guidance note can be a useful tool for facilitating accession to the Convention as well as promoting transboundary cooperation in a wider sense.

Item 4c) Implementation Committee

We thank the Implementation Committee for the work undertaken since its creation. We strongly encourage current and future Parties to the Convention to make use of the Implementation Committee's expertise where there is need for it, e.g. by using the advisory procedure which is aimed at facilitating implementation and application of the Convention.

Besides we support the 3 candidates who run for re-election to the Implementation Committee as they present good expertise in the fields related to the Convention and as they have done an excellent job during their first mandate.

Item 4f) Consideration of the need for reporting under the Convention

We welcome the establishment of a regular reporting mechanism under the UNECE Water Convention given that this will make available relevant information on the implementation of the Convention and potential difficulties encountered during the process. The reporting mechanism is meant to be a useful tool for the donor states to get the feedback whether the money spent helps to achieve the objectives of the Convention as well as for all States implementing the Convention to revise whether the implementation is on the right.

While designing the reporting templates, the Task force for reporting has taken into account the necessity not to bring extra burden to Parties, given other reporting obligations Parties might have.

We therefore support the idea to start with a pilot reporting exercise in 2016-2017 in order to test the reporting templates and to revise them – if needed – before the 8th MOP.

Item 4g) European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues

We are pleased to announce that EU Cooperation in the water sector is now moving towards a more effective strategic approach, from many projects to few focused areas.

The EU Water Initiative (EUWI) is one of the key instruments for establishing sustainable management of water resources. The National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) under the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) component of the EU Water Initiative in cooperation with the UNECE Water Convention have been successful and this cooperation will continue. More precisely, the support to NPDs in the framework of the EUWI, focusing on Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, in cooperation with UNECE and OECD, has generated a process which is progressively applied to all countries of these regions, with an increasing ownership of the countries concerned. This work will be integrated in the future into the EU regional programmes addressing water and the environment.

Moreover, the NPDs constitute a framework facilitating discussions on transboundary issues, as well as in the interaction between water resources management and the energy and food sectors. In particular, in the Eastern neighbouring countries and in Central Asia, the EU Water Initiative has proven to be instrumental for launching inter-ministerial discussions on the implementation of water reforms and progress towards sound economic and financially solid water policies. Among others, such work contributed to develop a participatory process for planning and discussing water issues. It also helped to address key challenges on the management of river basins at transboundary level.

We are happy to announce that the Eastern Partnership countries will start soon a new project under the EUWI – called the EUWI + East. This program will cover both support for the development of policies and support for the implementation of river basin management plans. The EU is allocating further 23 million for the EU Water Initiative + East. Funds will be allocated through the European Neighbourhood Instrument. The EUWI+ East will cover only the countries of the Eastern Neighbourhood, namely: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The EUWI+ East will work with the OECD and with UNECE on the support to the strengthening of the legal framework in line with the EU Water Framework Directive and Multilateral Environmental Agreements. In addition to that, the EUWI+ East is planning to work with a Consortium of EU Member States on the support to the implementation of River Basins Management Plans.

We are also pleased to announce that at the EU-Central Asia High Level Conference on Environment and Water Cooperation in October 2015, the EU and Central Asian countries have committed to continue to support the EU Water Initiative in Central Asia.

Item 4i) Thematic assessment of the water-food-energy- ecosystems nexus

We welcome the work of the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystem Nexus and the ongoing and planned pilot projects. We support creating synergies with similar on-going initiatives in other organisations and processes, thus avoiding duplication of efforts.

The EU will particularly strengthen regional dialogues addressing the water-energy-food security nexus in different partner regions, including the Eastern Neighbourhood and Central Asia, with a view to endorse Nexus policy recommendations and action plans. This effort will also focus on other regions and basins, which could be of interest in the context of the Water Conventions (e.g. Mekong Basin, Latin America, Africa, and Southern Neighbourhood - the Mediterranean)

Item 4h) Water and industrial accidents

There is relevant coordination ongoing between the UNECE Industrial Accident Convention and the UNECE Water Convention that benefits the implementation of the two Conventions. For example, this cooperation is happening in the context of the checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters.

The checklist was successfully tested in the Danube Delta Project during which Romania, Ukraine and Moldova made tremendous progress in the co-operation on the hazard and crisis management between the Danube Delta countries. The project has supported the three countries in their efforts to prevent accidental water pollution and prepare for effective response.

This demonstrates the usefulness of the checklist also in the context of water protection. Parties could, therefore, consider using the checklist in other similar water protection projects and it could serve also for the follow up activities to the Danube Delta Project, which will cover crosscutting issues related to several agreements including the UNECE Water Convention, the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, or the Convention on Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the River Danube.

Item 5) Opening of the Convention

We warmly welcome that the UNECE Water Convention is a global instrument since 2013 and that this global opening will now become operational after the ratification of the amendments to Articles 25 and 26 of the Convention by all Parties.

We look forward to cooperate with the countries who intend to join the Convention and we also encourage them to share with us their experiences and lessons learnt regarding transboundary water cooperation.

Item 9) Programme of Work 2016-2018, terms of reference for the bodies established to implement it and resources needed for its implementation

We welcome and give strong support to the draft Programme of Work for 2016-2018, as it is balanced and forward-looking, while realistic.

The EU and its Member States will continue to put at the Convention's disposal their achievements in the water field.

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE Meeting of the
Parties, Non-parties and others to the Convention on the Protection and Use of
Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes,

November 17-19, 2015, Budapest, Hungary

Intervention of the Ethiopian Delegation

First of all, I would like to thank the meeting organizers for inviting us to participate at this important meeting. The Ethiopian delegation appreciates the efforts of the Economic Commission of Europe in promoting cooperation and global understanding in trans-boundary watercourses and the purpose of our participation at this meeting is to share experience and learn from the community of trans-boundary water experts.

Related to the global opening of the Convention and as far as Ethiopia is concerned, as one of the riparians of the Nile Basin, the Ethiopian delegation would like to note the following challenges:

1. The Cooperative Framework Agreement of the Nile Basin is formulated based on relevant provisions of the 1997 UN Water Convention and most of the Nile Basin Countries are in the process of signing and ratifying the CFA. Thus, precedence of the CFA as a basin instrument over any other global convention needs to be recognized.
2. We would also like to express our concerns with regard to the limited capacity of developing countries in the implementation of the provisions of the UNECE Water Convention and its protocols, which needs to be taken into consideration.
3. We are also concerned that the UNECE Watercourse Convention puts onerous obligations on upstream riparian countries that also needs to be taken into consideration as a challenge to the global opening of the UNECE Water Convention.

I thank you very much.

Viet Nam

Mr. Thai Lai NGUYEN, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Viet Nam has ratified the UN Watercourses Convention. Viet Nam is developing flow regulation for hydropower generation on some of the Mekong River's tributaries. Viet Nam has participated in 2 UNECE meetings of the nexus Task Force. There have been earlier exchanges involving Mekong River Commission colleagues about a possibility of building on partners' efforts to apply the nexus methodology to assessing 1-2 tributaries of the Mekong shared between Viet Nam and Cambodia.

- **Welcome Viet Nam's participation** in the MoP and participation in specific activities like the meetings of the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus.
- **Recall Viet Nam's on ratification the UN Watercourses Convention.** Recall that the 2 water conventions are based on the same main principles of international water law, fully compatible and complementary. Individual provisions of the 2 conventions various articles of each convention provide guidance for the interpretation and application of the other. Remind that the main distinguishing feature and added value of the UNECE Water Convention is its institutional framework, a platform for exchanging experience and for carrying out activities that support implementation.
- **Recall that the UNECE Water Convention will soon be open for accession by all UN Member States.** Underline the value of the Future Parties from non-UNECE region will have the same rights and obligations as Parties from UNECE region, i.e. they will be able to participate in decision-making in the Meeting of the Parties, to be elected to the Convention's bodies, to lead the activities under the Convention, and to receive assistance for implementation of the Convention and participation in the Convention's activities. Encourage Viet Nam to look into acceding to the Water Convention, assuring that since Viet Nam has already ratified the UN Watercourses Convention, ensuring coherence with the UNECE Water Convention's obligations is expected to entail a relatively limited additional effort. **Offer that UNECE would be prepared to look into possibilities of providing assistance if Viet Nam is interested in considering accession.**
- Note that especially now when transboundary cooperation in water management is a part of the Sustainable Development Goal on water and the Global Environment Facility is increasingly referring to the water conventions, acceding also to the UNECE Water Convention would give strong message to the international community and water sector donors about Viet Nam's commitment to the principles of international water law. Being a Party would allow Viet Nam to participate in developing the Convention's regime as well as access to support for its bilateral and basin level cooperation, helping to improve management of water resources also at the national level.
- Note that applying the approach developed under the Water Convention for assessing the nexus could be a beneficial exercise, revealing opportunities from improved intersectoral coordination. This could contribute to taking a fresh look at the current cooperation with some of Viet Nam's neighbours for mutual benefits, for example Cambodia. This could build on and complement work on integrated water resources management in the framework of the Mekong River Commission.

Ukraine is a water-stressed country, water is one of the most important environmental factors determining the development of the state economy, the accommodation of the productive forces, the comfort and safety of the population.

Ukrainian Water Code, identifies the main priorities for water resources management, namely: the implementation of public management of water resources, the implementation of inter-basin water transfer meet the needs of the population and sectors of the economy with water in the required quantity and standard quality control of operating modes of reservoirs with multi-purpose. At the same time, the government strongly supported the reform of the country's water resources management taking into account the positive international experience in the field of integrated water resources management at the basin principle, the improvement of the institutional approaches to water management, use of modern protection systems against harmful effects of water and flood forecasting.

Taking into account that the sustainable development of each country is determined by the functioning of the economic complex, in 2010, Ukraine adopted a strategy of environmental policy of Ukraine. The strategy covers the whole range of questions connected with the rational use and protection of the air, land, soil, subsoil, forests, biological and landscape diversity. In order to integrate environmental policy into sectoral policies and taking into account the environmental component in the preparation of plans and programs for the development of Ukraine, the Government approved the National Action Plan for the Environment for the period up to 2015.

Ukraine has approved and implemented a comprehensive program of national implementation of the decisions adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development for 2003-2015 (National Programme of Action). One of the activities of this program is the implementation of integrated water resources management. Ukraine has created 11 river basin management of water resources, implementing water policy of the state in the major river basins and coordinating the work of basin councils, composed of representatives of public and scientific organizations. Status of water resources, the way they recover, their quality will certainly depend on the mode of use. With this purpose in all the major river basins of a special interdepartmental working committee, composed of representatives of the authorities, water users, environmentalists, members of the public.

Statement of Republic of Slovenia

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Slovenia welcomes the opening of the UN ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International lakes to all UN Member States. This is very concrete tool for the implementation 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on global level. Water is source of life, and there is never too much positive action regarding drinking water, water for the economy, water for food, for the ecosystem and the healthy cost and sea.

As a Danube River Basin state and a Mediterranean coastal state, Slovenia is fully aware of the strategic importance of respecting water resources, the coast and the sea when seeking comprehensive solutions for international river basins, and this is essential to the strengthening of peace and cooperation. Such efforts are particularly important in a period affected by climate change, which has a notable impact on water regimes, causing historic flooding and droughts and related adverse effects on the population, land use and the economy as a whole. These events are closely linked to stability and peace in the region. Comprehensive solutions are possible – but only through enhanced cross-border cooperation based on trust and a consensus for planning and implementing coordinated measures to reduce the negative effects of climate change.

Slovenia is actively striving to attain these goals at the regional level by enhancing subregional cooperation:

Firstly: As part of the implementation of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention, UNEP/MAP) and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD adopted in Portorož in 2005, COP of the 14th Barcelona Convention), an initiative was launched to draft the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Adriatic (Portorož, 2006; UNEP/MAP), which was approved at the meeting of the Slovenian-Italian-Croatian Commission for the Protection of the Adriatic Sea (Portorož, 2008). In the 2012–2014 period, Slovenia headed the drafting of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EU SAIR), Pillar 3: Environmental Quality, which was adopted as the third EU macro-regional strategy

(EU SAIR, Brussels, November 2014) and provides an excellent basis for enhancing and upgrading cross-border cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian Region (2014–2020) with very specific content and projects at the subregional level.

Secondly: As part of the implementation of the Danube River Protection Convention (DRPC), Slovenia and other countries of the Sava River basin are actively striving to enhance cooperation of the Sava basin at the subregional level. Following the conflict in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, cooperation between the international community and the countries of the Sava basin resulted in the drafting and signing of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (Kranjska Gora, 2002; Slovenia is the depository). In line with the Agreement, the permanent Secretariat of the International Sava River Basin Commission took up its work in 2004. The Commission has achieved excellent results during this period by undertaking cross-border coordination to restore the navigation route on the Sava River according to international standards, drafting and adopting the Sava River Basin Management Plan (Zagreb, December 2015) and drafting the Flood Risk Management Plan, which is essential to a full-scale restoration after the 2014 flood disaster that struck particularly Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. The work done by the Commission and the support of the EU donor conference, in cooperation with international financial institutions (IFIs), is crucial to seeking sustainable solutions, including the priority setting up of the Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System in the Sava River Basin, which is under preparation.

Thirdly: As a Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD; COP 9, Bonn, 29 May 2008), Slovenia drafted the initiative (in cooperation with the WWF, UNESCO, UNDP FAO, Council of Europe, EuroNatur) to enhance cooperation on the preservation of biodiversity in the Dinaric Arch, which was signed by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Slovenian know-how and good practices in water management reflect the successful trans-boundary and water management cooperation, which also enhances regional stability. The new cooperation in the Sava River Basin Commission is, thanks to UN EC Convention

framework and joint actions, reality. We are pleased to share our expertise, technical know-how and knowledge in water management.

Thank you.

République du SENEGAL

Exposé sur l'OMVS à Budapest 17-19 Nov 2015

Réunion des Parties sur la Convention sur l'Eau

Je voudrais vous livrer notre expérience dans le cadre de l'OMVS qui a, aujourd'hui, 43 ans d'existence et dont le crédo demeure Eau, Développement et Paix. En réalité la coopération entre les Etats partageant ce bassin a été bénéfique pour leurs populations respectives.

L'OMVS est une organisation sous régionale regroupant quatre (4) pays frontaliers (Guinée, Mali, Mauritanie, Sénégal) partageant un même cours d'eau : le fleuve Sénégal.

Sa vocation est de promouvoir un développement durable à travers la maîtrise et la valorisation des eaux du fleuve.

A sa création en 1972, la vision des pères fondateurs était de bâtir une organisation de paix pour la mise en valeur des ressources du bassin du fleuve Sénégal.

Trois (3) principes fondamentaux à savoir (i) la solidarité, (ii) l'égalité et (iii) l'équité régissent toute la vie de l'Organisation.

Conscients du caractère partagé des eaux du fleuve Sénégal et l'impératif de maîtriser les ressources en eau pour répondre aux problèmes posés par les aléas climatiques (sécheresse des années 70) et les défis démographiques, les Etats riverains ont convenu de déclarer le fleuve Sénégal cours d'eau international.

Cet acte fait des ressources en eau du fleuve un bien commun régi par des règles acceptées par toutes parties prenantes les mettant ainsi à l'abri de conflits éventuels. Ces règles sont constituées de Conventions internationales signées entre les Etats et ratifiées par leur Parlement.

Le seul droit reconnu est le droit « d'usage ». Sur ce droit d'usage, des priorités ont été dégagées en cas de rareté et de compétition.

Pour prévenir toute incompréhension ou différend entre les Etats, une charte des eaux inspirée des principes de la Convention des Nations Unies sur les Eaux interna-

tionales de 1997, est venue compléter en 2002, le dispositif juridique de l'OMVS. Cette charte précise les modalités de gestion des ouvrages et d'allocation des ressources.

Des mécanismes et organes de concertation, telle que par exemple, la Commission Permanente des Eaux, sont mis en place et fonctionnent régulièrement. La recherche de consensus est la règle, et ce, quelque soit l'urgence et l'importance de la question.

L'autre aspect, facteur de stabilité, est que tous les ouvrages et infrastructures structurantes réalisés par l'OMVS sont des **propriétés communes et indivisibles des Etats** quelque soit leur situation géographique.

Leur financement est assuré **solidairement** par les quatre pays et l'endettement par pays est fonction des bénéfices ou avantages attendus. Une clé de répartition des coûts et des charges est fixée. A défaut, un consensus politique est trouvé.

Ainsi, la mise en œuvre de programmes d'aménagements conjoints, solidaires et adaptés aux exigences de développement des Etats et répondant aux préoccupations des populations démunies du bassin a facilité l'adhésion de tous les acteurs.

Le soutien de la communauté internationale a permis la réalisation desdits programmes et conforté ainsi la crédibilité de l'Organisation

Sur le plan politique, la volonté des Etats et la tenue régulière et de manière tournante dans les pays, des réunions des différents organes d'orientation et de décision (Conférence des Chefs d'Etat, Conseil des Ministres) ont permis d'adapter en permanence l'organisation aux exigences d'une gestion intégrée des ressources en eau.

Ces rencontres des plus hautes autorités des Etats ont permis également d'entretenir une coopération sous régionale soutenue.

Ce système a permis, après plus de quarante ans d'existence, d'obtenir de bons résultats en termes de réalisation d'infrastructures, de prévention de conflits, de stabilité et de lutte contre la pauvreté. Aujourd'hui chaque pays membre de l'OMVS tire profit des réalisations de l'organisation.

Le maintien d'un climat de transparence, de bon entendement, de dialogue et de respect mutuel dans l'utilisation des ressources en eau a été aussi un facteur décisif.

En espérant que ce bref survol de l'OMVS, permettra de tirer quelques principes qui alimenteront nos débats, je vous remercie de votre attention.

UNECE Water Convention MOP7

Statement of the United Nations Environment Programme

read by Ms. Barbara Ruis, Legal Officer

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Agenda item nr 3, Part 2 - the Water Convention in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global commitments, 17 November, 15:00-16:00

Thank you Mr. Chair

The United Nations Environment Programme is committed to working with all concerned parties to support the implementation of the SDGs and we will align our strategic planning to the 2030 Agenda. UNEP's goal is to support countries through capacity building and to ensure that the environmental dimension is integrated in their sustainable development. In order to achieve this goal, we are active in monitoring, providing expert knowledge and technical assistance, convening stakeholders to agree on global environmental norms and standards, and making use of synergies through partnerships.

Concrete, we have launched a project in several pilot countries in order to build government capacities and to embed the environment into their SDG implementation strategies.

With regard to monitoring, we have launched the UNEP-Live SDG online portal, through which UNEP will focus on developing indicators to track SDGs at all levels, creating a national reporting system and building countries' capacities to collect data.

UNEP is very active in the area of water policies, as we work together on water-related projects with various partners, including UNECE, such as the Environment and Security Initiative and we are implementing water projects under the GEF, promoting interlinkages with climate change adaptation and supporting the water-energy-food-ecosystem nexus.

We are fully committed to engage in further cooperation with our partners to support the implementation of SDG 6 on water. As Mr. Friss Bach advocated this morning, UNEP also supports the inclusion of an indicator on transboundary water cooperation in addition to the indicator on the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management at all levels. UNEP has also been active in areas such as the sustainable management of transboundary water resources and the protection of water-related ecosystems. With our multifaceted approach, we have the capability to work on the implementation of SDG 6 at the national and international level with countries, organizations and other stakeholders.

For instance, UNEP is a leading partner of GEMI, the Integrated monitoring of water and sanitation related SDG targets, a joint UN initiative with the aim to develop a monitoring framework for SDG 6. Further, UNEP, together with the International Network of Basin Organizations and UNECE, has organized the first global Environmental Forum for Basin Organizations in Nairobi last year. On 15 and 16 December this year, the First Regional Environment Forum for Basin Organizations in Latin America will take place in Panama. A similar regional forum is programmed for the Caribbean region in 2016.

UNEP stands ready to strengthen its partnership with the Convention and provide its expertise for all regions of the world.

Thank you for your attention.

On Eurasian integration initiatives in need of Water Convention assistance

Intervention from the floor at plenary meeting of UNECE Water Convention Nov 17.

Eugene Simonov . Rivers without Boundaries

Since the last Meeting of Parties a number of high level integration initiatives have been launched in Eurasia, which may have profound influence on development and water resource use on the whole continent. These initiatives include Silk Belt¹ (championed by China), Steppe Road (promoted by Mongolia), Eurasian Economic Union (championed by Russia) and several other multi-country development platforms. To support these initiatives enormous investment resources exceeding 1 trillion dollars are prepared by more than 20 investment institutions, some of them brand-new as AIIB established by China with support from 50 other countries.

New development and integration programs will result in increasing utilization of water resources and diverse impacts on transboundary rivers. We as civil society members of Eurasian countries see an urgent need for the Silk Belt and other Eurasian initiatives to adopt advanced environmental and social standards and policies, develop public participation mechanisms and subscribe to safeguards in transboundary water management. Without such safeguards risks of this new integration for environment and local communities may be very high. There is an urgent need to ensure protection of river and lake ecosystems and promoting green development and ecosystem-based climate adaptation policies within the framework of the Silk Belt and other initiatives.

UNECE environmental conventions and first of all the Water Convention could serve as a ready source of tested safeguard mechanisms that could be used in new Eurasian integration programs. Majority of UNECE members and Water Convention parties are actively participating in new Eurasian integration initiatives: planning megaprojects, co-founding investment banks, coordinating spatial planning schemes, building energy networks, etc. We wish that all those parties apply robust toolkit of this Convention in new Eurasian integration initiatives and projects and urge neighbors to join this wonderful Convention and adopt its principles.

¹ **Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road**
http://en.ndrc.gov.cn/newsrelease/201503/t20150330_669367.html