





## Section 6

# United Nations and Its Specialized Agencies

## 6.1. General Assembly

The General Assembly occupies a central position as the chief deliberative organ of the United Nations. It is comprised of all Members of the United Nations, each having one vote. It is authorized to discuss full spectrum of issues covered by the Charter. The UN General Assembly meets September each year.

On September 12, 2017, the seventy-second session of the General Assembly was opened. Its agenda included 172 items. During the general

debate held under the theme “Focusing on people – striving for peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet”, the Presidents of the Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Uzbekistan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to UN delivered their speeches, where they focused on water, climate change, and energy-related issues.

### Address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

In his speech, H.E. Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov underlined that the enhanced regional partnership between the Central Asian states would make the latter more capable of confronting threats and challenges. In this context, Kazakhstan pays particular attention to regional cooperation in overcoming the Aral Sea catastrophe. IFAS remains the only platform for dialogue between the heads of Central Asian states. “We believe that this platform could promote our common efforts in the development of mid- and long-term regional development strategies”, said the Minister.

The speaker informed that Kazakhstan was actively working on establishing and hosting a UN Regional Hub for multilateral diplomacy in Almaty focusing on sustainable development, humanitarian assistance, disaster risk reduction and resilience building in the region and the wider area.

“My country remains deeply committed to sustainable development. Reckoning the reality of climate change, Kazakhstan, despite its abundant conventional energy resources, is deeply committed to a green economy through diversifying and developing alternative energy sources. This thinking led us to choose “Future Energy” as the theme for the Astana EXPO 2017 International Exhibition. Throughout the summer, 115 countries and 22 international organizations showcased their creative experiences.

This enormous undertaking is a clear evidence of Kazakhstan’s pledge to carry forward the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030. One of the best ways to promote green economy and green business we see is the use



of the heritage of the EXPO infrastructure. With the support of five UN agencies we are establishing the International Centre for Green Technologies and Investment Projects “Future Energy”. Its activities will be in full compliance with the Kazakhstan “Green Bridge” Partnership Program reflected in the Rio+20 Outcome Document”, he concluded.

Source: <http://mfa.gov.kz/ru/content-view/vystuplenie-ep-g-na-kajrata-abdrakhmanova-ministra-inostrannyh-del-respubliki-kazahstan-v-hode-obsih-prenij-na-72-j-sessii-generalnoj-assamblee-oon-nu-jork-sentabr-2017-goda-2>

## Address by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic

H.E. Mr. A. Atambayev underlined that climate change was a particular menace to mountainous countries, such as Kyrgyzstan. The climate change has impact on all sectors of economy in the Republic and cause substantial damage through more frequent natural disasters, such as landslides, mudflows, floods, and avalanches. He underscored that intensive melting of Kyrgyz glaciers was of particular concern.

As forecasted, by 2025 the total glacial area in the Republic could drop by 30-40% on average and, consequently, Central Asian rivers could lose 25-35% of water. Therefore, the country stands for implementation of joint projects for preservation of glaciers in mountain ecosystems of upstream countries.

The President spoke of the mutually beneficial use of water and energy resources as one of the main factors for prosperity in Central Asia. The Kyrgyz Republic consistently advocates the origin and implementation of economic mechanisms for water use in the region. The limited nature of water resources sooner or later brings us to the understanding that water is an economic resource that requires reasonable use.



He especially underlined that the matters of water use in Central Asia could and must be resolved by the countries in the region themselves via open dialogue, with account of the interests and needs of all concerned parties. It is unacceptable that international and regional organizations impose upon the countries of Central Asia their approaches and their ways for building cooperation in this sphere.

Source: <http://kg.akipress.org/news:1405770/>

## Address by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan

H.E. Mr. E. Rakhmon mentioned that Tajikistan over the past years made a great stride towards implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, in cooperation with the relevant UN agencies, has developed and adopted a Mid-Term Development Strategy 2020 and National Development Strategy 2030.

The strategies have been developed in line with the Global agenda on sustainable development and their timely and effective implementation would contribute to the achievement of the global Sustainable Development Agenda.

In his speech, the President focused on glacial melting and natural disasters caused by climate change. With 93% of its territory covered by mountains, Tajikistan, due to its geographical location, faces destructive consequences of climate change and natural disasters. Climate



change accelerates melting of glaciers that brings about the rise of water level in rivers, which, in its turn, has a negative impact on the real sectors of national economy, particularly hydropower, agriculture and industry. It is obvious that accelerated melting of glaciers adversely affects processes of water resource generation in the region.

The President mentioned that one of the ways to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was to adhere to the recommendation of the "green" economy and promote comprehensive use of renewable energy sources. 98% of the country's energy is produced at hydropower stations generating environmentally friendly energy. In this context, the country reiterates its commitment to the global initiatives "Sustainable Energy for All" and the International Decade "Sustainable Energy 2014-2024".

He informed that in order to review and deliberate on proposals and with the view of adopting a roadmap of a decade, the country

intends to organize in New York on the World Water Day, 22 March 2018, a Special Event on the occasion of the launch of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028" and host a High-Level International Conference on Water for Sustainable Development next June in Dushanbe.

Source: <http://khovar.tj/rus/2017/09/vystuplenie-glavy-gosudarstva-emomali-rahmona-na-plenarnom-zasedanii-72-j-sessii-genassamblei-oon/>

## Address by the Turkmenistan Delegation

The Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the UN Mrs. Atayeva mentioned that Turkmenistan paid special attention to preventive diplomacy and gave a high status to the activities of the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. In this context, it is proposed at the 72<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly to consider a possibility for adoption of a resolution in support of the preventive diplomacy mechanisms for addressing the important issues of delivering peace and security.

It was noted that the implementation of the SDGs was one of the key directions of Turkmenistan's strategic cooperation with the UN, and that in 2015, 17 objectives, 148 tasks and 193 SDG indicators were selected and adopted at the Government level by the UN. In this context, the National mechanism was developed for the implementation of SDG.

In light of Turkmenistan's chairmanship in the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS), it is proposed holding a Summit in 2018 in Turkmenistan, namely the Summit of the Heads of Founding States of IFAS, with participation of



the UN specialized agencies, such as the UNDP, UNEP, and the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

Source: [https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/72/tm\\_ru.pdf](https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/72/tm_ru.pdf)

## Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

H.E. Mr. Sh. Mirziyoyev underlined that Uzbekistan considered the region of Central Asia to be as the main priority of its foreign policy. And this is a conscious choice. Being in the heart of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is keenly interested in the region to become a zone of stability, sustainable development and good-neighborliness. A peaceful and economically prosperous Central Asia is our most important goal and key task. Uzbekistan is determined to engage in dialogue, constructive interaction and strengthening the good-neighborliness. The republic stands ready for reasonable compromises with the countries of Central Asia on all issues without exception.

The President focused on the joint use of the region's shared water resources. He told that he fully shared the position of the UN Secretary-General that "the problems of water, peace and security are inextricably linked". He expressed convince that there was no alternative to addressing the water problem other than equally taking into account the interests of the countries and nations of the region. Uzbekistan supports the draft conventions on the use of water resources of the Amu Darya and Syr Darya River Basins developed by the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy.

The President once again drew attention to one of the most acute ecological problems of



our time – the Aral Sea catastrophe. Overcoming the consequences of desiccation of the sea requires today the active consolidation of international efforts. "We stand for full implementation of the special UN Program to provide effective assistance to the population affected by the Aral Sea crisis adopted this year", the President said.

Source: <http://www.president.uz/ru/lists/view/1063>

## 6.2. Security Council

The Security Council (UNSC) has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security; all UN members are obliged to follow its decisions. It has 15 Members, including 5 permanent members with veto power (China, France, Great Britain, Russia, USA,) and 10 non-permanent members elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms for 5 countries each year.

### In 2017, Central Asia was presented in the UNSC for the first time in the UN history

On June 28, 2016, Kazakhstan for the first time was elected as a non-permanent member of the UNSC for 2017-2018. Kazakhstan's work in the UNSC began on 1 January 2017.

### Priorities of Kazakhstan in UNSC:

promoting national strategic interests while strengthening regional security and cooperation in the country and Central Asia; addressing security challenges towards the enhancement of a zone of peace, cooperation and prosperity in the region; focusing on the settlement of situation in Afghanistan; promoting, through the Council, international initiatives of the Head of State related to the nuclear non-proliferation, fight against terrorism and extremism as set out in the Manifesto: The World. The 21st century.

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, [www.mfa.kz](http://www.mfa.kz)

## UNSC briefing on Preventive Diplomacy and Transboundary Waters

On June 6, 2017, UNSC briefing “Maintenance of international peace and security: Preventive diplomacy and transboundary waters” was held. In his speech, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres told that the United Nations actively promoted mediation and dialogue as effective tools for preventing and resolving disputes over water and other natural resources. For example, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia is collaborating closely with the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and other partners to build capacity in water diplomacy and to modernize the regional legal framework on the management of transboundary water resources.

The Secretary-General told that while visiting the Aral Sea he would discuss with all five Governments of Central Asia how the United Nations is supporting mediation to prevent and resolve local and transboundary disputes over water in Central Asia and elsewhere. Water-related issues in Central Asia were also highlighted by the representatives of Kazakhstan and Japan.

Mr. Ashikbayev (Kazakhstan) mentioned the joint work of the countries in the region to conclude regional agreements on water resources and transboundary water management. He spoke on the Kazakhstan's initiatives to create a Central Asian investment fund for water projects to co-finance the construction and renovation of water facilities, establish a regional centre for water security, and jointly develop and sign a pact on water and environmental security in Central Asia.

Mr. Bessho (Japan) told that his country has been a proud partner of the Central Asian nations in promoting regional cooperation. He shared information on projects in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and concluded that improving water management in both upstream and downstream countries benefits both groups of countries, thereby contributing not only to sustainable water use in the region but also to regional confidence-building.

The other members of UNSC indicated a large set of measures for preventive diplomacy to ensure water security, including improving knowledge, data, and information; political, legal, and institutional framework; capacity building; integrated approaches; joint projects

and investments; and strengthening dialogue and interaction.

*Detailed:* [S/PV.7959](#)

## Open debate in UNSC related to non-traditional challenges to international peace and security

On September 20, 2017, Japan initiated in UNSC an open debate related to addressing complex contemporary challenges to international peace and security, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, expansion of terrorism, climate change, pandemics, and transnational organized crime.

Almost everyone underlined that climate change was one of the key factors of escalating the threats, particularly, in the basin of Chad Lake, Darfur, Somali, and Sahel.

Other threats include food insecurity, deteriorated environment, and water scarcity. Representatives of Senegal, Slovenia, Lebanon, Columbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Norway, Peru, Hungary, Belgium, the Netherlands, Nepal, and Tuvalu focused on water-peace-security nexus. Central Asia was represented by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan.

*Detailed:* [S/PV.8144](#)

### 6.3. Secretariat

The Secretariat is one of the main organs of UN. At the head of the United Nations Secretariat is the Secretary-General, appointed by GA upon recommendation of UNSC for a 5-year term. Since January 1, 2017, Antonio Guterres is the Secretary-General (Portugal).

On 8-14 June 2017, Mr. Antonio Guterres paid official visits to the Central Asian states and Afghanistan. Visit priorities included preventive diplomacy and regional cooperation as a response to regional challenges. The following issues were raised: environment and trans-boundary water use; achieving the SDG; preventing violent extremisms and fighting terrorism; situation in Afghanistan; fighting drugs and organized crime; economic and infrastructure cooperation; human rights and efficient management. Bilateral cooperation was discussed in each country.

The Secretary-General started his visit from Kazakhstan (8-9 June) as part of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit and opening of EXPO-2017. Speaking at the Summit, he made a special plea to them to show commitment in efforts to implement the Paris Agreement on climate change ([SG/T/3172](#)).

On 9-10 June, the Secretary-General visited Uzbekistan (Samarkand, Nukus, and Muynak). After visiting Muynak and flying over Preardlie, he told that the Aral tragedy was one of the biggest ecological catastrophes of our time ([SG/T/3173](#)).

In the Kyrgyz Republic (10-11 June), he held a bilateral meeting with President Almazbek Atambaev and participated in a high-level forum on "Taza Koom", a project supported by the United Nations Development Program to facilitate achieving SDGs ([SG/T/3174](#)).

In Tajikistan (11-12 June), The Secretary-General had a number of visits and participated in the national conference on the SDG, where he stressed the importance of involving all stakeholders and their close cooperation. Mr. Antonio Guterres visited Lake Sarez, in the Pamir Mountains. He was informed that almost 30 per cent of its glaciers having melted in the last 10 years alone due to climate change ([SG/T/3175](#)).

In Turkmenistan (12-14 June), Mr. Antonio Guterres discussed transport, energy, and environmental protection problems, and participated in a high-level dialogue on implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia ([SG/T/3176](#)).

On 14 June, the Secretary-General finished his tour along the region visiting Afghanistan, where he discussed security problems and counter-terrorism measures ([SG/T/3177](#)).

(See also speeches of the Secretary-General at the UN Security Council in section [Security Council](#)).

### 6.4. UN Development Program (UNDP)

UNDP is the United Nations' global development network. It operates in 177 countries and territories.

#### UNDP activity in the Central Asian states in 2017:

##### Kazakhstan

The Expert support for the establishment of a national ODA system in Kazakhstan project is implemented. Particularly, the [scientific-practical seminar](#) "Improving the productivity and profitability of agribusiness through training of farmers and agricultural specialists of Central Asian countries in innovative technologies for

water and energy saving" was held (April 24-28, Almaty).

The [mechanism](#) was launched to support energy-saving investment projects under the joint project of UNDP, GEF and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Low-carbon Urban Development".

The pilot [project](#) "Secure and integrated use of hydraulic facilities in the Aktobe province" was launched (9 November, Aktobe).

The [Conference](#) for presentation of the National Communication of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the UN Framework Convention on Climate



Change was organized by the Kazakh Ministry of Energy, GEF, and UNDP (29 November, Astana).

Source: [www.kz.undp.org](http://www.kz.undp.org)

## Tajikistan

In 2017, the [Disaster Risk Management Program](#) was continued (2016-2020). UNDP signed three project documents with the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense. They are financed by the Government of Japan, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and Russian Trust Fund for Development to ensure preparedness and response capacities, as well as disaster risk management in Tajikistan.

*“Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Capacities”* is a \$10.6 million four-year project funded by the Government of Japan and designed to support the Government of Tajikistan in undertaking a nation-wide risk assessment, develop and implement risk reduction measures, improve early warning and disaster management planning, preparedness and response, as well as strengthen capacities of search and rescue teams.

*“Strengthening Preparedness and Response Capacities”* is a \$1.5 million two-year project funded by the Russian Trust Fund for Development and designed to support the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan in strengthening emergency preparedness and response capacities in the country through:

1) establishment of a unified emergency preparedness and response system; and

2) strengthening technical bases, as well as search and rescue capacities of Tsentrospas (specialized department of the Committee responsible for search and rescue operations).

*“Improved DRR Policy Making Mechanism. Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance in Tajikistan (SDRGT)”* is a \$800,000 three-year project funded by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and designed to improve risk governance in the country at all levels and broaden the engagement of key government, private sector and external organization actors in disaster risk governance in Tajikistan. The project will also increase the awareness of River Basin Organizations on managing water related hazards.

In April 2017, during a [meeting](#) with the President of Tajikistan, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Tajikistan highlighted that UN agency would contribute over \$363 million to the country during 5 years. These funds would support Tajikistan in implementation of its mid-term and long term National Development Strategy (NDS) until 2020 – 2030 and of water-related global initiatives of Tajikistan. The actions as part of those programs include improving the welfare of the population, socio-economic development, and environmental protection, ensuring universal access to electricity, and mitigation of water disaster risks.

The [round table](#) on the National Adaptation Plan of Tajikistan was held in Dushanbe in June. The event was aimed at assessing needs, capacities, and potential for adaptation to climate change and presenting the country National Plan.

A [pilot workshop](#) on Flood Management Planning was organized to discuss flood control management approaches at basin level (13 September, Khujand).

Source: <http://www.tj.undp.org/>

## Turkmenistan

Under the new project “Climate resilient livelihoods in drought-affected areas”, UNDP held a series of educational [seminars and onsite trainings](#) for the farmers, cattle breeders and administrative personnel of the local administration of Galkynysh district of Lebap region and Gorogly district of Dashoguz region to raise awareness on effects of climate change and discuss potential adaptation mechanisms (1-25 June, Lebap, Dashoguz).

The final [results](#) of the project “Addressing Climate Change Risks to Farming Systems in Turkmenistan at National and Community Level” were summarized. The Project was funded by the Adaptation Fund (August, Ashgabat).

In 2017, the project “Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy for Sustainable Water Management in Turkmenistan” was continued. Particularly, UNDP held a [seminar](#) presenting innovative technologies and international best practices in efficient irrigation techniques in agriculture (November, Ashgabat).

As part of a joint project of UNDP, the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of Turkmenistan and the Global Environment

Facility (GEF), [construction](#) of one of the largest infrastructure projects in the history of the UNDP Permanent Mission in Turkmenistan, the 14.8 km long Khivaabad-Kaahka waterway has commenced in November 2017.

Source: [www.tm.undp.org](http://www.tm.undp.org)

## Uzbekistan

Implementation of the joint EU/UNDP “Technical Capacity Building” [Project](#) of the EU Sustainable Water Management in Uzbekistan's Rural Areas Program was continued. A series of [training courses](#) were conducted for 130 national water managers. The training modules and tools (see section [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization](#)), needs and capacities of national organizations providing training in the water sector were assessed (see section [Activities of ICWC executive bodies in 2017](#)).

A [Joint program](#) “Building the resilience of communities affected by the Aral Sea disaster through the Multi-partner Human Security Fund for the Aral Sea” was launched. It aims at improving social, economic, and environmental security in three pilot districts of Karakalpakstan (Muynak, Takhtakupyr, and Shumanay). Inception workshops were held for

farmers, representatives of rural citizens' assemblies, government institutions and agencies, and private entrepreneurs (13 January), and a study tour for the representatives of Diplomatic Corpus and international organizations accredited in Uzbekistan, ministries, agencies, national and regional mass media was organized (14 March).

Work was continued to increase resilience of farming communities to climate change consequences in the Republic of Karakalpakstan under the [project](#) “Developing Climate Resilience of Farming Communities in the Drought Prone Areas of Uzbekistan” funded by the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

[EcoWeek 2017](#) was organized to raise awareness of local people and encourage their interest in and actions for environmental protection (31 May, International Press Club).

UNDP and Goskomecology launched a [new initiative](#) “High-Mountain Ecosystem Sustainability in Uzbekistan” (September, 2017).

Source: [www.uz.undp.org](http://www.uz.undp.org)

## 6.5. UN-Water

In 2013, the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination established the inter-agency coordination mechanism UN-Water. It coordinates the efforts of UN entities and international organizations working on water and sanitation issues. Over 30 UN organizations carry out water and sanitation programs.

In 2017, UN-Water continued supporting UN member-states in sustainable management of water and sanitation.

A special focus was on implementation of the [Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6](#). The Initiative aims to support countries in their monitoring efforts on the goals on water and sanitation across sectors and collect data to track global progress. The Program will be implemented in several phases. In 2017, the baseline data were generated for 11 global indicators of SDG 6. In addition, webinars for National Coordination Centers for SDG 6 monitoring were organized. At about 50 countries made their inputs in the SDG 6

Synthesis Report that would be presented in 2018 meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

UN-Water released the [United Nations World Water Development Report 2017](#) “Wastewater: the untapped resource”. It calls for a quantum shift to see wastewater as a resource rather than a problem in a world where water is increasingly scarce but in growing demand.

Source: [www.unwater.org](http://www.unwater.org),  
<http://www.sdg6monitoring.org/>,  
<http://enb.iisd.org/water/un/27/>

## 6.6. Economic Commission for Europe

Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is one of five regional commissions of the United Nations set up in 1947. Its main scope of work includes environment, transport, statistics, sustainable energy, trade, wood products and forests, housing and land use, population and economic cooperation and integration.

### UNECE and Water Convention

UNECE serves as the Secretariat for multilateral environment agreements, including the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention). In 2017, UNECE in cooperation with regional countries and partners continued to implement the Water Convention's Program of Work for 2016-2018 in six program areas: support to implementation and application of the Convention; identifying, assessing, and communicating the benefits of transboundary cooperation; the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus in transboundary basins; adapting to climate change in transboundary basins; opening, promotion and partnerships; EU Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues.

In 2017, the following events were organized by UNECE as part of the Water Convention: first Meeting of the Expert Group on Third Assessment (9-10 May 2017), twenty-fifth meeting of the Bureau of the Water Convention (7 July 2017), eighth meeting of the Implementation Committee (23-24 May 2017), twelfth meeting of the Working Group on IWRM (5-6 July 2017), 9th meeting of the Task Force on Water and Climate (13 December 2017), the Task Force meeting on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystem Nexus (18 October 2017), workshop on recent progress on transboundary water cooperation: from getting cooperation started to its long-term sustainability (4 July 2017), Global Workshop on Water Allocation (16-17 October 2017), and International Workshop on Water Scarcity: Taking action in transboundary basins and reducing health impacts (11-12 December 2017).

Source: [www.unece.org/env/water/meetings](http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings).

Representatives of the Central Asian states participated in those meetings<sup>5</sup>.

### UNECE activities in Central Asia

In 2017, UNECE activities in Central Asia were focused on transboundary cooperation, water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus, national policy dialogues on IWRM, dam safety, and the Protocol on Water and Health.

**Transboundary cooperation.** The work focused on protection and use of transboundary rivers is at the centre of activities by the UNECE Water Convention team. In Central Asia, work was continued in the Chu-Talas basin (Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan), targeted on climate change adaptation issues. In 2017, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chu-Talas Water Commission was celebrated. In Panj River (Afghanistan-Tajikistan), UNECE kept supporting [bilateral cooperation](#) on hydrology and environment.

Since 2013, UNECE has carried out work on water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins. In 2014-2015, a pilot nexus study was conducted for the Syr Darya basin. In 2017, a [final report](#) was published.

The work to support regular meetings of *National Policy Dialogues (NPDs)* under the EU Water Initiative (EUWI) is ongoing in [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), [Tajikistan](#) and Turkmenistan. In 2017, high-level NPD Steering Committee meetings were organized in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Representatives of different ministries and other stakeholders discussed latest water policy issues and international donors presented their ongoing projects. As part of the 7 December 2017 Kazakh NPD Steering Committee meeting, the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), the collaborative centre of the UNECE Water Convention, was launched in Astana. In Uzbekistan, the Government is currently considering launching of the NPD process. It is planned that in April 2018, a first Central Asian regional meeting of delegates from national NPD processes will be organized in Almaty.

In 2017, UNECE continued its support to Central Asian countries for improving dam safety through [capacity building and development of relevant national legal frameworks](#) for safe operation and maintenance of the dams.

None of the Central Asian countries are Parties to the [UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on](#)

<sup>5</sup> Press-releases of ICWC <http://sic.icwc-aral.uz/releases/index.htm>

[Water and Health](#). Nevertheless, all five countries take active part in meetings and trainings that UNECE organizes regularly. In 2017, revision of earlier drafted water and health targets was ongoing in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In Kazakhstan, targets were being drafted for the first time as the country aims at becoming Party to the Protocol in 2018/2019. In Uzbekistan, events were organized by UNECE to inform in detail the ministries and agencies about requirements of the Protocol Water and Health.

In addition, UNECE in cooperation with UNESCAP manages the Special Program for the Central Asian countries (SPECA), thus facilitating economic cooperation between seven member-states of the Program (see section [Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific](#)).

Source: UNECE Secretariat  
[www.unece.org/env/water.html](http://www.unece.org/env/water.html)

## 6.7. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Established in 1947, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is one of the five regional missions of UN. ESCAP works to overcome some of the region's greatest challenges by providing results oriented projects, technical assistance and capacity building to member States in the following areas: macroeconomic policy and development; trade and investment; transport; social development; environment and sustainable development; information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction; statistics and sub-regional activities for development.

ESCAP in cooperation with UNECE manages the Special Program for the Central Asian countries (SPECA), which was launched under the Tashkent Declaration on 26 March 1998. Working mechanism of SPECA is represented by the activity of its Thematic Working Groups on Water, Energy and Environment; Sustainable Transport, Transit and Connectivity; Trade; Statistics; Knowledge-based Development; and on Gender and Economy.

On 5-6 December 2017, the Economic Forum "Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals in the SPECA region" and twelfth session of the SPECA Governing Council were organized in Dushanbe under the chairmanship of Tajikistan. The Forum was attended by high-level representatives of the SPECA member-states, as well as international, Asian, and European organizations. The main theme was the call of SPECA countries for transboundary cooperation to address challenges related to disasters, food, energy, and water to achieve SDGs both in the region as a whole and in each of SPECA member-states.

The twelfth session of the SPECA Governing Council summarized work undertaken over 2016-2017, interactions with international organizations, and approved Work Plan for 2018-2019. Kazakhstan was elected as the Chair country of SPECA for 2018.

Source: [www.unescap.org](http://www.unescap.org)

## 6.8. World Meteorological Organization

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations. It was established in 1950. It is the UN system's authoritative voice on the state and behavior of the Earth's atmosphere, its interaction with the oceans. It facilitates international cooperation to create the networks for meteorological, climate, hydrological, and geophysical observations, as well as exchange, processing, and standardization of relevant data, and helps in technology transfer, staff training, and research. The organization organizes global events aimed at joining efforts to combat

climate change, disasters and exchange information for their prevention.

### In 2017, WMO organized:

[Science Summit](#) on seamless research for weather, climate, water and environment (October, Switzerland)

Stakeholders [workshop](#) on climate services for agriculture (November, Bhutan)

International workshop on [Innovation in Hydrometry from ideas to operation](#) (December, Switzerland)

## 6.9. International Fund for Agricultural Development

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is a multilateral financial institution established in 1977. It mobilizes resources to eliminate malnutrition and improve agricultural productivity and incomes for rural poor in developing countries. It provides direct financing in the form of loans and grants, attracts additional resources to implement projects and programs. Currently it has a number of on-going projects in Central Asia.

### Uzbekistan

In Uzbekistan, IFAD loans work to enable sustainable income growth for rural people through viable small-scale agricultural production and rural enterprise systems. IFAD country strategic opportunities program for Uzbekistan aims to improve rural people's capacity and ability to benefit from high value agricultural systems; increase the productive assets and competitiveness of smaller-scale productive entities in rural areas to enhance their participation in markets; and enhance the ability of small-scale producers to make environmentally sustainable use of natural resources and build their proficiency in adapting to climatic variations.

#### Projects in Uzbekistan:

[Agriculture Diversification and Modernization Project](#);

[Horticultural Support Project](#);

[Dairy Value Chains Development Program](#).

### Tajikistan

In Tajikistan, IFAD loans work to improve the livelihoods of poor rural people by strengthening their organizations and enabling them to access productive technologies and resources. Key activities include: natural resource management; implementing land reforms; and strengthening local institutions and grass-roots organizations.

#### Projects in Tajikistan:

Livestock and Pasture Development Project.  
[Phase I](#) / [Phase II](#);

[Community-Based Agricultural Support Project](#)

### Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan, IFAD loans help to reduce poverty and enhance economic growth by helping rural poor earn more and improve their living standards. Activities target vulnerable households, especially women headed ones, through increased production and advanced value chain in livestock production. Key activities include: improving livestock productivity and enhancing the climate resilience of pastoral communities, increasing the returns of livestock farmers; and improving the access and integration of smallholder livestock farmers with remunerative markets for their products.

#### Projects in Kyrgyzstan:

Livestock and Market Development [Program I](#) and [Program II](#);

[Access to Markets](#).

Source: [www.ifad.org](http://www.ifad.org)

## 6.10. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) coordinates international cooperation on education, science, culture, and communications relying on the following priorities: attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning; mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development; addressing emerging social and ethical challenges; fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace; and building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication. Established in 1945, it includes 193 member-states.

In 2017, UNESCO continued implementing the following projects in Central Asia, including in the area of nature and water resources:

The [project](#) "Building the resilience of communities affected by the Aral Sea disaster through the Multi-partner Human Security Fund for the Aral Sea" (Uzbekistan) aims at ensuring livelihood generation, social cohesion and efficient management of natural resources in the sustainable development of tourism, use and management of cultural and natural resources;

The [project](#) "Capacity building for sustain-able water management in Uzbekistan" in the framework of the [component 2](#) "Technical capacity building" implemented within the framework of the EU Program "Sustainable Water Resources Management in Rural Areas in the Republic of Uzbekistan". Assessment results were presented during the [seminar](#) "Baseline assessment of existing and past training modules and tools" (June 2017);

The [project](#) "Sustaining Livelihoods Affected by the Aral Sea Disaster" aims to improve economic, food, health and environmental security for the population of Karakalpakstan affected by the Aral Sea environmental disaster (Uzbekistan);

The [project](#) "Improving the welfare and quality of life in the Kyzylorda region through innovative approaches to delivering economic, social and environmental services to the local population, including those most vulnerable" (Kazakhstan);

The [project](#) "Expanding the opportunities of the Mangystau region in achieving sustainable development and socio-economic modernization (Kazakhstan).

## 6.11. Food and Agriculture Organization

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was established in 1945. It carries out analyses and gives recommendations on reforms related to agriculture, land use rights, and natural resource use.

On August 22-24, the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan in cooperation with FAO organized an International Conference on **Development of Organic Agriculture in Central Asia**. The Conference aimed at exchanging experiences and discussing local practices and modern technologies for further cooperation among Central Asian countries.

In October, several Central Asian states organized events dedicated to the **World Food Day**. Thus, Expo 2017 Astana included numerous roundtable discussions and other events organized by FAO. In addition, a festival, fair, and other events were held to raise public awareness.

The inception workshop dedicated to the launch of the project entitled Central Asian Desert Initiative - **Conservation and adaptive use of cold winter deserts in Central Asia (CADI)** was held in Tashkent in November 2017. CADI is an initiative taken by Michael Succow Foundation for the Protection of Nature (MSF), University of Greifswald, FAO and national partner institutions that aims for long term commitment by governments for conservation and sustainable use of Central Asian cold winter deserts. It seeks to generate knowledge, transfer practical knowledge into sustainable land management practices, foster the protection of the ecosystem and improve nature conservation, and feed lessons learned into national, regional and international dialogue. The 3-year initiative (2017-2020) will cover activities in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Source: <http://www.fao.org>

## 6.12. United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

The United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) was established by the UN Security Council on 16 May 2007 with the headquarters in Ashgabat. UNRCCA promotes dialogues between the Central Asia states on transboundary water resource management and supports initiatives aimed at solving environmental and other problems influencing the situation in the Aral Sea basin. It supports the governments in capacity building for water diplomacy and revising legal mechanisms for rational use of transboundary water resources in compliance with the international law and agreements in force. It cooperates with the Central Asian states to raise awareness on consequences of glacial melting and climate change.

In 2017, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova Ms. Natalya Gherman was appointed a new Head of UNRCCA. She succeeded Mr. Petko Draganov from Bulgaria.

### 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Program of Action 2018-2020

In 2017, UNRCCA marked its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. On that occasion on November 2017, UNGA adopted a [resolution](#) initiated by Turkmenistan, highlighting the central role of the Centre in “encouraging political dialogue directed towards collective actions to address common challenges and development of economic and social cooperation in the region of Central Asia.”

On 11 December 2017, UNRCCA conducted a Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Central Asia and Afghanistan, on the occasion of the Centre's 10th anniversary. During the meeting, participants expressed their support to the Centre's fourth Program of Action 2018-2020.

The [Program of Action for 2018-2020](#) focuses on five key priority areas which correspond to the Centre's mandate: (1) promoting prevention among the governments of Central Asia; (2) monitoring and early warning; (3) building partnerships for prevention; (4) strengthening the UN's preventive activities in the region; and (5) encouraging cooperation and interaction between Central Asia and Afghanistan. Issues of water and energy security are treated as the key ones when implementing the Program.

### Center's activities on water-related issues

In accordance with its mandate, UNRCCA provides all-round support to the countries in strengthening regional water dialogue by providing political platform and necessary expertise. The task of the Center is to support the efforts of all five Central Asian countries without exception in finding mutually acceptable solutions in the sphere of water and energy.

As a result of numerous rounds of consultations and negotiations conducted at the platform of UNRCCA in 2012-2014, the basic legal principles of equitable and mutually beneficial use of water resources in Central Asia were developed. Then, in March 2017, with the assistance of independent international experts, and with the participation of relevant UN agencies, UNRCCA developed and proposed to the Central Asian countries two draft agreements on the Amu Darya and Syr Darya river basins as a basis for possible negotiations. These drafts incorporated best international practices on transboundary water cooperation as well as the specifics of Central Asia region.

### Seminars on International water law and cooperation

In 2017, the following seminars were organized as part of the program: “Ensuring Equitable Management of Transboundary Watercourses in Central Asia through International Diplomacy, Law and Institutions: Theory and Practical Solutions”:

“[International water law: main legal principles and substantive norms](#)”, 5-6 April 2017, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan;

“[Institutional Mechanisms of Transboundary Water Cooperation](#)”, 17-18 July 2017, Almaty, Kazakhstan;

“[International water conflicts: principles and means of dispute resolution](#)”, 18-19 October 2017, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

### International Conference on Security and Development in Samarkand

UNRCCA hosted as a [co-organizer](#) an International conference “Central Asia: Shared Past and a Common Future, Cooperation for Sustainable Development and Mutual Prosperity”, which took place in the city of

Samarkand on 10-11 November 2017. UNRCCA hosted the Session dedicated to cooperation of Central Asian states on water use and ecology, which was moderated by the SRSG Natalia Gherman. The debate highlighted the need to

unite efforts in resolving disagreements on water-energy issues in Central Asia and called all interested parties to enhanced cooperation.

Source: <https://unrcca.unmissions.org>

## 6.13. International Law Commission

The International Law Committee (ILC) is a subsidiary body of UNGA, consisting of thirty-four members of recognized competence in international law, who sit in their individual capacity and not as representatives of their Governments. The task of ILC is encouraging the progressive development of international law and its codification. It was established in 1947. The Commission has no representatives of the Central Asian states in its composition.

In 2017, ILC focused its activities on: immunity of State officials from foreign criminal

jurisdiction; provisional application of treaties; protection of the environment in relation to armed conflicts; protection of the atmosphere; crimes against humanity; and peremptory norms of general international law (*jus cogens*). At its 69<sup>th</sup> session, The Commission decided to include in its long-term program of work the topics: a) general principles of law; and b) evidence before international courts and tribunals.

Source: Report on the work of ILC at its 69<sup>th</sup> session, 2017 ([A/72/10](#))

## 6.14. International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. It was established in 1945. It delivers judicial and advisory functions. No judges from Central Asia sit in the International Court. Cases submitted to the Court involve a wide variety of subject matters: territorial and maritime disputes; consular rights; human rights; environmental damage and conservation of living resources; international responsibility and compensation for harm; the immunities of States, their representatives and assets; interpretation and application of international treaties and conventions. In 2017, two cases directly related to water were examined by the Court.

### **Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros Project (Hungary/Slovakia)**

In its Judgment of 25 September 1997, the Court called upon both States to negotiate in good faith in order to ensure achievement of the objectives of the 1977 Treaty, which it declared was still in force, while taking account of the factual situation that had developed since 1989. On 3 September 1998, Slovakia filed in the Registry of the Court a request for an additional judgment in the case because of the unwillingness of Hungary to implement the Judgment delivered by the Court. Hungary filed a written statement of its position on the request for an additional judgment made by Slovakia

within the time limit of 7 December 1998. The parties subsequently resumed negotiations and regularly informed the Court of the progress made.

By a letter from the Agent of Slovakia dated 30 June 2017, the Slovak Government requested that the Court “place on record [its] discontinuance of the proceedings [instituted by means of the Request for an additional judgment in the case]”. In a letter dated 12 July 2017, the Agent of Hungary stated that his Government “[did] not oppose the discontinuance of the proceedings instituted by means of the Request of Slovakia of 3 September 1998 for an additional judgment”. By a letter to both Agents dated 18 July 2017, the Court communicated its decision to place on record the discontinuance of the procedure begun by means of Slovakia's Request for an additional judgment.

### **Dispute over the Status and Use of the Waters of the Silala (Chile v. Bolivia)**

On 6 June 2016, the Republic of Chile filed an Application instituting proceedings against the Plurinational State of Bolivia with regard to a dispute concerning the status and use of the waters of the Silala. Chile contends that “due to Bolivia's insistence on denying that the Silala River is an international watercourse and



Bolivia's contention that it has rights to the 100% use of its waters" and requests the Court to adjudge and declare that:

"(a) the Silala River system, together with the subterranean portions of its system, is an international watercourse, the use of which is governed by customary international law;

(b) Chile is entitled to the equitable and reasonable use of the waters of the Silala River system in accordance with customary international law;

(c) Under the standard of equitable and reasonable utilization, Chile is entitled to its current use of the waters of the Silala River;

(d) Bolivia has an obligation to take all appropriate measures to prevent and control pollution and other forms of harm to Chile resulting from its activities in the vicinity of the Silala River;

(e) Bolivia has an obligation to cooperate and to provide Chile with timely notification of planned measures which may have an adverse effect on shared water resources, to exchange data and information and to conduct where appropriate an environmental impact assessment, in order to enable Chile to evaluate the possible effects of such planned measures, obligations that Bolivia has breached."

By an Order of 1 July 2016, the Court fixed 3 July 2017 and 3 July 2018 as the respective time limits for the filing of a Memorial by Chile and a Counter-Memorial by Bolivia. The Memorial of Chile was filed within the time limit thus fixed.

*Source:* ICJ report at the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of UNGA, 2017 ([A/72/4](#))



