



Section 6

United Nations and
its Specialized Agencies



United Nation's 75th Anniversary



75th Session United Nations General Assembly

On 24 October, UN celebrates its 75th anniversary. It was created at the end of World War II in an attempt to maintain international peace and security and to achieve cooperation among nations. Four months after the San Francisco Conference ended, the United Nations officially began, on 24 October 1945, when it came into existence after its Charter had been ratified. UN is commemorating its 75th anniversary amidst huge upheaval affecting the whole world, which is aggravated by an unprecedented global health crisis fraught with serious economic and social consequences. Are we able to overcome this upheaval? Are we ready to work together? Or lack of faith in each other and inability to get together will not let us do this? 2020 should be the year of dialogue to discuss shared priorities and ways to build a better future for all.

In January 2020, the United Nations launched the [global consultation](#) to mark its 75th anniversary. Over one million respondents from all UN Member States and Observer States have thus far taken part in the consultations, including through representative polling of 50,000 people in 50 countries. Through surveys and

dialogues, it asked people about their hopes and fears for the future – representing the UN's most ambitious effort to date to understand expectations of international cooperation and of the UN in particular. The results are presented in the report **“UN75: The Future We Want, The UN We Need”**⁶⁰.

On 21 September, Member-States held a [high-level event](#) to mark the UN's 75th anniversary, and to adopt a forward-looking political declaration that will be negotiated through an intergovernmental process on: “The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism”.

6.1. General Assembly

The General Assembly (GA) 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 UNGA meets on September each year.

The theme of the 75th Session is “The Future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism – confronting COVID-19 through effective multilateral action”. Video recordings of the country leaders' speeches were broadcasted live.

Statements from Central Asian countries at the general debate of the UNGA 75th Session

Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

H.E. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, **called for the prevention of trade protectionism and political nationalism in times of pandemic, and for avoidance of politicization of vaccine development.** He suggested that the idea of a network of Regional Centers for Disease Control and Biosafety under the UN auspices should be closely examined. Kazakhstan stands ready to host such a regional center. **“The whole world is on the verge of dramatic upheavals that may lead to irreversible consequences. Lack of mutual confidence, misunderstanding of international competition, trade wars and sanctions really undermine the prospects and hopes for a better world...”** underlined the President. In the post-Cold War world, the global society missed

the chance to build a truly just, people-centered international system.

Sustainable Development Goals. The next 10 years are critical for implementing 2030 Agenda. “The very basic target, zero hunger is to be provided unconditionally [...]. We should renew our commitment to leave no one behind, especially women, youth, children, elders, persons with disabilities, disproportionately affected by the crisis. The largest disruption of education systems in history should be stopped from becoming a generational catastrophe. Civic engagement and private sector involvement are also critical for solving current pressing problems. During past months we have witnessed strong solidarity all over

⁶⁰ Available on https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un75report_september_final_english.pdf

the world through volunteering. To acknowledge the role of volunteers, I propose the United Nations to proclaim an International Year of Mobilizing Volunteers for Development. In Kazakhstan I announced the current year as a Year of Volunteers”.

Erosion of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime. “Kazakhstan has been the role model of a responsible state by willingly abandoning its nuclear arsenal and shutting down world’s biggest nuclear test site. However, continuous erosion of the non-proliferation regime leaves us in a dangerous position... That is why we urge all P5 countries to ratify the respective Protocols to the Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaties, including Semipalatinsk Treaty”.

Climate Change. “Another existential crisis for our civilization is the climate change. It is not only a dangerous problem in itself, but is also a “threat multiplier”. The climate emergency is a race we are losing. But the post-COVID recovery gives us unique opportunity to put environmental protection at the forefront of international agenda. We must unite around the UN’s six climate positive actions. Kazakhstan is very vulnerable to the various effects of the climate change. The tragedies of Aral Sea and Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site, the rapid melting of glaciers, and desertification threaten not only Kazakhstan and Central Asian region, but also the entire world. Although Kazakhstan is highly dependent on fossil fuels and has a long way to go to meet Paris 2030 targets, our commitment to develop a decarbonized economy has no alternative. We will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by 2030 through economic overhaul and industrial modernization. And yet, in next five years we will plant more than two billion trees [...]”.

Regional Cooperation. [...] “Regional cooperation has always been our main focus and commitment. Central Asia is undergoing rapid transformation



The emphasis must be shifted on the root causes, preventive measures, and increasing the efficiency of our limited resources

through significant expansion of regional cooperation in various fields. No doubt that a prosperous, strong and united Central Asia is beneficial both for regional and global stakeholders. As to regional stability, the rational use of transboundary water resources is instrumental. We thus propose the establishment of a Regional Water and Energy Consortium. To coordinate development agenda in the region we intend to institutionalize a UN-led regional SDGs Center in Almaty [...]”.

Text Resume:

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/09/1073322>

Full text:

https://estatemnts.unmeetings.org/estatemnts/10.0010/20200923/bVdkQECcmuDf/Qpd6Tkqap8Dh_en.pdf

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnC_Dy7S69o

Address by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic

President of Kyrgyzstan H.E. S. Jeenbekov spoke on climate change, melting glaciers, shrinking water resources, and the need to develop green economy, raised problems related to the coronavirus pandemic, and underlined the importance of regional cooperation.

Coronavirus Pandemic and External Debt. [...] “The pandemic impedes the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and has greatly exacerbated the external debt crisis. I would like to express my gratitude to the G20 and international financing institutions for the decision to suspend debt payments. We also ask you to support our proposal for a deep restructuring of external debt in exchange for sustainable development projects. We count on the active support of our initiative [...]”.

Developing Clean Energy and Combating Climate Change. [...] “The Kyrgyz Republic is committed to attaining the 7th⁶¹ and 13th⁶² Sustainable Development Goals. Last November, we ratified the Paris Climate Change Agreement. The Kyrgyz Republic sees the development of green economy as an important step in implementing these commitments. We are endeavoring to become a country with environmentally clean production and clean energy. Kyrgyzstan intends to gradually lower the use of traditional energy sources. We consider it important for us to use our hydroenergy potential through the building of hydroelectric plants and participation in the CASA-1000 international project. This will help to save water resources for the irrigation needs of our neighbors and for sustainable development of the entire region. The Kyrgyz Republic needs in support of the interna-

⁶¹ Cheap and clean energy

⁶² Fighting with climate change



We are actively engaged in a regional high-level dialogue platform to address existing problems

tional community to adapt to the negative consequences of climate change”.

Water Resources, Ecosystem Development and Biodiversity Conservation. “Climate change reduces glaciers and water resources in the Kyrgyz Republic. This could lead to a shortage of freshwater, could pose a threat to public health, land degradation and economic risks. In this context, we advocate for the implementation of those projects which are aimed at studying the issue of glacier melting and protection. We also think it very important to preserve the mountainous ecosystems in those areas where glaciers

form. To this end, the Kyrgyz Republic has launched a number of global initiatives. We have conducted two Global Forums on protecting snow leopard and its mountainous habitat. We passed a resolution on the role of the international community to prevent the threat of radiation in Central Asia. In August last year, the Group of Friends of Mountainous Countries was created. Today it has 23 countries in its ranks. It is also important to safeguard biodiversity. Therefore, Kyrgyzstan at this present UN Session put forward a new draft resolution “Nature Knows No Borders: Cross-border Cooperation is a Key Factor in the Preservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity”. We hope that there will be support to our initiative”.

Regional Cooperation. “The Kyrgyz Republic attaches special importance to regional cooperation in Central Asia. Cooperation amongst our countries is developing and developing dynamically. We actively participate in the regional dialogue platforms at the highest level in order to resolve the existing issues. One of the main goals here is to removing barriers to economic cooperation in order to ensure that we enhance the well-being of our peoples. Of vital importance for us is developing a system of transport and communication corridors, logistical hubs and terminals. We need to restore the main axes that existed in the ancient Great Silk Road. The building and the launching of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railroad will be a meaningful contribution into linking Asia and Europe [...]”.

Video: <https://www.unmultimedia.org/avlibrary/asset/2561/2561438/>

Address by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan



...The countries of the region are concerned with the shifts in the hydrological cycle

In his speech, the President of Tajikistan H.E. E. Rahmon outlined the main challenges the country faces, such as terrorism and drug trafficking, climate change, and the economic consequences of the pandemic.

Pandemic and Economy. The COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on the Republic of Tajikistan.

The government, in close cooperation with WHO and other partners, has launched a major effort to prevent the spread of the infectious disease and to help those who are infected. The damage to the economy in 2020 alone has been estimated at US \$2 billion.

Security. “Terrorist and extremist groups pose tremendous challenge to national security, seriously jeopardizing stability in different regions of the country.” It is extremely important for Tajikistan to cooperate with international organizations, including UN, CIS, SCO, and CSTO, in the field of counterterrorism. Tajikistan is ready to share its experience in combating terrorism, drug trafficking and peaceful conflict resolution. In this context, the country nominated its candidacy for the first time for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for 2028-2029.

Tajikistan welcomes UN's Peacekeeping Operations. Tajik police forces are involved in the UN peacekeeping operations in Darfur, South Sudan and the city of Abyei of Sudan.

Peace Process in Afghanistan. Tajikistan shares almost 1,400 km of border with Afghanistan. The Afghan case has no military solution and Tajikistan indeed welcomes the peace-building negotiation processes and supports any approach aimed at addressing political crisis in this country.

Sustainable Development Goals. [...] “We have ten years left until the end of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. The international community has made a significant progress in this direction over the past five years. However, the economic and financial indicators of the countries and severe negative consequences of COVID-19 call into question the timely implementation of SDGs, particularly in developing countries. The repercussion of the COVID-19 will also negatively affect our country, which is one of the proactive members of the global community in implementing the 2030 Agenda [...]”. Tajikistan was one of the first countries to adopt its 2030 National Development Strategy and present its National Voluntary Report.

Climate Change. “Over the past sixty years, the average annual temperature in Tajikistan has increased by one degree. It has resulted in increased number of days with heavy precipitation and intensity of natural hydro-meteorological phenomena, which have year after year been affecting all countries throughout the world. Tajikistan, with 93% of its territory covered by mountains, bears losses equal to hundreds of millions of dollars annually as a result of water-related disasters. Such natural disasters often cause casualties. The areas of glaciers located in our country which are essential for all Central Asia have noticeably decreased over the recent decades. One thousand out of thirteen thousand glaciers located in Tajik mountains have melted away so far. This happens although when up to sixty percent of Central Asia’s water resources are formed in the territory of Tajikistan. This year, due to low precipitation in winter, we have seen a significant decline in water stock in the region’s rivers, which in turn led to low-water during the irrigation season and caused a severe drought. This situation causes a negative impact on quantity and quality of safe drinking water, as well as on all water using sectors, particularly agriculture and energy. **In this context, the countries in the region are concerned with the shifts in the hydrological cycle.** Thus, we would like to call on the United Nations and other international and regional organizations to support Tajikistan in organizing an expedition to study glaciers in Central Asia... In this context, I would like to once again put forward the following ways to address climate change, which I had previously introduced in other international forums: (1) encourage a widespread use of renewable energy, which would facilitate friendly environment for green economy development; (2) comprehensive support by donor countries and international and regional financing institutions in implementing national adaptation strategies and programs; (3) reinforce regular monitoring of water sources, especially glaciers; (4) strengthen international cooperation on protection of water resources and implementation of Tajikistan’s proposal to establish the **International Glacier Preservation Fund**; (5) render all-round financial and technical assistance, by developed countries and international organizations, to developing and least developed countries to monitor and preserve glaciers and other sources of water. We hope that our international part-

ners will support further steps Tajikistan undertakes forward in these areas”.

Water Resources. “UN acknowledged Tajikistan as an initiator and champion country in advancing water agenda. Our country has launched the majority of the United Nations’ initiatives and resolutions on water, including “The International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028”. Owing to support of the UN Member-States, we have been able to revive and strengthen the global water agenda over the past decades. Tajikistan’s Resolution entitled “Comprehensive Mid-Term Review of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028 which was adopted in 2018 has further enriched the global water agenda. The Resolution, along with other important goals and objectives, calls for convening the United Nations Conference on a Comprehensive Mid-Term Review of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028 in New York in March 2023.

This event is valued as an important initiative in terms of support towards an implementation of the Decade and conduct of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. It is worth recalling that the last UN Conference on Water was held yet in 1977 in Mar de Plata, Argentina. It means that the United Nations will host the Water Conference after 46 years. We can confidently claim that the United Nations member states, UN specialized agencies and other organizations have been demonstrating a growing interest and utmost attention to the Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” while some nations have already expressed their willingness to host regional preparatory meetings.

Regretfully, spread of COVID-19 affected their plans and most of the scheduled events have been postponed. I hope that after the victory over the coronavirus pandemic, the stakeholder countries, along with Tajikistan, will be able to take full advantage of the opportunities and convene events they have scheduled. In conclusion, I would like to draw the attention of all United Nations member states to the draft Resolution proposed by Tajikistan on the UN Conference for a Comprehensive Mid-Term Review of the Implementation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development, 2018 – 2028”. It is decided to review this Resolution at the UN General Assembly Session. I would like to encourage all distinguished delegates to support our initiative, like they have been so generous in supporting our previous Resolutions”.

Full text: <https://www.mfa.tj/en/main/view/6418/speech-of-the-president-of-the-republic-of-tajikistan-he-mr-emomali-rahmon-at-the-general-debate-of-the-75th-session-of-the-united-nations-general-assembly>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y31YtpaD2E>

Address by the President of Turkmenistan



...we urge the world community to pay closer attention to the problems of the Aral Sea and the Aral region

The President of Turkmenistan H.E. G. Berdimuhamedov proposed adopting a UNGA resolution to ensure stable transportation during emergencies like the current pandemic; called for increased efforts to combat COVID-19, as well as to study the coronavirus genome under the WHO auspices; and drew attention to the problems of the Aral Sea region.

Problem of the Aral Sea Region. [...] "Coronavirus pandemic has to varying degree affected many countries all over the world. However, it is especially dangerous to ecologically disadvantaged regions. Unfortunately, there are many such areas when one looks at a map and it is impossible to mention all of them during this statement. Therefore, I wish to touch upon the issue, which is of vital relevance to Central Asian states and nations. It is the Aral Sea disaster. Amidst the escalating pandemic, the situation there is worsening and threatens the lives and health of people and the risk of epidemic outbreak has considerably risen. Under these circumstances, we urge the world community to pay very close attention to the problems of the Aral Sea and the Aral Sea region. Obviously, the work is underway to address these issues. This work is substantive both through the United Nations and by other international organizations that have been providing assistance to IFAS. We thank all of these organizations and we highly appreciate their efforts. However, I wish to be frank today that it is not enough to save the Aral.

There is a need for a focused approach, concrete practical assistance and meaningful support to the people living there. Therefore, we strongly believe that the subject of Aral Sea needs systematic and comprehensive approach as well as relevant legal documents; and this issue should be set aside as a separate direction of operations of the United Nations. In this regard, Turkmenistan has put forward an initiative to create **a Special Program for the Aral Sea Basin**. We also wish to emphasize the importance of what was adopted at our initiative in April 2018 and May 2019. I refer to General Assembly Resolutions adopted on cooperation between the United Nations and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. Today these resolutions serve as a platform to consolidate joint efforts on Aral Sea issues. For the establishment of legal frameworks to address the Aral Sea issue in May 2021 during the session of UNESCAP Turkmenistan will present an initial draft of the concept and structure of the future special program on the Aral Sea. We call upon all states and relevant international organizations to consider and discuss these documents. [...]"

Peace process in Afghanistan. "[...] Our country as Afghanistan's neutral and immediate neighboring state is ready to provide necessary political and organizational conditions in our territory to establish peaceful dialogue between the Government of Afghanistan and all parties interested in political settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. We think that the key condition for political stabilization, social and economic recovery of Afghanistan, its successful integration to global economy is to implement large infrastructure projects with Afghanistan's involvement primarily in vital sectors such as energy, transport and communication. As is known, our country consistently working in this direction has initiated the construction of a gas pipeline along Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India route, as well as railroads and fiber-optic communication lines with access to the territory of Afghanistan, which have already entered the stage of practical implementation. We call on the international community, business structures, and financial institutions to become more actively involved in this work. [...]"

Full text:

https://estatemnts.unmeetings.org/estatemnts/10.0010/20200922/T3qdozGNpyYp/alvb4N7fKcJ_en.pdf

Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1UHOREJp3U>

Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

The President of Uzbekistan H.E. Sh. Mirziyoyev proposed to declare the Aral Sea region an area of ecological innovation and technologies, recalled the rapid desiccation of the Aral Sea and the devastating effects of climate change, talked about reforms in his country and called for joint efforts to combat COVID-19.

Pandemic. The Head of State proposed to develop under the UN auspices an International Code of Vo-

luntary Commitments of States during pandemics. This document should reflect each state's commitments to its citizens and international partners. "Such a global catastrophe has not been observed on our planet in the last hundred years. This calamity has vividly revealed humanity's vulnerability. The current threatening and complex situation has proved that all states and peoples of the world are interconnected and that regular dialogue, trust and close cooperation among us are extremely important".

Uzbekistan's Modernization. Mr. Sh. Mirziyoyev spoke on "political, social and economic modernization of Uzbekistan". "Today, the process of democratic transformations in our country has become irreversible". The President pointed to the increasing role of women in society, noting that their number in the new parliament has doubled, spoke about projects in support of young people and called for the support of Uzbekistan's initiative to develop a UN Convention on the Rights of Youth.

Regional Cooperation. "The fundamental changes are taking place now in the region of Central Asia. [...] Our common achievement is consultative summits of the Central Asian Heads of State. [...]. Over the past four years, Uzbekistan's bilateral trade with neighboring states has grown almost five-fold". It was proposed to establish a Regional Centre for the Development of Transport and Communications under the auspices of the United Nations and to hold an International conference on the ten-year results and forthcoming prospects of the Joint Plan of the United Nations Global Anti-Terrorism Strategy, as well as organize the International Forum "Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations" in the ancient city of Khiva.

Peace Process in Afghanistan. "In order to broadly involve Afghanistan in the process of economic integration in the region, we have started the implementation of major infrastructure projects such as "Surkhan – Pul-i Khumri" power line and construction of a railway from Mazar-i-Sharif to the sea ports of the Indian Ocean. We believe that the issues of ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan must remain a constant focus of the United Nations". To this end, it was proposed **to establish a permanent UN commission** on economic and social development of Afghanistan.

The Aral Sea region – an area of ecological innovation and technologies. [...] "Another acute problem of our time is related to global climate change. Today, every country feels the negative effects of this process. Unfortunately, such negative developments



also pose a great threat to the sustainable development of Central Asia. I would like to once again draw your attention to the devastating effects of the drying up of the Aral Sea. The Aral Sea region became the center of an environmental tragedy. To mitigate the current situation, we are carrying out an enormous work to create two million hectares of new plantations and forests, to form a layer of soil. On our country's initiative, the United Nations Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region was established. We hope that this Fund will serve as a base platform for the international community to provide practical assistance to the population living in a stressed ecological zone. We propose to adopt a special resolution of the UN General Assembly declaring the Aral Sea region an area of ecological innovation and technologies. It would be expedient to mark the date of adoption of this important document as the International Day for the Protection and Restoration of Ecosystems. [...]"

Full text: <https://president.uz/en/lists/view/3851>

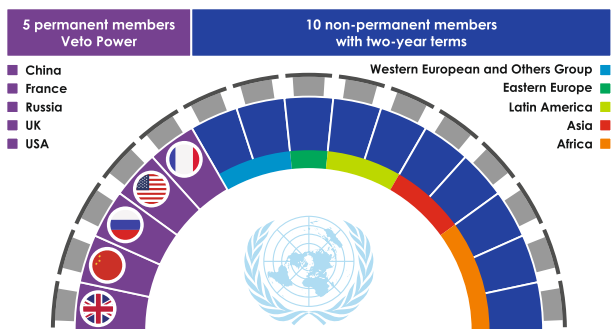
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ml08KvY8x1I>

Selected Resolutions on Water, Environment and Development Adopted by the UNGA 75th Session

Declaration on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations (A/RES/75/1); Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control (A/RES/75/53); International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (A/RES/75/124); United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028 (A/RES/75/212); Promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, building

on Agenda 21 (A/RES/75/213); Disaster risk reduction (A/RES/75/216); Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (A/RES/75/217); Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (A/RES/75/218); Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its contribution to sustainable development (A/RES/75/219); Harmony with nature (A/RES/75/220); Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (A/RES/75/221); Eradicating rural poverty to implement the 2030 Agenda (A/RES/75/232).

6.2. Security Council



The Security Council (Security Council) 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 (Great Britain, China, Russia, USA, France) and 10 non-permanent, elected by UNGA for two-year terms for five countries each year.

Arria Formula Meeting on Climate and Security Risks: the Latest Data

On 22 April, an Arria formula meeting on the theme of “Climate and Security Risks: the Latest Data. What Can the United Nations Do to Prevent Climate-Related Conflicts and How Can We Climate-Proof United Nations In-Country Activities?” was virtually held. The objectives of the Arria formula meeting were to: provide a better understanding of the challenges, opportunities and interlinkages between instability, conflict and climate risks; propose the best tools and policies for a comprehensive approach to climate-related conflict prevention; and empower the whole United Nations system to encourage its institutions to integrate climate fragility risks into their policies and operations.

Even with decisive action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the pace and intensity of climate change is going to increase in the future. This will have

direct and indirect negative consequences in many fields, including political stability, peace and security. Addressing the security impacts of the effects of climate change should also be part of the conflict prevention agenda. The countries welcomed the creation of the climate security mechanism, consisting of six staff from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, UNDP and UNEP. Member-States also pointed out that the different agencies of the United Nations system could be better coordinated, notably by the appointment of a special envoy on climate and security. These substantial discussions indicate to converging views among a large majority of those participating and demonstrate the progress the Security Council is making on the issue, while some delegations still saw the need for further discussion.

Source: <https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/S/2020/392>

Climate and security: ministerial-level open debate

On 24 July, Security Council members held a ministerial-level open debate on “Climate and Security” in an open videoconference (VTC) format. The debate was co-sponsored by ten Council members: Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, the UK, and Vietnam. The debate was focused on how climate change effects can exacerbate, prolong and contribute to conflict and instability around the world. Miroslav Jenča, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the America, highlighted the diverse impact of climate-related security risks across different regions and stressed the importance of climate-sensitive conflict prevention and peacebuilding interventions. Colonel Mahamadou Magagi, director of the Centre National d’Études Stratégiques et de Sécurité of Niger, described how climate change contributed to food insecurity and climate-induced migration in the Sahel. Coral Pasisi, director of the Sustainable Pacific Consultancy, Niue, explained the impact of climate change on exclusive economic zones, highlighting risks to the national identity and even existence of many Pacific Small Island Developing States.

Debate and Recommendations. Most delegations underscored the direct and indirect risks to peace and stability emanating from climate change im-

pacts, a message underlined by speakers from the most vulnerable Member-States, and focused on concrete next steps to take. A few Member-States emphasized that they continue to see climate change effects primarily as a question of sustainable development, and that a general focus on the link between climate change and security threatened to divert resources and attention from the Council’s core mandate, while infringing on the mandates of other UN entities. Many speakers made proposals for enabling a more comprehensive response by the Security Council and the UN system to manage climate-related security risks more systematically. They emphasized in particular that the Security Council needs more thorough and authoritative information on climate-related security risks as a decision-making basis. For this purpose, many delegations requested context-specific reporting on climate-related security risks in relevant situations on the Council’s agenda as well as regular, comprehensive and enhanced reporting on climate-related security risks by the Secretary-General to the Security Council.

Moreover, speakers called for further strengthening of UN in-country resources, including in UN peace operations to enable a better response to requests for information and assessment of climate-related security risks. The important work of the UN

Climate Security Mechanism was stressed in this respect. Finally, many speakers highlighted the important role data and forecasting could play in assessing risks early on. In this regard, Germany drew attention to the Global Risk and Foresight Assessment launched during the Berlin Climate and Security Conference 2020, which will provide a basis for evidence-based action on climate and security.

Many delegations also called on the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative on Climate and Security, to ensure relevant information reaches the attention of decision-makers across the UN system and to coordinate the UN response to these challenges. Moreover, they emphasized the need for better training and expertise on climate change within UN missions and mediation teams so that climate-related security risks would be systematically mainstreamed into prevention, peacebuilding, peace-keeping, mediation, and diplomatic efforts. In the context of the debate, the ten co-conveners and three incoming Council members – Ireland, Kenya and Norway –

announced the convening of an Informal Group of Experts of the Security Council to support it in achieving a more comprehensive and systematic approach.

Conclusion: Climate-Related Security Risks in the UN Security Council. The Security Council members and UN Member-States expect the Security Council to address the security dimension of climate change effects more comprehensively and systematically, in order to safeguard international peace and security in a changing climate. The widespread support for the climate security agenda – encapsulated in an ambitious joint statement by the 51 member-states of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security delivered by Nauru – and the formation of the Informal Expert Group testify to the determination of a vast majority of Council and UN Member States to enhance the Council's response to climate-related security risks.

Sources: [securitycouncilreport.org](https://www.un.org/securitycouncilreport.org), [climate-diplomacy.org](https://www.climate-diplomacy.org)

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).

Each year, the Secretary-General reports on the work of the Organization, including priority areas of the UN's activity and future plans. **2020 Report** highlights the work in the following areas: promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development; maintenance of international peace and security; development of Africa; promotion and protection of human rights; effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts; promotion of justice and international law; disarmament; drug control, crime prevention and combating terrorism. The Report presents critical results achieved to date and key transformations of the United to Reform Program, as well as key priorities for the Secretary General's work for 2019-2020: (1) **2030 Agenda and the decade of action** (supported Governments and key stakeholders at all levels to kick-start the decade of action to accelerate implementation of SDGs by 2030); (2) **climate action** (ambitious action to combat climate change and its impacts, including through the 2019 Climate Action Summit initiatives, is vital to achieving the 2030 Agenda and the



”We must commit to building a more inclusive and sustainable world“.

Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General

goals of the Paris Agreement, and to recovering better, together, from the COVID-19 pandemic); (3) **gender equality** (placed the spotlight on dismantling gender inequality and ensuring that equal participation and women's leadership are at the heart of UN efforts to respond to global challenges).

Source: <https://www.un.org/annualreport/2020/>

6.4. United Nations Development Program



The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the UN's global development network that promotes positive change and gives countries access to the knowledge, experience and resources that help improve people's lives.

It operates in 177 countries and territories.

UNDP Activity in the Central Asian States in 2020

UNDP in Kazakhstan

UNDP in Kazakhstan focuses its activities on SDGs implementation, water and land management, environmental protection, climate change, energy and other relevant development issues. In 2020, UNDP project portfolio in Kazakhstan included 36 projects.

SDGs. The following projects were initiated: "Support of the Government with SDG Financing Strategy" (2020-2021) in aligning policy and financing with SDGs towards adopting the Integrated National Financing Framework; (2) "SDG Finance Accelerator Joint Proposal Development" (2020-2021) aimed at identifying, testing, and scaling up financial mechanisms to support and leverage investment in projects that advance the SDGs in Kazakhstan. Since 2018, the "Partnering for Building a National SDG Platform" project is being implemented (2018-2019) to support the Government to nationalize, implement and monitor SDGs. **The 2020 results:** the Committee on Statistics was supported in organizing a series of workshops to finalize a nationalized set of SDG indicators; targets and indicators will be mainstreamed in national plans by the result of the SDG Coordination council meeting to be held in 2021; capacity of Com Stat was enhanced in providing trainings on methodologies to calculate SDG indicators with a focus on environmental and gender-related indicators; MNE is finalized with involvement of the national think tank JSC Economic Research Institute. The report will be validated by the Government of RK.

Water Management. The "Irrigation and Drainage in Kazakhstan, Capacity Building and Awareness Raising" project was continued (2017-2021) to develop the capacities of RSE "Kazvodkhoz" and its branches in Almaty and Turkestan regions by changing institutional management and improving irrigation water management. **The 2020 results:** the following documents were developed (1) New State Water Management Program 2020-2030 endorsed by the Government of Kazakhstan; (2) one concept on private public partnership in irrigation water sector and three master plans endorsed by the Chairman of the Committee for Water Resources; (3) 3 tariff methodologies submitted to RSE "Kazvodkhoz"; two water extension centers were established in Almaty and Turkestan regions; 750 farmers were trained through 36 on-line training and workshop programs in all six project target regions.

Land Resources and Ecosystem Management. In 2020, the following projects were continued: (1) "Sustainable Forest Management" (2017-2021) for conservation and sustainable management of key globally important ecosystems for multiple benefits; (2) Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program

(2017- 2021) focusing on resilient rural and peri-urban landscapes of steppe and desert ecosystems for sustainable development and global environmental protection; (3) "Sustainable Food Systems and Improved Ecosystems Services" (2019-2020) for restoration and sustainable management of cropland and grasslands in Kazakhstan in line with LDN concept for multiple lands, climate and biodiversity and economic benefits; (4) "Supporting Sustainable Land Management" (2015-2020) to transform land use practices in critical, productive, steppe, arid and semi-arid landscapes of Kazakhstan.

The following projects were launched: (1) "Mapping Nature for People and Planet" to map the Kazakhstan's areas which are essential for human life and biodiversity and ecosystems conservation, for their further protection, management and restoration; (2) "Ecological Education in Kazakhstan" (2020-2025). The key outcome of the project is training of over 6 thousand teachers and creating a network of educational and model sites, preparation of educational and methodological packages in the field of environment protection, natural resource management, and environment and economic security.

Energy and Climate Change: (1) "Low-Carbon Urban Development" (2014-2019); (2) "Energy Efficient Standards and Labelling" (2017-2021) to transform Kazakhstan's markets to energy efficient appliances and equipment, thereby reducing electricity consumption and GHG emissions; (3) "De-Risking Renewable Energy Investment" (2017-2021); (4) Development of Kazakhstan's Eighth National Communication and Preparation of Two (Fourth and Fifth) Biennial Reports (2019-2022) to the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC in accordance with the commitment to the UNFCCC (grid emission factor for Kazakhstan is under development, national and international experts are working with statistic data; on 27 October-5 November, trainings were held on "Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment"); (5) "Forest Carbon Offset Mechanisms" (2019-2021) to assist the Republic of Kazakhstan in fulfilling international obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the carbon footprint of electricity suppliers; (6) "National Determined Contributions Program in Kazakhstan" (2020-2022).

Capacity Building. First cohort of 30 participants under the "Supporting the Economic Empowerment of Afghan Women" project were enrolled in academic programs at the Kazakh-British Technical University, Agrarian and Satpayev Universities (Satbayev University).

Sources: kz.undp.org and open.undp.org/projects

UNDP in Kyrgyzstan

UNDP interventions in Kyrgyzstan are guided by the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-2022, which out-

lines four priorities: (1) sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industrial, rural and agricultural development, food security and nutrition; (2) good governan-

ce, rule of law, human rights and gender equality; (3) environment, climate change, and disaster risk management; (4) social protection, health and education.

In 2020, UNDP [project portfolio](#) in Kyrgyzstan included 28 projects totaling US \$24.54 million.

SDGs. Since 2018, UNDP in Kyrgyzstan is establishing a "National SDG Support Platform" (2018-2023) – an anchor point for advancing SDG integrated approaches. Since 2020, the United Nations Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund is implementing the [project](#) to create the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF).

Environment Protection: (1) "Conservation of Globally Important Biodiversity and Associated Land and Forest Resources of Western Tian Shan Mountain Forest Ecosystems to Support Sustainable Livelihoods" (2017-2021); (2) "Climate Resilience of the Batken Province" (2019-2020) through introduction of climate smart irrigation and mudflow protection measures under the UNDP and Russia Trust Fund for Development's Climate Change Window. Repair works at 8 intra-farm irrigation facilities in the pilot Aiyl Aimaks of Batken province were completed, work was initiated to expand the network of agrometeorological observation; practical classes were held for farmers); (3) "Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate" (2016-2021) to strengthen integrated risk governance capacities and regional cooperation in Central Asia; (4) "Strengthening Capacities for Sustainable Development Finance in the Com-

monwealth of Independent States (CIS) Region" (2018-2020), which transferred an automated weather station and office equipment worth US \$56,786; (5) "Transboundary Cooperation for Snow Leopard and High Mountain Ecosystem Conservation" (2016-2020) to ensure stability of global snow leopard population; (6) "Capacity Building Towards Securing the Resilience of Communities and Institutions to Climate and Disaster Risks and Sustainable and Inclusive Natural Resource Management" (2018-2022); (7) "UN Support for Strengthening Disaster Preparedness" (2012-2020) to support activities of the Disaster Response Coordination Unit Secretariat; (8) "HCFC Phase-out Management Plan (HPMP) – Stage 2" (2015-2020); (9) Advancing "Development of a National Adaptation Plan" process (2020-2023) for medium and long-term adaptation planning and implementation in the Kyrgyz Republic.

A project on climate diplomacy and security in Central Asia [was presented](#). It is implemented by UNDP in cooperation with relevant government agencies in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan with the support of the UK Government (17 December). The project will foster regional cooperation on climate policy and effective climate diplomacy, positioning by countries of their climate agendas based on science-based commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Sources: kg.undp.org and open.undp.org/projects

UNDP in Tajikistan

In 2020, UNDP [project portfolio](#) in Tajikistan included 49 projects with overall budget of US \$28.83 million.

SDGs. The 2020 ongoing projects: (1) "Financing SDGs in Tajikistan" (2020) to support the Government of Tajikistan in achieving its national SDG targets through an integrated resource mobilization framework; (2) "Monitoring SDGs in Tajikistan" (2020-2021) to explore the needs for and expand support to strengthening national system for monitoring of SDG national indicators in close partnership with the Agency of Statistics under the President of Tajikistan.

Land and Water Resources: (1) "Building Climate Resilience in Agriculture and Water Sectors of Rural Tajikistan" (2019-2022), as a result of which: 4 project sites and 4 practices have been selected; capacity needs assessment conducted in 5 jamoats (13 villages); 803 farmers (319 – 39.7% – women) have got trained in CCA agriculture and effective irrigation methods; field days conducted for farmers of Ayni and Penjikent districts; (2) "Support to Water Initiatives of Tajikistan" (2020-2021), with the overall objective to provide support in organization of the International Water Conference 2020 and to develop a project proposal in support of the implementation of IWRM-based water sector policy reforms; (3) "Tajikistan Water Supply and Sanitation Project, Phase III" (2018-2021) to strengthen policy development and reform at the national level. **The 2020 results:** Decree on tariff setting developed and approved by the Government; 2 meetings of Inter-ministerial working group on drinking water and sanitation organized; 4 policy documents on tariff set-

ting, taxation, construction norms and standards of rural WS systems and sanitation reform developed and published; (4) "Strengthening Communities in Khatlon Region and Rasht Valley" (2020-2022) to ensure that residents of pilot rural areas in Khatlon region and Rasht valley are equipped with skills for employment, self-employment and innovations in farming and agribusiness spheres. The Project Steering Committee meeting was held on 31 January.

Energy. The 2020 ongoing project: "Green Energy SME Development Full-Size Project" (2018-2023) to facilitate the transformation of Tajikistan's energy sector, in particular the emergence of independent energy entrepreneurs.

Climate Change and Ecosystems: (1) "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pamir Alay and Tian Shan Ecosystems for Snow Leopard Protection and Sustainable Community Livelihoods" (2016-2021); (2) "First Biennial Update Report and Fourth National Communication under the UNFCCC" (2016-2021) to enhance the implementation of disaster and climate risk management measures at national and sub-national levels. **The 2020 results:** the project collected and analyzed data on climatic conditions and socio-economic characteristics of the country over the past 10 years, the forecast of greenhouse gas emissions in Tajikistan until 2030 has been completed, and a tool for forecasting has been developed; (3) "Policy Action For Climate Security In Central Asia" (2020-2022); (4) "Conservation and Sustainable Management of High-Value Arid Ecosystems in the Lower Amu Darya Basin" (2020-2021); (5) "Facili-

tating Climate Resilience in Tajikistan" (2017-2021) is expected to contribute to building climate resilient communities across Tajikistan and address specific threats to lives and social infrastructure posed by climate-induced natural hazards. The Steering Committee meeting was held on 25 December; (6) "Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance in Tajikistan" (2016-2020) to reduce the human and material impact of disasters on Tajikistan by improving the risk governance; (7) "An Integrated Landscape Approach to Enhancing the Climate Resilience of Small-Scale Farmers and Pasto-

ralists in Tajikistan" (2019-2025); (8) "Climate Promise: Support to NDC Revision in Tajikistan" (2020-2021); (9) "Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Response Capacities in Tajikistan" (2016-2021) supports the Government of Tajikistan to undertake a nationwide risk assessment, establish and implement risk reduction measures and improve early warning. The Project Steering Committee meeting was held on 18 February.

Sources: tj.undp.org and open.undp.org/projects

UNDP in Turkmenistan

In 2020, UNDP [project portfolio](#) in Turkmenistan included 20 projects.

SDGs. The "Partnering for SDG Acceleration" project was continued (2018-2021). In 2020, the following events were held: (1) online workshop on digital economy; (2) international seminar on financing for development, with adoption of a final statement; (3) a webinar "Review and Guidance on Global, International and Regional Funds to Finance the SDGs in Turkmenistan".

Water Management. The "Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy for Sustainable Water Management in Turkmenistan" project was continued (2015-2022).

The 2020 results: seedlings of orchards and vineyards planted together with the "Turkmensuwlymtaslama" Design Research Institute on a research area of 145 hectares in Gokdepe; 1st edition of a methodology for the development of on-farm and inter-farm water use plans prepared and demonstrated to national water specialists; comments received from the State Committee for Water Management; the regulatory documents in the field of integrated management and protection of water resources developed, agreed with the concerned ministries and institutions, and submitted for approval with a total of 9 documents; three small demonstration projects on solar-based water supply implemented in desert areas. The following events were held: for representatives of the water, agricultural and agribusiness spheres the [online training](#) on water saving irrigation organized by the [joint project](#) of UNDP and the State Committee for Water Management (17 September); [practical classes](#) for students of the Turkmen State Agricultural University (2 July, "Turkmensuwlymtaslama").

Land Management. The "Conservation and Sustainable Management of Land Resources and High Value Ecosystems in the Aral Sea Basin for Multiple Benefits" was launched (2020-2021).

Climate Change and Environment Protection: (1) "Supporting Climate Resilient Livelihoods in Agricultural Communities in Drought-Prone Areas of Turkmenistan" (2016-2022). **Project results:** four gender sensi-

tive local adaptation plans prepared and adopted by three farmers' associations; 529 targeted agricultural farmers and pastoralists reported on improved crop production and livelihoods; 59% participating households from 3 farmers' associations (Watan, Parahat and Yagtylyk) and 1 livestock farm (Garagum) reported 10-15% additional income earned. The following events were held: a webinar "Establishing Agricultural Advisory Services and Knowledge Dissemination Services in Turkmenistan" (16 October); online working meeting to discuss the draft instruction describing data collection and processing procedures and the use of gender-disaggregated data in sectoral planning and budgeting for climate change adaptation (26-27 November); (2) the "Sustainable Cities in Turkmenistan: Integrated Green Urban Development in Ashgabat and Awaza" (2017-2023) project, which held the [first working meeting](#) to discuss the development of the draft National Strategy in the field of waste management on 28 February; special equipment purchased and installed to monitor atmospheric air for the Environmental Monitoring Service and regional laboratories of the Nature Protection Departments of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection. After the conference "Preservation of the Unique Nature and Ecological System of Turkmenistan is the Key to Sustainable Development", the following documents have been signed: MoU between UNDP and the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection on cooperation in the field of environment protection; MoU between UNDP and the State Committee for Water Management on cooperation in the field of water management, protection and use; Annual Work Plans for 2021 of the joint projects (1) between UNDP and the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection "Sustainable Cities in Turkmenistan: Integrated Green Urban Development in Ashgabat and Avaza"; (2) between UNDP and the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection "Supporting climate resilient livelihoods in agricultural communities in drought-prone areas of Turkmenistan" (2 December).

Sources: tm.undp.org and open.undp.org/projects

UNDP in Uzbekistan

The Country Program Document guides UNDP interventions at country level for the period of 2016-2020, which includes four outcome areas: (1) inclusive economic development, with focus on employment and

social protection; (2) environmental protection to ensure sustainable development; (3) effective governance to enhance public service delivery; and (4) protection of rights.

In 2020, UNDP [project portfolio](#) in Uzbekistan included 35 projects with overall budget of US \$22.35 million.

SDGs. The “[Financing for Sustainable Development](#)” project (2020-2023) was launched to ensure that the attainment of SDGs in Uzbekistan will be accelerated thanks to more efficient, transparent and results-oriented use of public finance resources.

Water Management. UNDP continued to implement the “[Sustainable Management of Water Resources in Rural Areas in Uzbekistan: Technical Capacity Building](#)” project in 6 pilot provinces (2016-2020). **2020 results:** water supply to 13,000 ha of irrigated land improved and led to a 30-50% reduction in water losses through repair and reconstruction of water canals and gates; drip irrigation systems installed in 35 household plots and 1 farm; 14 international standards for metrology and standardization approved by UzStandard and implemented in Uzbekistan; National Unified Capacity Building Program, including 8 training modules for water professionals developed; 3,718 water specialists got new knowledge and improved their practical skills in water management, hydrometry and metrology, large structures and water reservoirs, irrigation and land reclamation, water pumping and energy saving; 6 BISAs, TIAME and Research Institute of Irrigation and Water Problems equipped with modern digital water meters. Regulations governing contractual relations between water users and water consumers have been developed and approved; normative documents have been developed for adapting irrigation canals to drip irrigation systems and on drip irrigation of agricultural crops. **Future interventions:** ensuring the irrigation infrastructure development; automation of large engineering structure operations; improving the monitoring system, water and energy saving technology application in 6 pilot regions; creation of centers for water saving technologies.

Land Resources and Ecosystem Management. The 2020 ongoing projects: (1) “[Sustainable Natural Resource and Forest Management in Key Mountainous Areas Important for Globally Significant Biodiversity](#)” (2017-2022), within the framework of which training in handling the Biodiversity Information Management System and the Biodiversity Information Center of Uzbekistan was held (from 26 February to 3 March); the Resource Center has got modern IT equipment; (2) “[Sustainable Rural Housing and Settlements in Uzbekistan](#)” to transform the rapidly growing rural housing sector in Uzbekistan towards a more sustainable and low-carbon development pathway by designing, piloting and scaling-up a green mortgage market mechanism (2015-2023); (3) “[Complete HCFC Phase-out in Uzbekistan](#)” through promotion of zero ozone-depleting substances low GWP Energy Efficient Technologies (2018-2024); (4) “[Sustainable Development of Mountain Ecosystems](#)” (2017-2022), within the framework of which in 2020 camera traps were installed in snow leopard habitat for detailed data analysis and research on snow leopard species; the project conducted a series of training workshops; a contract was concluded between UNDP and State Cadaster Committee for establishment of a buffer zone of Chatkal State Biosphere Reserve and an ecological corridor between the Ugam Chatkal State Biosphere

Reserve and Chatkal State Biosphere Reserve; pasture management plans were developed this year for 8 pilot forest enterprises; forest restoration activities were carried out in 2,730 ha of forest land, and there was natural regeneration of forest in 300 ha in Akhangaran state forest enterprise.

Climate-related activities. Development of the [National Adaptation Plan](#) (2020-2022) began to advance medium and long-term climate change adaptation planning in Uzbekistan. The 2020 ongoing projects: (1) “[Resilience of Farming to Climate Change Risks in Fergana](#)” aims to institutionalize integrated services to agricultural producers in the pilot region that enhance their adaptation to the impacts of climate change (2019-2021). The project successfully completed installation of a network of 9 agrometeorological stations; the recommendations on improvement of soil and water management, and use of biological pest control methods have been included to respective sections of the Concept of Namangan region development for 2020-2030; 7 business projects have been selected through competitive process for technical and financial support by the project; 8 thematic seminars and 2 webinars were held on certification and standardization of fruits and vegetables, business planning and marketing, climate change and adaptation measures in target areas of the Fergana Valley; (2) “[Developing Climate Resilience](#)” project to develop climate resilience of farming and pastoral communities in the drought prone parts of Uzbekistan, specifically Karakalpakstan (2014-2021); (3) “[Promoting Green Urban Development in Tashkent](#)” to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles in the City of Tashkent that can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transport sector and improve urban environmental quality (2019-2020).

Activities in the Aral Sea: (1) “[Sustainable Management of Lakes and Wetlands](#)” (2020-2021) as pillars of a resilient and land degradation neutral Aral basin landscape supporting sustainable livelihoods; (2) “[Building the Resilience of Local Communities Against Health, Environmental and Economic Insecurities in the Aral Sea Region](#)” (2020-2021); (3) “[Building the Resilience of Communities Affected by the Aral Sea Disaster](#)” (2016-2019) through a Multi-Partner Human Security Fund for the Aral Sea; (4) “[Addressing the Urgent Human Insecurities in the Aral Sea](#)” (2019-2021) to address the environmental, social and economic insecurities in the most vulnerable communities of the Aral Sea (see [Expeditions on the Exposed Bed of the Aral Sea in 2019-2020](#)).

UNDP in Uzbekistan launched the [Green Aral Sea crowdfunding campaign](#) (11 March); commenced to host the [series of trainings](#) to assist national experts and specialists in fine-tuning the Concept Note on “The Aral Sea Region – an Area of Ecological Innovation and Technologies” and developing a Roadmap for its operationalization (from 8 June); with the Ministry of Innovative Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan [co-hosted a virtual training](#) on the practical application of the Systems Innovations Approach in support of the process of transforming the Aral Sea region into an Area of Ecological Innovation and Technologies (7-8 October).

Sources: www.uz.undp.org and www.open.undp.org/projects

UN Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan

On 27 November, the UN Headquarters in New York hosted a High-Level Event on the launch of the UN Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan (MPHSTF).

MPHSTF Activities in 2020

By signing MoU between the UN Participating Organizations (PUNOs) and the UN MPTF Office, WHO on **24 March** has joined MPHSTF to successfully address health-related problems within the framework of one of the strategic goals of the Fund – ensuring health security of the population in the Aral Sea region.

On **14 July**, the **4th meeting of the Steering Committee** of MPHSTF was held to review the results of the evaluation of proposals submitted within the **Second Call for Proposals**. Representatives of UNICEF and UNDP made a brief presentation on the implementation of joint projects approved in accordance with the decision of the **second meeting of the Steering Committee** (June 3, 2019). One of the main items on the agenda of the meeting was the discussion and decision on the first meeting of the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Development of the Aral Sea region on the platform of the Trust Fund, established per the **decision of the Steering Committee** of 16 December 2019.

On **1 December**, UN in Uzbekistan in cooperation with the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan jointly hosted the **inaugural meeting** of the Advisory Committee in support of sustainable development in the Aral Sea Region. Participants of the Advisory Committee agreed to establish two working groups and a technical-level working group, comprised of the members of the Advisory Committee. Working groups will (1) focus on sustainable investments and will guide and oversee the systems innovation approach for sustainable development of the Aral Sea region, building on Uzbekistan's sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies, as well as other relevant national and regional development priorities; (2) strengthen the visibility of the Aral Sea region to ensure raising awareness of the international community about the situation in the Aral Sea region as well as effectively communicating the results of joint initiatives. The **Technical Group** will focus on data and assessments to provide evidence and rationale for portfolio analysis and investments.

Financial Support to MPHSTF. According to the MPTF Office, under standard agreements **US \$1.5 million**, **€1 million**, and **US \$5.5 million** were allocated by the Governments of Uzbekistan, Finland, and EU, respectively, to MPHSTF. The Government of the Republic of Korea and the UN MPTF Office in New York signed the Standard Administrative Arrangement on the Republic of Korea's contribution of **US \$1 million** (17 December).

Ongoing Projects. In 2020, the following projects were continued: "Improvement of Quality in Perinatal Care Service to Most Vulnerable Mothers and Newborns" (August 2019-April 2021, US \$1.61 million) to support the Ministries of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Karakalpakstan to ensure access of the population to perinatal service by improving infrastructure and provision of essential equipment for secondary level perinatal referral facilities, and to improve quality of maternal and newborn health service; (2) "Addressing the Urgent Human Insecurities in the Aral Sea Region through Promoting Sustainable Rural Development" (September 2019-February 2021, US \$1.46 million) to address the environmental, social and economic insecurities in the most vulnerable communities of the Aral Sea region. Within the framework of the project, autumn (2019) and second (May 28-June 26, 2020) expeditions were conducted to survey the Aral Sea bed, and a **round table** was organized on the results of these expeditions (December 16). "Monitoring of the Dried Seabed of the Aral Sea" to be published in 2021 provides the detailed information and conclusions on the conducted expeditions (see [Expeditions on the Exposed Bed of the Aral Sea in 2019-2020](#)).

Scheduled Projects. Funding was approved for three new projects amounting to more than US \$6 million within the **Second Call for Proposals** addressing such priority areas as Youth, Innovation and Health Security (2020-2023): (1) "Investing in a Resilient Future of Karakalpakstan by Harnessing the Talents of Youth and Improving Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Nutrition During and After COVID-19"; (2) "Unleashing Young People's and Vulnerable Citizens' Creativity and Innovation by Strengthening Their Adaptive Capacity to Address the Economic and Food Insecurities in the Exposed Communities of the Aral Sea Region"; (3) "Towards Universal Health Coverage and Security in Karakalpakstan".

Source: aral.mptf.uz

of UN entities and international organizations working on water and sanitation issues. Over 30 UN organizations carry out water and sanitation programs.

In 2020, UN-Water held:

- **32nd meeting**, which included agenda items addressing the work program for the coming biennium, the UN-Water 2030 Strategy, and input to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which will extend to 2050 (28-29 January, IFAD headquarters). The partici-

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

parts also discussed a proposed SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework in the context of the UN Secretary-General's recent call for a Decade of Action to deliver the 2030 Agenda. Planning for engaging at the country and regional levels was discussed in light of ongoing UN reforms. UN-Water's Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 and efforts to update monitoring and reporting were also highlighted. The report on the meeting is available on: <https://enb.iisd.org/download/pdf/sd/enbplus82num40e.pdf>;

- 33rd meeting, which discussed challenges for international water and sanitation policy issues due

to the COVID-19 pandemic and opportunities to coordinate the work of their respective organizations to advance progress on SDG 6 (29 September, online).

UN-Water presented (1) its [UN-Water 2030 Strategy](#) highlighting the UN-Water's vision, mission and three lines of work, and outlining a Theory of Change through which UN-Water can fully realize its potential during the ten-year period⁶³; (2) [Analytical Brief](#) on Unconventional Water Resources during the Dresden Nexus Conference under the theme "Circular Economy in a Sustainable Society" (3-5 June, online).

6.6. UN Economic Commission for Europe

UN 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 the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention). In 2019, the Parties to the Convention, together with UNECE, other countries and partners, launched the Prog-

ram of Work for 2019-2021 consisting of 7 program areas: increasing awareness of and accession to the Convention, monitoring and assessment, promoting an integrated and intersectoral approach to water management, adapting to climate change, facilitating financing, reporting, partnerships and knowledge management. Kazakhstan takes over the chairmanship of the Water Convention for the period of 2019-2021.

Activities in 2020

Under the Water Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health, UNECE organized the following events: 2nd and 3rd meeting of the Expert Group on the Transboundary Water Allocation Handbook (30-31 March, 20-21 October); Webinars on SDG indicator 6.5.2: supporting countries in preparing national reports for the 2nd reporting exercise (12 May-4 June); 23rd and 24th meetings of the Bureau of the Protocol on Water and Health (13-14 May, 4-5 November); 19th and 20th meetings of the Compliance Committee under the Protocol on Water and Health (15 May, 2 November); Webinar "Water Convention and Transboundary Water Cooperation" (26 May); 11th meeting of the Implementation Committee (31 August-2 September); 30th Meeting of the Bureau of the Water Convention (29-30 September); 15th meeting of the Working Group on IWRM (30 September-2 October); 11th meeting of the Task Force on Water and Climate (2 October); Regio-

nal Workshop on Equitable and Sustainable Water Allocation (5-6 October); 6th meeting of Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus (22-23 October); 11th meeting of the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting (3 November); virtual workshop on financing transboundary water cooperation and basin development (16-17 December).

For details:

<https://unece.org/info/events/unecemeetings-and-events/environmental-policy/waterconvention?page=0>

Development of a Handbook on Transboundary Water Allocation

In 2020, the handbook on supporting equitable and sustainable water allocation in the transboundary context has been in the process of development. IWAC is handling this process in Central Asia, addressing such issues as sustainable water allocation in the transboundary context and environmental flow – the basis for conservation of the ecosystem. Two meetings of the Expert Group on the Transboundary Water Allocation Handbook were held to provide strategic advice and inputs (30-31 March and 20-21 October). The drafting team and Water Convention secretariat further developed the main Handbook content chapters in order to complete the first full draft by early 2021.

UNECE Activities in Central Asia

Transboundary cooperation

In 2018, the project "Enhancing Climate Resilience and Adaptive Capacity in the Transboundary Chu-

Talas Basin" (September 2015-December 2018), funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs under the FinWaterWell Initiative, was concluded. It was aimed to establish a framework for regular and strategic cli-

⁶³ The Strategy can be downloaded on: <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-2030-strategy/>

mate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin and enable the Chu-Talas Water Commission and local authorities to facilitate climate change adaptation in the basin. The Annex on climate adaptation to the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and measures for climate change adaptation for the Strategic Action Program (SAP) have been developed. After further refinement and discussion with interdepartmental organizations, SAP was adopted at the 248th session of the Chu-Talas Water Commission (April 15, 2021).

The project also proposed, in consultation with local stakeholders, a set of adaptation measures, covering broad range of issues from water quality to monitoring and education, that were assessed against their cost/effectiveness and prioritized.

Following discussions within the Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change and Long-term Programs of Action of the Chu-Talas Water Commission, the following measures were selected by the project team for the pilot implementation: (1) Floodplain forest restoration; (2) Training on water efficiency measures for irrigation; (3) Kirov dam safety monitoring system support.

The project teamed up with the local NGOs [Kyrgyz Association of Forest and Land Users](#) on implementation of the pilot adaptation measures.

The local NGO [BIOM](#) is facilitating awareness raising and information campaign that includes preparation of information materials, trainings for local communities, press-tour and other important activities.

Project results are available on:
<http://www.unece.org/env/water/centralasia/chutalas.html#c6>

and in the brochure:
https://unece.org/%EF%80%81leadadmin/DAM/env/water/Chu-Talas/RUS_ClimateProo%EF%80%81ngChuTalas_web_10Dec2018.pdf

National Policy Dialogues

The work to support NPDs under the EU Water Initiative is ongoing in close cooperation with OECD and [WECOOP2](#) project financed by EU. In 2020, the following events were held:

- expert group [meeting](#) under NPDs on SDG indicator 6.5.2 (12-13 November, Bishkek). Participants discussed preparation of Kyrgyzstan's national report under SDG indicator 6.5.2 on transboundary water cooperation;

- 6th [meeting](#) of the Inter-agency Coordination Council of NPD in Kazakhstan (20 November, Nur-Sultan). During the meeting, the reports were presented on activities under the WECOOP project, Kazakhstan's accession to the Protocol on Water and Health, as well as on activities to strengthen inter-institutional cooperation on mine tailings safety and the prevention of accidental water pollution in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. Participants discussed Kazakhstan's cooperation with its neighboring countries on the protection and use of

water resources of transboundary rivers, and the direction of the water resources management Program of Kazakhstan until 2030, as well as developed proposals for the NDPs Plan of Work for 2021.

Cooperation on Dam Safety

The [third phase](#) of the project "Capacity Building for Cooperation on Dam Safety" in Central Asia was continued. An online [meeting](#) was held. The participants expressed their interest in resuming the work on the draft regional agreement on cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia; took note the progress on the implementation of the interstate agreement between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan on the joint use of the Orto-Tokoy (Kansay) reservoir and on the establishment of the Central Asian Platform on Dam Safety within the SPECA Working Group; encouraged national focal points to discuss and agree on the draft Terms of Reference for the platform at the national level for submission and approval at the regional meeting on dam safety (15 June).

Water quality in Central Asia

Within the framework of the "Water Quality in Central Asia" project, a meeting of the Working Group on Water Quality was held to finalize the mandate of RWG-WQ⁶⁴, and develop and agree upon the Group's [Work Plan](#) for 2019-2020 (5 February, Tashkent).

Facilitating the work of EECCA NWO

To facilitate the collection and exchange of information in the water management sector, UNECE supports EECCA NWO (see [International Network of Basin Organizations](#)).

SPECA Program

Together with UNESCAP, UNECE leads the United Nations Special Program for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) promoting economic cooperation among the seven participating countries of the Program (see [Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific](#)).

Source: UNECE, www.unece.org/env/water.htm

International Water Assessment Center

The International Water Assessment Center (IWAC) is the center for international cooperation on integrated water resource management, which has been established as a subsidiary body of the Water Convention in Astana in 2017. The main purpose of IWAC is to support the implementation of the Water Convention and its relevant work programs.

IWAC Activities in 2020

IWAC with the official support of the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan and in cooperation with the Water Convention Secretariat, as well as with "ECOTERA" LLC and "Kazakhstan Agency of Applied Ecology" LLC

⁶⁴ Regional Working Group on Water Quality

organized an online [regional meeting](#) on water resource allocation and environmental flow assessment in a transboundary context (22-23 September). The main outcome of the meeting was that the countries of the region came to a consolidated vision, reflected as recommendations to the global Handbook on water allocation in a transboundary context⁶⁵.

IWAC office hosted meetings of S. Akhmetov, IWAC Director, with:

- Mr. Omar Aziz, the Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, to discuss the development of cooperation on joint projects to improve the use and protection of the resources of transboundary rivers in Central Asia ([15 October](#));

- Mr. Ruslan Matkerimov, Counselor of the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Republic of Ka-

zakhstan, to discuss possible areas of cooperation between IWAC and Kyrgyzstan on the protection and use of water resources, exchange views on current efforts to maintain and further improve mechanisms for managing transboundary water resources at the regional level, as well as exchange information on the current policy of Kyrgyzstan on the protection and use of water resources ([6 November](#)).

The 2nd [meeting](#) of the Working group on Kazakhstan's chairmanship in the Bureau of the UNECE Water Convention was held online on 14 December. The participants discussed the activities carried out within the framework of Kazakhstan's chairmanship in the Bureau of the Water Convention, considered priority areas of the Convention's work program for 2022-2024 and the work plan of the Working group for 2021.

Source: www.iwac.kz

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 five regional missions of the 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.

SPECA Program

ESCAP in cooperation with UNECE manages SPECA. In 2020 under SPECA, the following online events were organized: (1) [SPECA Economic Forum](#) on "Regional Co-



operation to Support Socio-Economic Recovery in the Wake of COVID-19" (18-19 November); (2) [15th Session of the SPECA Governing Council](#), where the [Bishkek Declaration](#) of the SPECA Economic Forum 2020 was adopted and the SPECA Thematic Working Groups reported (20 November). Uzbekistan was elected as the [Chair country](#) of SPECA for 2021. The 16th session of the SPECA Governing Council and the 2021 SPECA Economic Forum will be held in Uzbekistan in 2021.

Source: www.unescap.org, www.unece.org

6.8. United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) was established on the initiative of the five Governments of Central Asia in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, in 2007 to support national authorities in identifying and addressing existing and potential threats to regional peace and security. In implementing its initiatives, UNRCCA interacts with regional and international organizations. The Centre began operations in 2008 and is led by a Special Representative of the Secretary General.

In 2010, UNRCCA launched its water project to support five CA countries in their search for mutually acceptable water agreements. In 2019-2021, the Centre implemented a project in support of regional transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia. UNRCCA promotes dialogues between the Central Asia states



on transboundary water resource management and supports initiatives aimed at solving water, environmental and other problems influencing the situation in the Aral Sea basin. UNRCCA assists the Governments of the region in the development of a comprehensive mechanism for the effective use of water and energy resources, on the basis of recognized norms of international law, and taking into consideration the interests and needs of all states. It supports the governments in capacity building for water diplomacy by developing

⁶⁵ The draft Handbook is developed by the Water Convention Secretariat with contributions from experts and practitioners from different regions all over the world

the skills and raising the awareness of civil servants in Central Asia and Afghanistan. The Centre focuses on collecting and sharing data for early warning and on hazards related to glacier melt and climate change, and on identifying the needs of countries in this area.

The 2019-2021 Water Project focuses on the following main areas arising from the preventive mandate of UNRCCA: (1) using preventive and water diplomacy to build confidence; (2) strengthening relevant institutions and legal base in the region; (3) enhancing transparency, cooperation and partnership; (4) encouraging cooperation and interaction between the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan.

UNRCCA Activities in 2020

UNRCCA virtually organized: (1) a capacity building seminar on water diplomacy practices related to international law and international cooperation in the field of safety of dams and other hydraulic facilities in cooperation with UNECE and international experts. Participants have acquainted themselves with the international legal instruments and international experience on the safety dams and other hydraulic facilities, exploring the nexus between the legal and practical problems of cooperation in the given field between the states of Central Asia; discussed potential for improving regional interaction in this field; briefed

on their national efforts, respective legislation and actions to address dam safety and knowledge sharing (7 October); (2) two meetings of experts on water and energy cooperation. The participants had an opportunity to discuss the terms of reference of the ad-hoc expert group on legal and institutional aspects of water and energy cooperation in Central Asia and exchanged views on issues related to the systematization and inventory of regional agreements along with other normative acts related to water and energy cooperation between the Central Asian states. This work will be continued in 2021 (10 November and 21-22 December).

In cooperation with SIC ICWC, four early warning bulletins were issued on transboundary water management in the Aral Sea basin, as well as the third 2019 edition of the *Water Yearbook: Central Asia and around the Globe*, which featured key water-related events and developments in Central Asia and beyond.

In cooperation with a group of international water experts, the new web portal of the "Central Asian Water Knowledge Management Platform" has been updated (www.waterunites-ca.org).

Sources: <https://unrcca.unmissions.org>, https://unrcca.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unrcca_programme_of_action_2018-2020_-_eng-08.12.17.pdf

6.9. 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.

WMO and WHO hosted a cross-sectoral dialogue on digital cooperation and Big Data in preparation for the United Nations World Data Forum 2020⁶⁶ (19 February).

WMO and the European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) launched a new web-based interface to help monitor the availability and quality of global meteorological observations within the WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS) (17 March). The WIGOS Data Quality Monitoring System (WDQMS) monitors the performance of the in-situ observing systems that are a key component of WIGOS.

WMO supported online 5th (27-28 May) and 6th (28-29 October) Arctic Climate Forums and the High Mountain Summit initiated by Columbia (11 December).

The virtual Data Conference was convened by WMO. It set the scene for a comprehensive modernization of the roles, rules and requirements for the international exchange of observations and other data that measure the pulse of the planet (16-19 December).

WMO projects in CA and Afghanistan

In 2020, the following projects were continued: (1) Afghanistan Early Warning System (US \$2.4 million); (2) Hydromet & Early Warning Services for Resilience (US \$3.7 million); (3) Central Asia Region Flash Flood Gui-

dance (CARFFG) System; (4) Uzbekistan Climate Data Restoration (by February 2020, Uzhydromet has converted over 7 million pages of hydrometeorological observations into digital images and this operation is on track to complete this first phase of data rescue by the end of 2020).

WMO Publications

WMO Bulletins Vol. 69 (1) *Climate and Water* and (2) *Responding to a Global Pandemic*; Global Seasonal Climate Update; 2020 WMO Statement on the State of the Global Climate; 2020 State of Climate Services; report "United in Science 2020". Other publications are available [here](#).

Source: <https://public.wmo.int/en>

⁶⁶ Held in October 2020

6.10. 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 ongoing projects in Central Asia.



Kyrgyzstan

Since 1996, IFAD has invested US \$97.8 million in rural development in the Kyrgyz Republic. IFAD [Country Strategic Opportunities Program \(COSOP 2018-2022\)](#) aims to support inclusive rural transformation that enables smallholders to reduce poverty and strengthen livelihood resilience. This is addressed through two strategic objectives:

(1) Increase smallholders' equitable and sustainable returns by improving services and developing livestock product value chains that enable rural producers, principally smallholders, to capitalize on market opportunities;

(2) Enhance smallholders' resilience to climate change by implementing innovative approaches that strengthen resilience and ensure sustainable incomes from diversified livelihoods systems.

The 2020 ongoing projects include "[Access to Markets](#)" (2018-2023) and "[Livestock and Market Development Program II](#)" (2014-2021).

FAO and IFAD join forces to develop e-agriculture in Kyrgyzstan. FAO Representative in Kyrgyzstan and IFAD Country Director signed a partnership agreement, which will be an important initial step in the development of [e-agriculture](#) in Kyrgyzstan. This partnership will pave the way to a clear Action Plan which, guided by the Kyrgyz Government, will involve strategic Development Partners towards an inclusive Strategy to accompany the Agricultural sector and Rural Transformation in the country, supported by the New Information and Communication Technologies which

already proved successful in the country as well as the sub-region.

Tajikistan

IFAD has been investing in the rural poor in Tajikistan by strengthening local institutions and grassroots organizations, and expanding their access to land, productive technologies and resources. Key activities include: natural resource management; implementing land reforms; and strengthening local institutions and grassroots organizations. The 2020 ongoing projects include "[Livestock and Pasture Development, Phase 2](#)" and "[Community-Based Agricultural Support](#)". Within the framework of the latter, new agricultural equipment was provided to farmers and the Minister of Economic Development and Trade Mr. Z. Zavkizoda held a videoconference with the IFAD Country Director Mr. M. Kauttu.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan [joined](#) IFAD in 2011. Since 2014, IFAD has supported three investment projects totaling more than US \$435.3 million (US\$128.7 million from IFAD) and directly targeting about 105,000 rural families. IFAD projects work to enable sustainable income growth for rural people through viable small-scale agricultural production and rural enterprise systems, with a specific focus on dekhani farmers, rural women and youth. The 2020 ongoing projects include "[Dairy Value Chains Development Program](#)" and "[Agriculture Diversification and Modernization](#)". A financing agreement was signed for US \$ 47 million within the framework of the 2nd phase of the project (4 August).

Source: www.ifad.org

6.11. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It coordinates international cooperation in these areas. Established in 1945, it includes 193 member-states.

UNESCO's programs contribute to the achievement of the SDGs defined in the Agenda 2030. Key areas of activity include the following five program sectors: education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, and communication and information.



On 17 June, UNESCO in partnership with Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources and National University of Sciences and Technology [hosted a webinar](#) “Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) as a Tool for Prevention and Smart Monitoring of COVID-19”. More than 50 national and international participants including experts, members from academia and students attended the event. It highlighted the challenges faced in implementing IWRM.

On 28 July, the UNESCO Water Family in the Asia and the Pacific held its first online gathering. The agenda was focused on the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact in different parts of the region – from the Small Island Developing States of the Pacific to the mountain countries of Central Asia. The principal outcomes of the meeting were a commitment to collaboratively mobilize water science and innovation to address the pandemic and its impacts and to reinforce work towards SDG 6 and other water-related SDG targets.

In October, UNESCO and France have [formalized the creation](#) in Montpellier of the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Water Systems Dynamics (ICIReWaRD), which will provide expertise, carry out research and training actions in management and governance, water science and technology in vulnerable regions, focusing in particular on problems linked to rapid urbanization, demographic pressure and the foreseeable effects of climate change. This research institute, within the University of Montpellier, will promote partnerships in the field of research and training, in order to strengthen the capacities of Member-States. It also aims to train future professionals with the skills and expertise to tackle complex water issues.

On 26-27 October, the UNESCO Water Family in Asia and the Pacific conducted [a virtual meeting](#) of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Program (IHP) – Regional Steering Committee. The special session was held to ensure that the water science community continues its important deliberations on cooperation and exchange in the hydrological sciences amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. The new IHP strategy coming into effect in 2022 was also discussed.

On 28-30 October, UNESCO-IHP in cooperation with IWRA⁶⁷ and IAH⁶⁸ held an [online Conference](#) “Addressing Groundwater Resilience under Climate Change” to raise awareness of the links between groundwater and climate change, which are key to the management of this vital resource.

On 7-11 December, the UNESCO Division of Water Sciences in cooperation with the Greater Paris Metropolis, SIAAP and ARCEAU-IdF organized an [online Pre-Conference](#) “Water, Megacities and Global Change” to respond to the urgent and pressing need of initiating discussion on the challenges and solutions related to water, megacities and global change

which was planned to take place during the Second International Conference “Water, Megacities and Global Change”, but had to be postponed to December 2021.

Activities of the UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty

Project Activities. The UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty held, (1) in relation to the preparation to the **GEF-UNDP-UNESCO project on glaciers**, a [technical meeting in cooperation with IHP and in coordination with the UNDP Istanbul Regional Center](#) to approve the project proposal and submit it to the GEF Secretariat for consideration for funding. Participants discussed issues related to the last stage of submitting a project proposal and components, as well as details and features of its implementation (16 June); **an online consultation meeting** with civil society organizations. The participants had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the proposed structure of the project, as well as to provide comments concerning coordination of sub-regional and basin-level planning efforts, importance of gender aspects and availability of the project communications and learning materials for local communities (30 September, Almaty); (2) a technical online meeting within the framework of the 3rd phase of the **“Governance of groundwater resources in transboundary aquifers”/GGRETA project** (2020-2022) (10 December). During the event, the project countries presented the progress of the project implementation in 2020, as well as discussed the work plan for the next year. The current phase of the project aims to strengthen cooperation between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan for sustainable water resources management and to develop a numerical model of the Pretashkent transboundary aquifer as a basis for joint, sustainable water resources management.

On 10 September, the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office and Swiss ‘Adventure of Science’ initiative organized an [online conference](#) on Women and Glaciers in Central Asia, which focused on motivating women and girls by sharing their visions, and combat stereotypes of gender in science. The conference brought together 50 people from Central Asia and Europe. The event was divided into three sessions: Gender equality, Climate change and Environment Protection, and Citizen science projects, and attendees shared visions and knowledge for consideration during the time of COVID-19 crisis.

On 16 October, the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office in cooperation with the United Nations Agency for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction in Almaty (CESDRR) and the Disaster and Climate Resilience Youth Network (DACRYN) organized an [online event](#) “Youth and SENDAI 7”, on the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. More than 150 people attended the event from Central Asia,

⁶⁷ International Water Resources Association

⁶⁸ International Association of Hydrogeologists

Eastern Europe and South-East Asia. The program included a panel session “Youth and DRR Policy: Bridging the Gap” and a plenary session “Sendai 7 and Youth in Central Asia”, during which speakers and participants shared their vision, knowledge and experience in the field of DRR on relevant for the Central Asian region topics.

On 24 November, GKU in partnership with the UNESCO office in Almaty organized a [pre-conference online event](#) on “UNESCO Water Family: Cooperation in Education and Science in Central Asia” at the occasion of the Silk Road of Knowledge online conference. The meeting aimed at identifying the needs and agreeing on a common approach for promoting better networking and partnership among the UNESCO Water Family, water related research and educational institutions in Central Asian countries.

On 26 November, the UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty in cooperation with UNECE and UNEP organized an [online High-Level Policy Dialogue](#) “Building a Resilient Future in Coalition with Nature in Central Asia” to share knowledge, strengthen and scale actions in “building back better” from the COVID-19 pandemic. The event helped to take stock of the considerable

efforts already made and underway by the Central Asian countries with regards to the environment at national and regional levels. The countries were able to showcase their work on nature protection and identify priority areas, such as ecotourism, green economies, rational use of natural resources and low-carbon development, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic challenges.

On 22-24 December, the Public Fund Center “Cooperation for Sustainable Development” (Kazakhstan), with the support and participation of the UNESCO Almaty Office, organized an [online training](#) for teachers to familiarize them with a new learning module on “Water and COVID-19” developed for 5-9 grade students. The module includes five thematic lessons, covering various aspects of water use in the context of climate change and COVID-19 pandemic, water pollution and efficiency. During the 3-days training, about 70 teachers from four Central Asian countries were trained on the new module and learned about specificity of teaching this important subject.

Source: UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty, www.unesco.org

6.12. Food and Agriculture Organization

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was established in 1945.

Nutrition, climate change, gender equality, social protection, and decent rural employment are cross-cutting issues of FAO activity in the Central Asian region.

FAO Activities in the Central Asian States in 2020

Kazakhstan

The portfolio of FAO technical assistance projects in Kazakhstan for 2010-2025, excluding planned projects under the Partnership Program, totals 39 projects worth US \$35.8 million. 11 projects have already been successfully completed, 8 projects are ongoing, and 20 projects are in the pipeline. The project focus areas are determined jointly with national partners and mainly with the Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan. The FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) in Kazakhstan, which is currently updated in line with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework in Kazakhstan for 2021-2025, shapes FAO assistance in Kazakhstan.

Currently, there are ongoing projects on integrated land and pasture management, production of drought-resistant and salt-tolerant crops; formation and development of value-added agriculture in rural areas with the involvement of homestead plots and family farms; combating antimicrobial resistance and crop pests, including locusts, as well as on enhanced phytosanitary control, digitalization in agriculture, reduction of food waste and losses and other most urgent areas for the development of the country's agroindustry.



A project was launched to support the Ministry of Agriculture in preparation of a new National Plan for agro-industry development in 2022-2026. Additionally, a few projects have been started to develop agro-food trade, establish an international food hub in Kazakhstan (together with the Ministry of Trade and Integration of Kazakhstan), promote agricultural markets and agro-food export, and develop land relations and family farming.

In collaboration with the joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section and international experts, the country has [developed the draft](#) “Master Plan for the Development of the Forestry Sector in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030,” as well as a roadmap for its implementation.

Kyrgyzstan

FAO's [assistance](#) in Kyrgyzstan is shaped by the 2018-2022 FAO's CPF. [FAO's portfolio](#) in Kyrgyzstan consists of 28 regional and sub-regional, as well as 11 national projects in the field of aquaculture and fisheries, forest management, poultry farming, organic agriculture, and

locust control, including "Towards Sustainable Aquaculture and Fisheries Development in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2009-2020" (funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, US \$2.5 million); "Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in the Kyrgyz Republic" (2014-2020, US \$1.1 million).

The FAO-EU "Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation" supports development of a comprehensive and consistent agricultural and rural development framework and contributes to the preparation of a new National Food Security and Nutrition Program for 2018-2022.

Moreover, FAO in Kyrgyzstan together with (1) GCF prepared the project "Carbon Sequestration through Climate Investment in Forests and Rangelands in the Kyrgyz Republic" (US \$50 million), to intervene in key hot spots of target areas with adapted forest and pasture investments and to clearly transform management of pasture and forest resources at the national and local levels to ecosystem-based sustainable natural resource management by enhancing an integrated and participatory approach, which is adaptive to climate change and responsive to needs of local communities; (2) GEF provided 10 hardware sets for development of e-agriculture in the country. Since April 2020, specialists of the State Design "Kyrgyzgiprozem" Institute on Land Management have been digitizing the Kyrgyzstan land use maps.

Tajikistan

FAO's assistance in Tajikistan is shaped by the 2019-2021 [FAO's CPF](#). In 2020, FAO contributed US \$2.83 million to Tajikistan, of which US \$2.16 million was utilized.

Agriculture, organic agriculture, and food security. The project "Strengthening Institutions and Capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture & State Veterinary Inspection Service for Policy Formulation" (2016-2020, US \$5.7 million) supported implementation of Tajikistan's Agrarian Reform Program and institutional development and capacity strengthening of the Ministry of Agriculture in relevant areas of policy-making, financial and policy analysis, disease surveillance and data management. Within the framework of the Program, the following pilot projects are implemented: "School Food and Nutrition Programs" and "Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth through Matching Grants for Families of Migrants". JICA and FAO have launched a new [pilot project](#) to support the Ministry of Agriculture of Tajikistan in potato seed replenishing. A National Investment Plan for Agriculture in Tajikistan for 2021-2030 is planned.

Turkmenistan

FAO interventions and resource mobilization for Turkmenistan envisages three priority areas: (1) agricultural production and food security, with a view to increasing the contribution of agriculture, forestry and fisheries to the country's economic growth; (2) sustainable natural resource management, climate change mitigation and

adaptation; (3) increased resilience of rural livelihoods to agriculture and food security threats and shocks. FAO has no official representation in the country.

Turkmenistan officially endorsed [a set of projects](#) on reducing food loss and waste, improving fisheries and aquaculture management, and increasing fungal resistance of wheat.

Uzbekistan

Agricultural development and food security. A new four-year FAO project, "[Smart Farming for the Next Generation](#)" (US \$3.4 million provided by South Korea), implemented in Uzbekistan and Vietnam, will contribute to the achievement of SDGs, including the eradication of poverty and hunger, and ensuring good health and well-being for everyone. The overall goal of the project is to initiate and promote smart and sustainable production, as well as post-harvest handling and marketing of vegetables grown in greenhouses.

FAO launched the Technical Cooperation Program "[Support in Implementation of Inclusive Agricultural Policies](#)" (US \$100 thousand, end of 2022) aimed at improving rural livelihoods through inclusive policies in agriculture and rural women's empowerment.

GEF [has approved to co-finance FAO's efforts](#) in Uzbekistan striving to shift food systems and land use to a sustainable track and supporting land restoration. Specifically, improvements in the wheat production and value chain are foreseen, given that the country is the sixth biggest wheat consumer in the world and that appetite is growing.

FAO Regional Projects and Activities

(1) "Integrated Natural Resources Management in Drought-Prone and Salt-Affected Agricultural Production Landscapes in Central Asia and Turkey project" is the second phase of the Central Asian Countries Initiative on Land Management ([CACILM-2](#)) regional program (US \$75 million, 2017-2022). In 2020, the following events were held: [regional webinar](#) on "Estimating the Impact of Land Management on Climate Change Mitigation with the Carbon Benefits Project (CBP) Tools" (25-29 May); [two trainings](#) – QGIS Basics, Watershed tool, Trends.Earth (15 June-1 July); 3rd Project Steering Committee [meeting](#) (24 January, Bishkek);

(2) Central Asian Desert Initiative ([CADI](#)). The 3rd [CADI Steering Committee meeting](#) was organized online (13 November). The agenda included reports and discussions on implementing CADI activities in the target countries in 2019-2020 and an outlook on the work plan in 2021. Capacity building in Uzbekistan has been implemented via [the Farmers' Field Schools](#) (FFS) concept developed by FAO. On two pilot sites in Uzbekistan, the FAO project team conducted a series of FFS [sessions](#) to improve nutritional security and increase the rural farmers' income living under harsh

climatic conditions of cold winter desert through enhanced capacity (December);

(3) [Program to Improve National and Regional Locust Management in Caucasus and Central Asia](#) to reduce occurrence and intensity of locust outbreaks in CCA, thus limiting threat or damage to crops and rangelands and safeguarding rural population food security and livelihoods, as well as minimizing impact of chemical control operations on human health and the environment. An [Annual Technical Workshop](#) on Locusts in Caucasus and Central Asia was held (24-26 November, online). The new ["Project for Improvement of Locust Management \(Phase 2\)"](#) was launched on the occasion of the first Project Steering Committee (1 December);

(4) ["Developing Capacity for Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in selected countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia"](#). FAO analyzed the situation with food security and nutrition in Kyrgyzstan through a number of indicators of social and food systems and prepared infographics, which illustrates data interrelation over time, and also demonstrates their trends.

In order to define its future medium and long term priorities for Europe and Central Asia, FAO has requested a group of renowned experts to prepare a region-specific report outlining the trends, challenges, and opportunities for food, agriculture and rural development in the region up to 2025 and beyond. A [virtual regional workshop](#) was convened, where the research teams presented the draft report for review. The meeting underlined the importance of including the COVID-19 response in the report, not only under short-term, but also medium-term, action. Experts also emphasized the multiple dimensions of digitalization, its implications and opportunities for the region, as well as the need to promote agriculture, fisheries, and forestry to young people (27-28 August). The challenges and opportunities of digital agriculture was the topic of the [second meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of Central Asia](#), facilitated by FAO and Kazakhstan. The Central Asian countries expressed interest in developing and implementing comprehensive digital agricultural strategies to spur the growth of digital technologies (8 December).

Source: www.fao.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.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, the General Assembly, on 12 August 2020, decided to postpone the seventy-second session of the ILC to 2021. Subsequently, in accordance with resolution [75/135](#) of 15 December 2020, the International Law Commission will hold its seventy-second session at the

United Nations Office at Geneva from 26 April to 4 June and from 5 July to 6 August 2021 (11 weeks).

The 72nd Session of the Commission is to consider the following items: immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction; provisional application of treaties; protection of the atmosphere; succession of States in respect of State responsibility; general principles of law; sea-level rise in relation to international law. Had the seventy-second session taken place in 2020, additional topics were on the agenda for the 2021 session – and may well still be so. These topics are: peremptory norms of general international law (*jus cogens*) and protection of the environment in relation to armed conflict.

Source: <https://www.independentila.org/pil-current-items/2020/7/17/the-72nd-session-of-the-international-law-commission>

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 2020, the Court's list of cases included only one case directly related to water – dispute over the status and use of the waters of the Silala (Chile v. Bolivia). For the nature of the case and proceedings in 2016-2020, see the [ICJ report](#).

Source: [ICJ report](#) at the 75th Session of UNGA, 2020

