



**4TH HIGH-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION
«WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT»
2018-2028**

DUSHANBE DECLARATION

The Fourth High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028 (hereafter 4th Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference), took place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan from 25 to 28 May 2026 to discuss how to achieve the objectives of the Decade contained in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 71/222 of 21 December 2016 in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Discussions and key messages that resonated with participants will contribute to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, 2026 UN Water Conference and other upcoming water-related events and conferences including UN 2028 Water Conference.

We, the Heads of Delegation, high-level representatives of United Nations Member States, organizations, major groups and other stakeholders having met in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, from 25 to 28 May 2026, contributing to the Dushanbe Water Process in our different roles and responsibilities,

Reaffirming commitment to United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” and determination to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” and other water-related goals and targets by 2030, in accordance with national priorities and circumstances,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 71/222 of 21 December 2016, by which it proclaimed the period from 2018 to 2028 the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development” and United Nations Secretary-General’s Plan: Water Action Decade 2018–2028 that formulated the objectives of the Decade (a) to advance sustainable development; (b) to energize implementation of existing programmes and projects; and (c) to mobilize action to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and *also recalling* United Nations General Assembly resolutions 73/226¹ and 75/212,²

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 64/292 of 28 July 2010 which introduced the human right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation and United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/169 of 17 December 2015 which affirms that the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation as components of the right to an adequate standard of living are essential for the full enjoyment of the right to life and all human rights,

Emphasizing that water is critical for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger, that water, ecosystems, energy, food security and nutrition are linked and that water is indispensable for health,

¹ United Nations General Assembly resolution [73/226](#), “Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028”

² United Nations General Assembly resolution [75/212](#), “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.”

well-being and human development, including the empowerment of women and girls, and a vital element of achieving the SDGs and other relevant goals in the social, environmental and economic fields,

Noting with concern that the world is not on track to achieve water-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets, including SDG 6, at the global level by 2030 at the current rate of progress and *emphasizing* the urgent need for accelerated action,

Recalling the political declaration adopted by the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (Sustainable Development Goals Summit), held in New York on 18 and 19 September 2023, in which Heads of State and Government and high representatives indicated they “will address water scarcity and stress and drive transformation from a global water crisis to a world where water is a sustainable resource, ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”,³

Taking note of the convening of the 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 (UN 2023 Water Conference), from 22 to 24 March 2023, which generated significant momentum towards enhancing water action and commitment at all levels to address water-related challenges including through the Water Action Agenda,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/334 of 1 September 2023 on the “Follow-up to the 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” and the decisions by Member States contained therein, including to convene the 2026 United Nations Water Conference to Accelerate the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (2026 UN Water Conference), and also to convene, in 2028, the United Nations Conference on the Final Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028 (UN 2028 Water Conference),

Expressing appreciation to the Republic of Senegal and the United Arab Emirates for their leadership as co-hosts of the 2026 UN Water Conference, and the Government of Tajikistan for the generous offer to co-host the UN 2028 Water Conference in Dushanbe, and *committing* full support for the preparation of these forthcoming United Nations conferences on water in an inclusive, transparent and balanced manner and *taking note* of the High-level Preparatory Meeting for the 2026 UN Water Conference convened on 26 and 27 January 2026 in Dakar,

Taking note that the United Nations General Assembly decided by consensus on 9 July 2025 to adopt the six themes of the interactive dialogues of the 2026 UN Water Conference: (a) water for people, (b) water for prosperity, (c) water for planet, (d) water for cooperation, (e) water in multilateral processes, and (f) investments for water and *also noting* that these themes offer a basis for dialogue and action at all levels,

Looking forward to the 11th World Water Forum in 2027 co-hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and World Water Council and *encouraging* alignment of priorities with the United Nations conferences on water in 2026 and 2028,

Noting the action that was taken by the United Nations Secretary-General to appoint the first United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Water to galvanize partnerships and concerted efforts to advance the water agenda and to develop a UN System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation in consultation with Member States, as requested by United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/334, in order to enhance coordination and delivery of water-related priorities across the United Nations system, and in this context to place particular emphasis on the water-related needs of the developing countries, and *encouraging* the efforts of the United Nations development system to strengthen actions to accelerate progress on SDG 6 in

³ United Nations General Assembly resolution 78/1 adopted on 29 September 2023, “Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly”, annex, paragraph 38(f).

programme countries, upon request, in line with national priorities, needs and plans as requested by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 79/226,⁴

Noting with satisfaction the important progress made and follow-up efforts to implement actions and commitments contained in the Final Declaration of the 3rd Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference that took place from 10 to 13 June 2024,

Recognizing the need for sustainable development and integrated management of water resources, at all levels, in order to ensure a sustainable supply of water for life, food production and other ecosystem services,

Recognizing that glaciers and the broader cryosphere are a critical component of the hydrological cycle, *taking note* of the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation in 2025 and International Conference on Glaciers' Preservation that took place in Dushanbe from 29 to 31 May 2025, as well as *welcoming* the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences, 2025-2034, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 78/321⁵ and *underlining* the significant impacts of glacial retreat on water availability, extreme events and livelihoods,

Recognizing the importance of the closed water bodies, including inland seas and endorheic basins and *promoting* their protection, sustainable management and restoration in view of their ecological and socioeconomic importance,

Acknowledging that the adverse impacts of climate change may increase water demand and exacerbate pressures on water resources, thereby posing challenges to their sustainable management and to the achievement of water-related SDGs and targets,

Taking note of the convening of the 30th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP30) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Second World Summit for Social Development 2025, Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States and other international events including the 2025 G20 Leaders' Summit and the 10th World Water Forum,

Emphasizing that the Dushanbe Water Process, culminating in the 4th Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference, has provided an important platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue, enhanced common efforts and support for the implementation of the objectives of the Water Action Decade, including SDG 6, and encouraged inclusive and constructive dialogue on the future of the water agenda, in a manner that complements intergovernmental processes,

Key Messages

Invite and urge all decision-makers and stakeholders to take action in order to:

Prioritize water-related actions to promote sustainable development and reduce inequalities, including within and among countries, towards the achievement of SDG 6 and *ensure* the realization of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation by targeting financial resources and strengthening disaggregation of data, monitoring and accountability systems to reach those in vulnerable situations, in accordance with national contexts;

Ensure meaningful and inclusive participation to achieve impactful water and sanitation outcomes by structuring transparent processes and active roles for stakeholders, including civil society, Indigenous Peoples,

⁴ United Nations General Assembly resolution [79/226](#) adopted on 19 December 2024, "Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system".

⁵ United Nations General Assembly resolution [78/321](#) adopted on 13 August 2024, "Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences, 2025–2034".

local communities, women, youth, elderly, people living with disabilities, smallholder farmers, academia and the private sector to build mutual understanding and embed diverse, cross-sectoral and intergenerational perspectives in decision-making and implementation, as well as strengthen the legitimacy, effectiveness and sustainability of water-related solutions;

Translate national commitments into concrete action at all relevant levels, including through strengthened capacities, financing mechanisms and enforcement of standards to improve the delivery of water and sanitation services;

Address gaps in technology, knowledge, data and scientific cooperation to help bridge the science-policy interface, support harmonized monitoring across SDG 6 targets and *value* local, traditional and Indigenous Knowledge, with the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples, including through exchange of best practices, knowledge-sharing platforms, capacity building, open data, digital water tools, and strengthened hydrological monitoring systems in accordance with national policies and frameworks;

Enhance international cooperation, including at the global, regional and subregional levels, towards the exchange of best practices, knowledge, and innovation and technology, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation to enable context-specific approaches, channel breakthrough solutions, and help scale impact through partnerships that ensure mutual benefit, pose no burden and deepen solidarity;

Shift from fragmented project-based financing for water-related investments toward comprehensive, predictable, scalable instruments and investment-ready water and sanitation systems, and promote efficient, transparent and accountable use of financial resources;

Recognize the importance of mobilizing public and private finance, including through international cooperation and development finance, while ensuring alignment with national priorities and equitable access, and the need for practical mechanisms that strengthen bankability, improve risk allocation, and provide structured platforms for investor engagement, especially for developing countries and addressing the special needs of Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Development States;

Emphasize the importance of strengthening systems, including through increased capacity, regulatory frameworks, transparency, cost recovery, affordability measures, use of data in decision-making and transboundary and international water cooperation, including scientific cooperation;

Facilitate concrete opportunities for youth employment, entrepreneurship, and innovation by ensuring equitable access to education, capacity development, skills, financing, and decision-making, especially for young women, to enable youth to fully participate in shaping sustainable and resilient water systems;

Promote gender equality in the water sector by strengthening the role of women professionals and advocates in water resource management and climate policy, expanding access to financing, technologies and innovation addressing women initiatives and meeting women needs, developing inclusive management models for water resources, drinking water supply, sanitation and hygiene;

Promote the conservation of hydrological connections from source-to-sea, including the glacier-to-sea system, from glaciers and mountain headwaters through rivers, wetlands and groundwater to the sea, that are essential for climate stability, biodiversity conservation and water availability;

Promote resilience to climate-related water risks, including floods, droughts and water scarcity, through preparedness and adaptive management strategies and improve understanding of the spatial and temporal variability of the water cycle, as well as the close link between water-related disaster risk reduction and economic growth, that can assist countries to better respond to water-related risks and challenges and encourage long-term investment based on economic benefit;

Advance the use of modern technologies, including remote sensing and satellite observations to significantly strengthen monitoring capacities, facilitate digital transformation in risk governance, and enable the implementation of end-to-end early warning systems to ensure that technical hazard detections are translated

into timely and actionable public safety measures to protect vulnerable populations, in accordance with national circumstances and priorities;

Encourage policy coherence between water, energy, climate, and digital strategies by aligning artificial intelligence (AI) development and deployment with sustainable water management to not exacerbate water stress and by supporting the use of AI in water-related contexts through capacity-building, bridging digital divides and international cooperation;

Promote integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate, as an instrument for resilience and sustainable development, with particular reference to nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, ecosystem restoration, water productivity monitoring and sustainable groundwater management, as well as integrated approaches such as the water-energy-food-ecosystem nexus, source-to-sea and disaster risk reduction, in alignment with planning tools such as inclusive river basin management plans;

Strengthen river basin organizations and other joint bodies by better integrating groundwater in institutional arrangements, adopting practical tools such as monitoring and data-exchange and equipping them with decision-support systems to translate arrangements into basin-specific, climate-resilient actions;

Recognize the importance of integrating water considerations into multilateral processes, including those related to climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development;

Promote scientific and technical cooperation mechanisms to support the translation of voluntary commitments into implementable public policies, financing pathways and locally grounded action;

Build on UN 2023 Water Conference and 2026 UN Water Conference to develop a clear vision to provide a solid foundation for the preparation of the UN 2028 Water Conference;

Use the preparatory process for the UN 2028 Water Conference as an opportunity to take stock of progress of the actions, partnerships and commitments made in support of the implementation of the objectives of the Water Action Decade, including the voluntary commitments registered in the Water Action Agenda;

Emphasize the importance of continuity to bridge the efforts from 2023, 2026 and 2028 UN Conferences on water and explore possible pathways towards achieving internationally agreed water-related goals and targets by 2030 and beyond;

Encourage strategic, forward-looking discussions to help identify priority areas for future water action and inform intergovernmental processes, building towards the 2026 UN Water Conference and the UN 2028 Water Conference, and also *support* the development of a long-term vision for water beyond 2030 to ensure that water remains a priority and is recognized as a cross-cutting element of the global sustainable development agenda, including transparent and continuous stakeholder engagement;

Support water-related Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda as a strong foundation for mainstreaming water into other global processes;

Propose the UN 2028 Water Conference as a timely milestone to shape the future positioning of water in the multilateral agenda beyond the end of the Water Action Decade in 2028 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on work already underway in other processes, including the 2026 UN Water Conference;

Promote greater coherence, complementarity and coordination across existing international water-related processes and institutions to enhance impact and reduce fragmentation;

Support active multi-stakeholder participation and multi-level cooperation and ensure a transparent, inclusive and balanced approach for the preparatory process of the UN 2028 Water Conference, and within the Conference itself, to enhance international efforts to advance “Water for Sustainable Development”;

Hereby, *reiterate* our determination to achieve the objectives of the Water Action Decade and declare our commitment to the following actions, according to our respective capabilities:

1. *Reaffirm* the necessity for water to remain a priority on the international agenda, including through a high level of ambition at the 2026 UN Water Conference, as well as the UN 2028 Water Conference as mandated by United Nations General Assembly resolutions 77/334 and 78/327;
2. *Stress* the importance to keep up the momentum of progress and achieve coherent and consistent action through the implementation of the voluntary commitments registered in the Water Action Agenda of the UN 2023 Water Conference and commitments from prior Dushanbe Water Action Decade conferences, and to stimulate new and innovative partnerships and accelerate actions to achieve the water-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and encourage their alignment with national strategies and plans;
3. *Invite* the Government of Tajikistan to present the outcomes from the 4th Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference as an input to the upcoming 2026 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development that will undertake and in-depth review of SDG 6 and other relevant events and forums;
4. *Offer* the outcomes from the 4th Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference as a contribution to the preparatory process for the 2026 UN Water Conference and UN 2028 Water Conference, as well as other water processes and initiatives such as the 11th World Water Forum;
5. *Look forward* to action-oriented and impactful results from the 2026 UN Water Conference and UN 2028 Water Conference;
6. *Encourage* monitoring and reporting of Water Action Agenda voluntary commitments and *encourage* the achievement of Water Action Agenda voluntary commitments;
7. *Call* for support to the work of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Water in advocating, aligning and accelerating efforts to advance the water agenda, including through the preparation of the 2026 UN Water Conference and UN 2028 Water Conference;
8. *Look forward* to the United Nations Secretary-General's report to assess progress on the implementation of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028, taking into account actions, initiatives, best practices and lessons learned, as well as obstacles and constraints encountered, that will be submitted for the consideration of the United Nations General Assembly at its eighty-fir000000st session;
9. *Promote* engagement on water-related issues, including climate resilience, in upcoming high-level meetings and conferences including UNFCCC COP31, Convention on Biological Diversity COP17, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification COP17, UN Special Thematic Sessions on Water and Disasters, 2027 SDG Summit, Ninth Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2028 High-level Review of the Pact for the Future, as well as other meetings organized by Member States, including the 11th World Water Forum that will take place in 2027;
10. *Propose* that the Co-Hosts of the 2026 UN Water Conference and UN 2028 Water Conference present the results and voluntary commitments from each conference as an input to upcoming High-Level Political Forums on Sustainable Development;

***Express* our sincere appreciation for the hospitality extended by the Government and People of Tajikistan and the support of the United Nations and of all the partners who contributed to this important conference.**

– *Adopted in Dushanbe on 27 May 2026 by acclamation.*