

**Declaration
of the
High Level International Conference on the implementation of the
International Decade for Action “Water for Life”, 2005-2015**

Dushanbe, Tajikistan
9-10 June 2015

We, representatives of governments, international organizations, local governments and civil society met in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, between 9 and 10 June 2015 at the High Level International Conference on the implementation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Life”, 2005-2015.

In furtherance of United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/69/215 entitled “International Decade for Action, ‘Water for Life’, 2005-2015, and further efforts to achieve the sustainable development of water resources”, this Conference aimed at evaluating progress achieved in the implementation of the Decade and at continued progress for achieving internationally agreed water-related goals using a comprehensive approach.

This Conference builds on the outcomes of previous events, particularly the 2010 High-Level International Conference on midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, held in Dushanbe, 2012 Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the 2015 UN-Water Annual International Zaragoza Conference, the High Level Interactive Dialogue in the framework of the Sixty-Ninth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Seventh World Water Forum held in Daegu and Gyeongju and the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, as well as the outcomes of the International Year of Water Cooperation, 2013. In doing so,

We salute the momentum gained and important achievements made during the Water for Life Decade and the role that the Decade has played in facilitating the achievement of the internationally agreed water-related goals and particularly Millennium Development Goals;

We express appreciation for the role of the United Nations for its support to the development and implementation of the Decade and for setting up mechanisms through UN-Water, such as the UN-Water Decade Programmes, and for utilizing existing instruments, such as the World Water Development Reports and UNSGAB, that proved to be effective and reliable tools and contributed to the achievements of the Decade;

We acknowledge that much progress has been achieved during the Decade, particularly in terms of implementation of integrated water resources management plans, water cooperation, level of project implementation, the involvement of women as important stakeholders and the development of the global water community, and specifically on monitoring, private sector involvement, knowledge, advocacy, awareness raising, intergovernmental and interagency coordination in a UN context and stakeholder participation, which has been facilitated by improved knowledge and advocacy raising efforts on specific Decade themes;

We acknowledge that today the water community is less fragmented and more able to engage in a coordinated manner, but that there are several gaps, including, inter alia, the need to develop Water Efficiency Plans and to address emergent water issues such as water-related disasters and water environment problems including waste water management, that resulted from discussions about the implementation of the Decade from national,

regional and global perspectives, as well as from discussions about progress and achievements, lessons learned and best practices;

We express concern that sanitation still lags behind despite improvements made since the International Year of Sanitation 2008 and the “Sustainable Sanitation: 5-Year Drive to 2015”; also, the drinking water target has not been achieved evenly within and across urban and rural areas, large and small countries, richer and poorer households, households and non-household settings, gender and age group and there is huge variability in terms of water quality, affordability, efficiency, capability and durability of both management and infrastructure;

We are convinced that to keep the momentum gained, to fill the gaps that emerged during the Decade, as well as to contribute to the achievement of internationally agreed water-related goals, including the water-related goals and targets proposed by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations General Assembly, requires renewed, additional and sustained efforts of the international community;

We consider of primary importance to fully achieve internationally agreed drinking water and sanitation targets in a sustainable manner, to promote the respect of human rights obligations to safe drinking water and sanitation recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in 2010, and to focus our efforts on this key driver of human development, health and well-being, because inadequate water and sanitation services still pose a huge toll on health, particularly diarrheal disease; it is essential to aim for universal sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation services in all homes, schools, health centers and workplaces;

We exhort the international community to promote green economy in a context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and identify solutions along the water-food-energy-environment nexus through multipurpose and integrated water resources planning and management that also takes mining, extractive industries and tourism into consideration, to better understand and work for common answers and results to handle scarce water resources;

We encourage promoting measures that tackle global challenges, such as poverty, biodiversity loss, emerging diseases, humanitarian crises, urbanization, the impacts of natural disasters, food security, climate change, as well as small island and mountain development, which affect and are affected by water resources; adaptation to climate change through water is of particular importance for global discussion and actions including in COP 21 in Paris in December 2015;

We stress the importance of financing and governance, considering the impact of the financial and economic crisis that hit several countries, the challenges emanating from increased population, rapid urbanization and improved income levels, the difficulties of all countries, particularly Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, the need for improved water resource governance and legal frameworks to ensure much needed sustained investment and financing, as well as the importance to provide efficient and transparent financial mechanisms to support civil society initiatives;

We also acknowledge the importance of water cooperation across sectors and at all levels, including transboundary, as one of the conditions to achieve water related goals, socio-economic growth and prosperity and public health and the important role of multilateral and bilateral arrangements, basin institutions, including aquifers, and other cooperative institutional platforms to catalyze action;

We highlight the importance of implementing and monitoring the proposed water-related aspects of the Post-2015 Development Agenda in a comprehensive, integrated and inclusive manner;

We acknowledge that governments have the responsibility to ensure the sustainable management of water resources while taking into account competing demands and the interests of other stakeholders; it is important therefore to encourage stronger dialogue, as appropriate, and meaningful stakeholder participation at the local, national and international levels with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders including women and children;

We take note that improvements as far as water is concerned often require long term planning, mobilization of financial resources, implementation and management, as well as, inter alia, the promotion of integrated water resources management, risk management in water supply from catchment to consumer, improved scientific understanding of water resources, technology sharing, capacity building of human resources and institutional structures, education and training, better shared and open data and indicators disaggregated by marginalized groups, particularly for women and children;

We encourage governments and other stakeholders to consider the outcomes of the high level plenary sessions, implementation panels, post-2015 round tables, side events and pre-conference events of this Conference, to be reported in the Chair's Summary, and to translate, to the extent possible, the visions contained therein for the post-2015 water agenda into concrete actions;

Moreover, *we urge* the international community to launch new initiatives to support the implementation of the proposed dedicated water goal in the Post-2015 Development Agenda; address emergent water issues; improve planning, coordination and implementation of water-related actions by the UN system; and consider the potential for a new International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" proposed by Tajikistan at the Seventh World Water Forum in Korea to keep the momentum gained during the Water for Life Decade;

Finally, *we express* our sincere appreciation to the Government of Tajikistan for hosting this Conference and for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to all participants and recommend the Government of Tajikistan to submit this Declaration accompanied by the Chair's Summary of the Conference to the United Nations General Assembly.