

**Fifteenth Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water
Resources Management (30/9-1/10/2020)**

I would like to express my gratitude to the Secretariat for the constructive cooperation and coordination and holding this meeting in this critical times with rising of enormous warnings of the water crisis in the world generally, and the region particularly, in addition to the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic impacts on the people and the planet.

Ministry of water resources worked closely with the Iraqis' Ministries and parties that have reservations and uneasiness about some items and paragraphs. These efforts were fruitful to lift the reservations and objections to access the Convention.

In 2018, the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers approved Resolution number 272 that contains the draft law in its final form and transmitted it to Iraqi Parliament.

In 2019, the Parliament confirmed the inclusion of the draft law on Iraq's accession to the Convention on its agenda and it was presented to the first reading and waiting to the second read to approve the law of Iraq's accession to the Convention.

The establishment of legal frameworks for managing and equitably using of water, as well as maintaining it, is a critical global need. The International community realized his duties in this regard; the UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Use of Watercourses (1997) and UNECE Convention for the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki 1992) are fundamental steps to realize principles of adequate use for an international watercourse to share the prosperity and sustainable environmental utility.

I like to reaffirm the Iraqi request for providing technical and legal support for management and negotiations with his upstream countries, which was proposed in Kazakhstan meeting on 2018 and Geneva meeting in 2019. We are grateful to the Convention Secretariat, which informed us about their readiness to provide technical and legal support and advice. Therefore, the Ministry of Water Resources has formed a committee headed by the Director-General of the Planning and Follow-up Directorate, Mr Jamal Muhsin Al-Ani. This committee has been preparing proposals and identifying their needs that are required to assist Iraq in the process of joining the Convention.

Thank you all, and looking forward to being among you as a member in the next sessions.