



**PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH, BUCHAREST
MINISTER MLADEN ZIROJEVIĆ SPEECH, NOVEMBER 24, 2010**

Honourable Hosts, Your Excellencies, Government officials of Romania, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have great honour and pleasure to be kindly invited, and thus have the opportunity to speak on such an impressive meeting as „**Second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health**“, organized by Government of Republic of Romania. I would like to welcome you on behalf of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers BiH, as well as in my personal name, as a Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations BiH.

Thanks to this Protocol, and a lot of other activities both on international and national level, great progress is achieved concerning water supply and management of drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. But it is not yet resulted in universal access to safe drinking water and appropriate sanitation for all citizens. I hope that today meeting represents pace up in this field and result in activities which will further improve the situation in the field of health of people related to drinking water supply.

This Protocol is the first one international agreement specifically adopted for relating water and health, as well as adequate supply of safe drinking water and appropriate sanitation for everyone. I am convinced that Parties responsible for implementation of the Protocol will achieve progress in better water management and protection of ecosystems, and finally result in prevention, control and reduction of water-related disease.

People in Bosnia and Herzegovina are concious that water is basic element and condition for sustainable life, and that safe water of good quantity and quality meeting basic human needs is preconditions for ensuring and improving health of people and fulfillment of general sustainable development.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is also concious of possible concequencues for public health, reduction of water in sufficient quantities and qualaities to meet basic human needs, as well as fact that prevention, suppression, and reduction of water-related diseases is very important and emergency, and it could be achieved only through better cooperation at all levels and among all sectors within countries and among them.

I have to mention that BiH is one of the few countries in Europe, which have developed water supply systems in all populated areas supplying population with drinking water of high level correctnes. Furthermore, BiH is a country abundant in natural resources and in developed and preserved ecosystems. Concerning these comparative advantages and benefits regarding water supply and water resources, we have obligation to preserve and improve them in the future.

Concerning our international commitments in Conventions regarding water resources, BiH completed the procedure for accession „ **Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watersources and International Lakes**“, Helsinki, 1992, („Official Gazzete BiH – International Agreements no 7/09, September 02, 2009) came into force March 03, 2010.

Accession to this Convention will enable BiH to have better communication with member states, and will resulted in faster access to information, exchange of experiences and technologies in this field, as well as strenghtening transboundary cooperation regarding water and other importanat issues of common interest. Signing of the Convention is in line with future commitments of BiH to the EU accession.

Besides accession to Convention, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations BiH, last year initiated the procedure for accession Protocol „**Water nad Health**“, which is part of Convention.

Because of more complex procedure for conclusion of international agreements in BiH, the Presidency BiH has made Decision on accession BiH to the Protocol „**Water and Health**“ with the Convention on Protection and Use of Transboundary Watersources and International Lakes at the beginning of this year.

After completed procedures in the Parliamentary Assembly BiH and positive opinion regarding Protocol, on September 16, 2010, Minisater of Foreign Affairs BiH signed ratification instrument which is forwarded in UN Mission, in order to be deposited.

According to that, BiH is a recent and official member of the Protocol in the near future we need to develop action plans for implementation of Protocol and realization of specific activities to protect water and prevent diseases that arise due to inadequate water management and supply. The interest for implementation of this Protocol we shows by presence and participation at today meeting.

Once more, I would like to use this opportunity to express my sinciere gratitude to the hosts on very succesful organized meeting and I hope positive outcome resulted from the arranged issues in these three days.

THANK YOU.