

High Level Segment MoP 6, Rome

Wednesday 28 November 2012, Chamber of Deputies, Rome

Part 1: Main achievements and remaining challenges for the Convention 11.00–13.00

Debate: interventions from the floor

Azerbaijan

Statement by H.E. Mr. F. Aliyev, the Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

Уважаемые дамы и господа, Уважаемые участники конференции,

Разрешите поприветствовать участников Конференции Европейской Экономической комиссии ООН по «охране и использованию международных озер и вод, протекающих через границу».

Азербайджан является первой страной, присоединившейся к конвенции в Закавказье. Более 12 лет Азербайджан находится в сотрудничестве с Конвенцией, было достигнуто немало успехов в этой сфере. В условиях ограниченных водных ресурсов для Азербайджана имеет большое значение справедливое распределение водных ресурсов между государствами.

В соответствии с экологическими проблемами, связанными с водными ресурсами в регионе, а также принимая во внимание, что Европейская экономическая комиссия (ЕСК) и с помощью проекта инициативы окружающей среды и безопасности (ОСБ) поддержали идею о взаимном соглашении между Азербайджанской Республикой и Грузией о совместном использовании водных ресурсов.

Настоящий документ представляет собой двустороннее соглашение "между Правительством Азербайджанской Республики и Грузии по охране и рациональному использованию водных ресурсов бассейна реки Кура", который после положительного заключения соответствующих органов страны, был передан в Кабинет Министров.

В 2010 году между правительствами России и Азербайджана было подготовлено и подписано соглашение в соответствии с требованиями добросовестного использования и охраны трансграничных вод реки Самур, которое до сих пор успешно работает.

В то же время Министерством Экологии и Природных ресурсов Азербайджана вместе с ООН по «охране и использованию международных озер и вод, протекающих через границу» в тесном сотрудничестве с Секретариатом Конвенции в 2010 году был подписан Меморандум по Национальному Диалогу Водной Политики и интегрированному управлению водными ресурсами, в рамках этого национального диалога Водной Политики основываясь на международном опыте, было принято решение о подготовке Водной Стратегии страны. Окончательный вариант Водной Стратегии после утверждения соответствующими органами будет представлен в Кабинет Министров Азербайджанской Республики.

Основной проблемой охраны окружающей среды в регионе являются проблемы связанные с водными ресурсами. Главной стратегической мерой является спрос на водные ресурсы и охрана от загрязнения. На основе принципов устойчивого развития и реализации идет разработка 5 Национальных и Государственных Программ. Указы, подписанные Президентом Республики, для реализации Национальной и Государственной программы были определены цели. Особое внимание уделяется созданию безопасных питьевых водных ресурсов и обеспечению населения чистой водой, защиты экосистем, принятию мер против заболеваний угрожающих жизни населения.

В целях обеспечения населения безопасной питьевой водой реализуются крупномасштабные проекты на строительство трубопроводов и очистных сооружений. В целях обеспечения безопасной водой самых отдаленных районов Республики, которые не имеют доступа к чистой питьевой воде, в этих районах строятся водоочистные сооружения модульного типа.

В последние годы в республике осуществляются проекты по реконструкции централизованных систем канализации, модернизации очистных сооружений, в том числе осуществляется

строительство очистных сооружений модульного типа для предотвращения загрязнения водных бассейнов даже от небольших, локальных источников.

Продолжая работать в этом направлении в ближайшем будущем, не только будут достигнуты Цели тысячелетия в области развития «к 2015 году уменьшению вдвое числа населения, не обеспеченного питьевой водой и санитарными услугами», но и это дает возможность для обеспечения населения качественной питьевой водой.

Положительные результаты в области водоснабжения и санитарии также играют важную роль для достижения других целей развития и искоренения нищеты.

Политика, проведенная в области социально-экономического развития страны, которая до сих пор принесла только успехи, а также в результате проведенной политики в области использования и успешной реализации природных ресурсов, в том числе улучшение экологического состояния водных ресурсов в будущем будут достигнуты еще лучшие результаты.

Благодарю за внимание.

Austria

Distinguished Madam Chair, dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentleman,

We have celebrated a very successful 20th anniversary of the UNECE Water Convention in Helsinki this September. So please allow me to look back on transboundary cooperation from the Austrian point of view.

Transboundary water cooperation across administrative borders has a very long tradition in Austria and is dating back to a time when Europe was divided by the Iron curtain, thus a time before the UN ECE Water Convention.

Nevertheless, the process of negotiation and ratification of the UNECE Water Convention provided for Austria (and we are sure that we are not the only country) an important and particular inspiring new basis for enhanced cooperation in the field of water management.

Looking back, the UNECE Water Convention was a unique story of success. A very prominent example for Austria is the International Convention for the Protection of the River Danube, which is based on the UN ECE Convention and which entered into force in 1998; other examples include in the case of Austria day to day work in bilateral transboundary water commissions in line with the principles of the Water Convention.

Looking forward to the next twenty years Austria would like to see a continuation of this story of success. We are firmly convinced that we all together have laid down a sound basis for the future by opening the Convention to countries outside the UNECE region.

Beside its proven function as independent body and advisor in the field of transboundary water cooperation we would like to see a clear focus on UNECE being the platform for exchanging experiences and knowledge. A sort of stock exchange for new ideas and inspiring answers to new challenges we all are facing.

These new challenges include a broad range of potential activities, i.e. adaptation to climate change, the water – food – energy nexus. Not to forget the exchange of good practice solutions how to tap new sources of budgets and funds in order to secure sustainability of integrated water management in times of rather constraint resources.

Concluding, Madam Chair, dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, please allow me to express that we note a broad support of UNECE activities, and we see an efficient and committed secretariat; this is why we look forward with expectation and optimism to future work of UNECE Water Convention.

Thank you for your attention!

Bulgaria

Statement of Ms Vanya Grigorova, HoD, Executive Director, Executive Environment Agency, Republic of Bulgaria

Your Excellencies, Madam Chair, Distinguished delegates, Dear colleagues,

At this special session on the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, we can pay tribute that it is a significant multilateral instrument for achieving sustainable development in the pan-European region.

In the 20 years since its adoption, the Water Convention has proved to be a sound legal framework and an active intergovernmental platform for the cooperation and the sustainable management of water resources in the pan-European region. Its implementation has promoted the adoption of better policies for water resources management resulting in the overall improvement of their status. Moreover, the Convention has led to stronger cooperation at all levels - basin, regional and international, and has contributed also to security, poverty reduction and economic integration in the pan-European region.

Transboundary cooperation in the light of water management is very important for Bulgaria having in mind that Bulgaria borders the Danube River in the North and the Black Sea in the East. Water Convention formulates the main principles in the field of transboundary water cooperation and the follow-up of its principles is of the most importance for Bulgaria. We appreciate that progress in the region can be built on various priority actions, such as multilateral and bilateral environmental agreements and coalitions for water policy. Because of its geographical location Bulgaria has an active role as a party to the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution and to the Danube River Protection Convention. Under the Water Convention Bulgaria took part in the preparation of the Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters through providing the necessary information about Bulgaria for the purposes of the assessment. The Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters is a very important international instrument for widen our view and awareness of the status of transboundary waters and a very good basis for lining the future steps. We have more than twelve bilateral agreements regulating the environmental protection in general or stipulating specific environmental matters. This legal framework is a very good ground for Bulgaria for setting up successful international relationships.

As an EU Member State, Bulgaria has fully transposed and implements the European legislation in the field of water management.

In September 2012 Bulgaria ratified the amendment to art.25 and 26 to Water Convention. The ratification of the amendment is a clear signal that we support the opening of the Water Convention to the countries outside UNECE. With the opening of the Water Convention to countries outside the UNECE the application of the principles of integrated water resources management will be expanded and the Water Convention will become a global legal framework for international cooperation in the field of transboundary water management. The entering into force of the amendment will create very strong legal base for present and future Parties to the Convention to join their efforts for protecting waters as well as it will bring many advantages in terms of exchange of experience, union of forces, matching needs and strengthening political support to transboundary water cooperation. We consider this is the answer of the question what direction the Convention should head in for the next 20 years.

Thank you for your attention.

European Union

There is an extensive policy and legislative framework in the European Union to address the challenges of transboundary cooperation on water management. At the heart of it is the Water Framework Directive. The aims of the European legislation and the Water Convention are similar: to ensure the sustainability of all activities that impact on water, thereby securing the availability of good-quality water for equitable water use in all river basins including transboundary ones.

The European Union has recently reviewed its water related policies and their implementation and published the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources. The Blueprint is looking at international issues as well because water is also a global problem interlinked with many issues such as food security,

desertification, climate change, impact of natural and man-made disasters, which all have significant economic, social and security dimensions.

The European Union is engaged in many of these areas following on from its commitments under Agenda 21, the three Rio Conventions (on desertification, climate change and biodiversity), the Millennium Development Goals relating to water, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and most recently the Rio+20 conference. This engagement will continue to be a high priority for the European Union.

The focus of water management in the European Union development cooperation will be to ensure the access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services and to support sustainable agriculture via the nexus water-agriculture-energy-environment. In addition the European Union will support improvements in water governance since an effective institutional setting leading to good water governance at river basin level is a key to achieve peace and political stability.

European Union support to partner countries and regions should draw on the experience and knowledge gained in water management in the European Union, particularly the implementation of the Water Framework Directive. The UNECE Water Convention has been successful in the last 20 years to complement the achievements of the European Union in ensuring good quality and quantity of waters. In this time of economic crisis it is even more important to allocate financial resources in a wise manner and to avoid duplication of efforts. It is therefore important that the Water Convention continues to provide this added value looking at how it can complement European Union's efforts in the field of water management in parts of the UNECE area where the necessary frameworks have not yet been put in place and implemented and by expanding the area where transboundary cooperation of water resources is taking place.

Germany

The Federal Republic of Germany congratulates the UNECE Water Convention on its successful work in the two decades since it has been signed.

Germany appreciates the products of the Water Convention as well as the work of its bodies which offer unique exchange platforms, enabling knowledge and experience transfer as well as trust building. I refer e.g. to the great experience of developing the second assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters which brought together a big community of experts.

Due to its location in the middle of Europe Germany is sharing 8 river basins with other countries. Several of the international river basin commissions, Germany is part of, are based on the Water Convention and its principles. Germany has shared and will share the experiences of the work in those joint bodies with other UNECE countries. The products of the Water Convention are very useful in the river basin commissions, on EU and on national level, e.g. the guidance on water and adaptation to climate change.

The next years will bring a lot of new aspects and challenges to the Water Convention's community. We will start the work of the new implementation committee hoping that it will develop into a helpful instrument supporting implementation of the Convention and transboundary cooperation. The Convention's work will get more and more linked to the globally discussed issues, like ecosystems and biodiversity or the water-food-energy nexus. The opening up of the Convention to Non UNECE countries is foreseeable and we hope to cooperate with a lot more countries in the future. I am convinced that the Convention and its work are useful worldwide.

Republic of Moldova

Уважаемая председатель, уважаемые коллеги,

От имени Правительства Республики Молдова, Министерства окружающей среды и от себя лично хочу поприветствовать участников VI-ой Встречи Сторон Конвенции по охране и использованию трансграничных водотоков и международных озер, Секретариат Конвенции и выразить слова признательности организаторам этого высокого форума.

Республика Молдова ратифицировала Конвенцию по охране и использованию трансграничных водотоков и международных озер восемнадцать лет назад, 4 января 1994, подписала Протокол о гражданской ответственности и компенсации за ущерб, причиненный трансграничным воздействием промышленных аварий на трансграничные воды в 2003 году, а в 2005 году, ратифицировала Протокол по Воде и Здоровью. За прошедший период после ратификации Конвенции, Молдова участвовала в ряде многосторонних соглашений в области окружающей среды, заключенных под эгидой ЕЭК ООН, что позволило нашей стране усилить выполнение требований указанных международных актов.

Требования Конвенции способствовали формированию и осуществлению национальной экологической политики, направленной на сохранение окружающей среды и здоровья населения, охрану и устойчивое использование водных ресурсов, а также формированию правовой основы трансграничного сотрудничества с приграничными странами - Украиной и Румынией.

Определенный прогресс был достигнут в развитии сотрудничества в области охраны водных ресурсов реки Прут между Молдовой и Румынией. В июне 2010 году мы подписали Соглашение между Правительством Республики Молдова и Правительством Румынии о сотрудничестве в области охраны и устойчивого использования вод Прута и Дуная. Основные принципы Соглашения направлены на улучшение качества вод, предусмотренной Водной Рамочной Директивой ЕС. Соглашение предусматривает ряд специфических действий и форм сотрудничества на основе Межправительственной Гидротехнической Комиссии.

В ходе нашего Совещания сторон мы планируем подписать очень важное и значимое для Молдовы и Украины Соглашение между Правительством Республики Молдова и Кабинетом Министров Украины о сотрудничестве в области охраны и устойчивого развития бассейна реки Днестр. Этот документ был разработан в рамках Конвенции и учитывает требования европейской Рамочной Водной Директивы, в том числе создание бассейновой комиссии, которая будет международным органом по совместному управлению вод Днестра.

При содействии Секретариата Конвенции ведется постоянный Природоохранный Политический Диалог в трансграничном контексте между Молдовой и Украиной. Этот Диалог проходит в рамках совместных проектов, реализуемых в регионе, а именно: проекты ТАСИС «Управление вод», «Сотрудничество по охране бассейна Черного моря», проект при поддержке Германии «Управление рисками», серия проектов ЕЭК ООН и ОБСЕ: Днестр-1, Днестр-2, Днестр-3, и другие проекты, направленные на усиление сотрудничества между нашими странами. Особенно хочется отметить роль международных организаций, таких как ОБСЕ и ЕЭК ООН И ЮНЕП, которые оказывают нам значительную поддержку, и мы надеемся на развитие дальнейшего сотрудничества.

Изменение климата оказывает и будет оказывать негативное влияние на водные ресурсы, обуславливая тем самым катастрофические экономические, социальные и экологические последствия. Осознавая серьезность этой проблемы, Конвенция должна играть ведущую роль в активизации глобальной интеграции, в формировании политики устойчивого управления вод и водных экосистем, должна призвать страны к разработке мер по адаптации к изменениям климата, снижению отрицательного воздействия природных катаклизмов, а также использованию новых технологий для рационального использования водных ресурсов.

Конвенция должна объединять государства для взаимовыгодного и устойчивого сотрудничества в области справедливого распределения водных ресурсов, согласованного с их надлежащей защитой.

Благодарю за внимание.

g) Вода и адаптация к изменению климата в трансграничных бассейнах

Уважаемая председатель, уважаемые коллеги,

Изменение климата оказывает негативное влияние на водные ресурсы и в ближайшем будущем будет иметь катастрофические экономические, социальные и экологические последствия. Осознавая серьезность этой проблемы, страны должны разработать меры по адаптации к

изменениям климата, снижению отрицательного воздействия природных катаклизмов, а также использованию новых технологий для устойчивого использования водных ресурсов.

И здесь я хотел бы напомнить о том, что за последнее время Молдова, Румыния и Украина сталкиваются с большими непрогнозируемыми деструктивными явлениями на наших реках, такими как наводнения. Это явление, бесспорно связано с глобальным изменением климата, и мы, естественно, должны быть готовы к принятию должных превентивных совместных мер в трансграничном контексте, поскольку непринятие мер одной стороной повлияет негативно на другую сторону или обе стороны одновременно.

Мы должны вместе принимать согласованные меры по снижению уязвимости к таким экстремальным ситуациям в бассейне, поскольку наводнения влияют на экономическое развитие наших стран, на гидрологический цикл, на разные сектора экономики, на рекреационный режим и безопасность в бассейне.

Следует отметить, что в рамках совместного с Украиной пилотного проекта «Снижение уязвимости к экстремальным наводнениям и изменениям климата в бассейне реки Днестр («Днестр-III - наводнения и климат») при поддержке ЕЭК ООН, ОБСЕ и ЮНЕП, мы оценили уязвимость в отношении наводнений, были согласованы сценарии и модели для оценки последствий наводнений, частоты и масштабов экстремальных наводнений.

Важно, что эта работа основывалась на данных результатов гидрологических и метеорологических наблюдений, собранных в молдавской и украинской частях бассейна. По молдавской части реки были выполнены профили для реализации моделей и карт наводнений по Днестру. При выполнении карт будет учитываться и трансформация паводковой волны, и перелив через плотину ниже Дубоссарской ГЭС, что важно для приближения к реальным границам наводнения. В рамках проекта предусматривается также улучшение менеджмента и мониторинга вод Днестра, путем установления автоматизированных станций для мониторинга, что улучшит и инфраструктуру обмена данных с Украиной. Как мы видим, проект создает реальные инструменты и механизмы для управления рисками в трансграничном контексте. Правда, есть необходимость в консолидации наших сил по разработке Плана оповещения о рисках наводнений на разных уровнях - подбассейновом, локальном. Также необходимо запланировать совместные мероприятия по снижению риска на основе имеющихся данных проекта.

Сотрудничество с Украиной по Днестру позволило вовлечь в него и заинтересованных лиц нашего приднестровского региона, а также установить тесное сотрудничество с неправительственными организациями. Так, сотрудничество содействует установлению мер доверия, вовлечению всех заинтересованных лиц обеих прибрежных стран.

Вполне понятно, что для стран с переходной экономикой, финансовые возможности для выполнения вышеперечисленных мероприятий только в рамках бюджетных средств весьма ограничены. Поэтому, я хотел бы поблагодарить всех наших партнеров по проекту «Снижение уязвимости реки Днестр» - ЕЭК ООН, ОБСЕ и ЮНЕП, - за помощь, оказанную нам при разработке и выполнении этого проекта и хочу выразить надежду, что проект усилит еще больше наш потенциал по сотрудничеству в рамках управления водами реки и управления рисками. Считаем, что этот проект своевременно вносит свой определенный вклад в прогресс по снижению уязвимости к изменению климата на региональном уровне.

Кроме того, для снижения риска наводнений необходимо укрепить правовую базу трансграничного сотрудничества в сфере управления паводками в рамках бассейнового договора по Днестру и его бассейновой комиссии.

Я благодарю всех за внимание.

h) Водная инициатива Европейского союза и национальные диалоги по политике

Уважаемая председатель, уважаемые коллеги,

Национальный диалог по водной политике (НДВП) в рамках Водной Инициативы ЕС - это механизм, применяемый в Молдове, начиная с 2006 года, для улучшения управления водными ресурсами и водным хозяйством страны. Молдова имеет обязательства по гармонизации

национального законодательства с Директивами ЕС в рамках Плана «Молдова - ЕС». Поскольку в водном секторе пересекаются интересы нескольких министерств и ведомств, необходимо найти и согласовать подходы к решению многих проблем, включая охрану и использование водных ресурсов, управление трансграничными водами, обеспечение качества поверхностных и подземных вод, модернизацию и развитие водоснабжения и водоотведения, управление рисками.

В Диалог вовлечены Министерство окружающей среды, Министерство здравоохранения, Министерство регионального развития и строительства, члены Парламента, национальные и международные эксперты, неправительственные организации, ведущие донорские организации и другие заинтересованные министерства и ведомства.

Европейский Союз, Европейская экономическая комиссия ООН и Организация по Экономическому Сотрудничеству и Развитию всемерно способствуют проведению диалога, в том числе путем оказания помощи при разработке проектов нормативных документов, аналитических отчетов и рекомендаций, Планов действий и т.п. Эта работа финансируется ЕС и донорами, включая Австрию, Германию, Швейцарию, Чешскую республику и другие страны и организации.

Конкретные мероприятия в рамках НДВП в Молдове были направлены на решение приоритетных проблем водной политики, включая интегрированное управление водными ресурсами, водоснабжение и водоотведение, укрепление институтов и нормативно-правовой базы. В частности, за эти годы:

1. Был разработан и принят Парламентом новый Закон о воде (2011), который вступит в силу в октябре 2013 года и заменит существующий Водный Кодекс;
2. Были пересмотрены нормативы при сбросе сточных вод (2008) и разработано Положение по сбросу сточных вод в природные водоемы (2008)
3. Была разработана и утверждена Правительством Стратегия водоснабжения и канализации населенных пунктов Республики Молдова (2007). На данный момент Стратегия пересматривается при помощи программы ЕС по поддержке водного сектора.
4. Был разработан среднесрочный План действий и Инвестиционный план для водоснабжения и водоотведения (2011), как среднесрочный элемент будущей обновленной отраслевой Стратегии.
5. Разрабатывается Стратегия адаптации водоснабжения и водоотведения к изменению климата, которая войдет составной частью в Национальную стратегию адаптации и в обновленную Стратегию правительства по водоснабжению и водоотведению.
6. Наконец, в рамках Диалога ведется большая работа по внедрению в Молдове Протокола по проблемам воды и здоровья.
7. Были разработаны целевые показатели по Протоколу, утвержденные в 2011 году совместным приказом министров здравоохранения и окружающей среды. В продолжение этого направления работы, на заседании НДВП 21 ноября с.г. подписан Меморандум о взаимопонимании и начат новый Проект по реализации установленных целевых показателей при поддержке Швейцарского агентства по сотрудничеству.

Национальный Диалог был и остается эффективным и полезным механизмом взаимодействия различных государственных структур, общественности, частного сектора с целью улучшения водной политики в стране и продолжения необходимых реформ. Молдова заинтересована в его продолжении и рассчитывает на помощь ЕС, ЕЭК ООН, ОЭСР и доноров. У нас есть ряд приоритетов и конкретных предложений по дальнейшим темам диалога, на 2013 год и далее, которые мы в ближайшее время представим партнерам на обсуждение.

Благодарю за внимание!

Palestine

Madame Chairwoman, Respectable Moderator, Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, High Representatives, Esteemed guests,

Thank you for inviting Palestine to this Meeting of the Parties.

All Palestinian water resources straddle international borders and thus are shared with other countries; Palestine has no endogenous resources of its own.

Access to and control over our rightful share of water is crucial to the success and long-term viability of a sovereign Palestinian state. It is also a basic right guaranteed to all under customary international law.

Palestine welcomes the UNECE Water Convention because it provides a framework for transboundary water management and cooperation based on the principle of 'reasonable and equitable' allocation. This is the standard that we aspire to in Palestine.

We feel that our current institutional arrangements are deficient. What is required is a robust mechanism for coordinated or shared management of transboundary water resources based on substantive and procedural principles of equality.

We see the UNECE convention is an important model which offers universal norms and a robust management model to be adopted.

We understand that the amendment to the convention makes it possible for only UN member states to accede to the convention. Unfortunately, however, Palestine is not yet a member state, noting that Palestine has in fact applied for full membership at the UN and in parallel, Palestine is seeking to upgrade its status in the UN to a non-member state. This resolution will be presented by our President tomorrow at the UN General Assembly meeting, to be discussed and voted on.

It is also worth noting also that Palestine, illustrating its commitment to the principles of international water law, has declared its intention to join the 1997 UN Watercourses Convention, and this is expected to happen following a vote in the UN on the non-member state status.

On that note, we kindly ask the Members of the Parties, short of accession to the UNECE convention, how Palestine can benefit from the Convention, both in terms of technical assistance and capacity building.

Thank you.

Romania

Dear Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

First question

- Romania has a long history in cooperating with its neighbouring countries in the field of transboundary water resources. Romania is committed to a full and effective implementation of the Water Convention.
- As the Water Convention encouraged governments to get involved in cooperation with the aim to jointly manage shared rivers Romania signed new agreements with Ukraine (1997), Hungary (2003), Bulgaria (2004) and Republic of Moldova (2010) and is in process of negotiation of a new agreement with Republic of Serbia.
- Entering into force of an agreement represents the first step of the bilateral co-operation. Therefore we paid a lot of attention to achieving the second step by developing specific technical regulations on specific issues such as: monitoring and assessments of waters, exchange of data and information, floods protection, etc.
- The resulting products developed by the Water Convention such as: methodologies, guidelines, recommendations, guidance, contribute to a better understanding of the water issues as well as to a better implementation of the Water Convention on the grounds. All these products are appreciated and taken into account by Romania.

Question on the Convention's direction for the next 20 years.

- We need to build on lessons learned in addressing the remaining challenges for transboundary water management as these are presented in the document entitled Vision for the future of the Water Convention.

- We need to create a framework for active cooperation with the international organizations established on the base of this Convention on specific water bodies as the ICPDR and the Black Sea Commission.
- Particularly the Convention will have to focus in increasing capacity at the international water basin level to tackle main transboundary problems. In this respect an increased cooperation with the established bilateral and regional bodies will be necessary. Also in some case assistance should be given to establish these joint bodies.
- And the least but not the last we need to make efforts in creating a new funding mechanism in order to continue our work at national, regional and international level.

Serbia

- Ratification of Water Convention – tool for the raising the level of protection of transboundary watercourses from transboundary impact, influencing achievement of better conditions in manystreams in the Republic of Serbia
- Importance of bilateral agreements governing sustainable management of transboundary water cooperation with neighboring countries (existing and under preparation) and multilateral agreements: DRPC and Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin
- Allowing accession to the Water Convention by countries outside the UNECE region will be the great opportunity for all of us to exchange experiences and showcase good practices of transboundary cooperation from different basins.

Slovakia

a) How has the Convention helped your country/organisation to improve transboundary cooperation on the ground?

The Czechoslovak Republic, later on since year 1993 the Slovak Republic has a long term history in cooperation with neighbouring countries on transboundary waters. Co-operation with some of them continues more than 40 years. Already that time surface waters protection was managed in the framework of the river basins.

Slovak representatives and experts co-operate on many activities on Water Convention and Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Use of the Danube River (Danube Convention) since beginning of their history. Asset from the first years of activities under umbrella of both Conventions consisted in co-operation and communication with different foreign experts and in exchange of information and experience. These activities have continued later in preparation of common projects: e.g. pilot project on transboundary waters - in SK Morava, Ipeľ, Latorica, Uh (The Netherland as leading country), PHARE projects etc.

In the frame of this co-operation some new aspects of water management have been incorporated into work in comparison with previous one. Experts on positions of leaders of projects, resp. Working groups were mostly from EU countries, what was very useful to start to be familiar with EU legislation (some years before that the Slovak Republic came into EU).

Participation and co-operation of Slovak representatives and experts in all bodies of the Danube Convention and fulfilment of its main objective-implementation of the Water Framework Directive, considerably has helped in preparation of the Slovak Water Management Plan. The experience obtained from this process is transferred into bilateral co-operation on transboundary waters with neighbouring countries, mainly EU members.

Co-operation on transboundary waters, with regard to mentioned experience, is at present more comprehensive with large scale activity rates, whereby better fulfils requirements on water protection and management and helps to approach to objective: „water in satisfactory quality and adequate quantity“.

b) What direction should the Convention head in for the next 20 years? I. e., what should be done to address the remaining challenges for transboundary water management at the basin, regional and global levels?

Challenges for the future for transboundary water management are different for different countries/regions, depends on status of water, pressures (industry, agriculture, floods, droughts etc.), economy and others.

For the future years for the Slovak Republic and EU members - Blueprint, which is at present finalized, will be a key document for water policy. Key role in this document plays better implementation and increased integration of water policy objectives into policy areas, e.g. Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), the Cohesion and Structural Funds and the policy of renewable energy, transport and integrated disaster management.

Measures managed by the EU members depend on county/regional pressures. Based on it countries set up priority ranking. For the Slovak Republic is necessary to continue in pollution reduction programmes (urban waste water, priority substances, diffusion pollution), flood protection, to solve problem with hydromorfological alternations. There is a need to improve, or incorporated into water policy new measures related with CAP, to take into consideration impact of climate change, interaction surface and groundwater etc. All relevant topics will be incorporated into EU Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for next years.

The Slovak Republic in harmony with relevant EU policy reflects these requirements, implement them and will implement measures into national river basin management plans and the Programme of Measures. Different data, assessment of water status, pressures and measures taken and many others are topics at:

- bilateral transboundary meetings with neighbouring countries, mainly EU members (under the umbrella of the transboundary commissions)
- multilateral transboundary meetings (International Convention for Protection of the Danube River and its bodies).

With objective to harmonize them and fulfil requirements of the Water Framework Directive and Flood Directive, mainly.

For the next years there is a need to incorporate new raised topics in Blueprint into water management of transboundary waters, depends on their relevancy.

Mr Dušan Čerešňák

Water Director, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic

AGWA (The Alliance for Global Water Adaptation), Conservation International

Conservation International is committed to supporting efforts and institutions that focus on promoting long-term sustainable resource management, particularly if that resource management can enable peace, social, environmental, and economic security, and cooperation across borders. The UNECE has proven to such an instrument for transboundary freshwater systems. Conservation International believes that to date the UNECE has built a strong framework, practical guidance, and a body of on the ground work that show how transboundary cooperation can become a pillar of sustainable development.

Conservation International is excited at the prospect of opening the convention from its current geographic focus to operating at a global scale. Given this broader scope, I believe that we can work with the UNECE effectively through our regional and global partners to realize transboundary cooperation and to prevent conflict and manage or mitigate the conflict related to water. We view the UNECE as both a strategic global and regional partner in this work.

Several of the work programs are directly relevant to our mission, and we wish to express strong support for them. These include the following:

We believe that IWRM can be a powerful tool for integrating sectors and institutions within and across national borders, particularly if IWRM recognizes the role of ecosystems and a healthy environment in maintaining a secure and healthy water cycle and treats these as vital assets in the natural capital and infrastructure of economies to realize green growth. We also believe that freshwater adaptation and the implementation of approaches that explicitly include ecosystems and biophysical processes in

negotiations such as environmental flows will make IWRM ultimately more sustainable and result in greater equity for vulnerable communities, species, and ecosystems.

Identifying the benefits of transboundary cooperation is a powerful methodology for linking whole basins to have a common understanding of the social, economic, and eco-hydrological connections those nations together. We support this program of work and its explicit inclusion of natural processes that influence the movement of water across landscapes through the recognition and accounting of the essential role ecosystem and biophysical services. We are particularly eager to contribute cases and methodologies to support this work.

The program of work around adaptation to climate change has been very impressive within the UNECE area. The inclusion of basins outside of the ECE region will strengthen this convention, the political and practitioner awareness of how to implement transboundary adaptation of freshwater resources, and ultimately regional and global efforts at sustainable development. We hope to be an implementing partner in this work in places such as the Mekong and the Pantanal.

The water-food-energy nexus program of work is very close to the historic mission of Conservation International, and helps to answer the evolving quest of how to promote economic and ecological coherence, especially in those parts of the world that are developing rapidly or that are vulnerable to the negative impacts of development. The international dialogue around green growth recognizes the transboundary basis for global and regional economies.

Finally, a keystone for all of this work is the opening of the Convention beyond the ECE region. Conservation International began as an organization focused on the developing world in central and South America, Asia, Africa, and the Pacific region. We have worked in the ECE region at a policy level rather than on local and regional projects. We believe the opening of the Convention will help unite many more actors who share core values embedded within the Convention but who work outside of the ECE region.

AMCOW (Conseil Des Ministres Africains De l'Eau)

Présenté par Mr. CHARLES NGANGOUE, AMCOW Secretariat

Je voudrais à cette session spéciale de la Réunion des Parties à la Convention sur la protection et l'utilisation des cours d'eau transfrontalières et des lacs internationaux (Convention sur l'eau) exprimer la profonde gratitude de l'AMCOW au Gouvernement de l'Italie et remercier le Secrétariat de la Commission économique pour l'Europe (UNECE) pour l'invitation adressée au Secrétariat de l'AMCOW en vue de sa participation à ces importantes assises.

Je voudrais aussi et surtout porter à votre connaissance que les Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement de l'Union Africaine ont lors de leur 11ème sommet tenue en juillet 2008 à Sharm El Sheikh en Egypte, pris d'importants engagements dits Engagements de Sharm El Sheikh. Ils reconnaissent et placent l'eau comme facteur primordial pour le développement socio-économique de l'Afrique, d'intégration et de coopération régionale. L'AMCOW qui est le Comité technique spécialisé de l'Union africain en matière d'eau et d'assainissement y a reçu mandat pour le suivi et la mise en œuvre de ces Engagements et doit fournir annuellement un rapport à la Commission de l'Union Africaine (AUC).

L'AMCOW, avec l'appui de ses partenaires africains, européens et internationaux travaille pour le suivi et la mise en œuvre de ces engagements.

La Convention de Helsinki sur la protection et l'utilisation des cours d'eau et lacs internationaux est un exemple concret de coopération sur les eaux transfrontalières dont le Secrétariat de l'AMCOW s'inspire. Le Secrétariat de l'AMCOW s'est engagé à mettre à la disposition des décideurs africains toutes les informations sur la Convention et ses protocoles, nécessaires à son appropriation et à les encourager à sa ratification.

Pour les 20 prochaines années l'AMCOW souhaiterait que l'accent soit porté sur les points suivants:

- L'ouverture de la Convention aux pays non membres de la Commission économique pour l'Europe;
- La promotion de la coopération sur l'eau et 2013, année internationale de la coopération sur l'eau est déjà un bon point de départ;

- L'élargissement de la Convention aux autres aspects de l'eau tels que la santé, l'éducation, l'agriculture etc.;
- La mise en place d'un partenariat fort entre le Secrétariat de l'AMCOW et le Secrétariat de l'UNECE, dans le cadre de leurs programmes de travail 2013-2015.

Pour terminer, je souhaite pleins succès à cette sixième session et vous remercie pour votre aimable attention.

CAREC (The Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia)

a) How has the Water Convention helped your organization to improve transboundary cooperation on the ground?

- NPDs and Central Asian Water Quality Improvement Cooperation project went first along with and second jointly with CAREC, which in its own turn was putting efforts to establish small transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia, then
- Water Convention has accepted proposals of CAREC to assess opportunities and then practice PES in Central Asia and took it under its umbrella. We would like here to thank Swiss Government and personally Ms. Sybille Vermont for strong support of CAREC efforts to promote water related PES in Central Asia
- The joint PES related exercise and practices have allowed CAREC to win a global contest for promotion of PES and REDD + in Kyrgyzstan among 200 applicants worldwide from the Swiss Re, which globally awards best sustainable watershed management proposals for more than decade
- All PES related joint Water Convention's and CAREC activities allowed to promote interregional knowledge networking toward PES, those successfully presented and supported at the 6th WWF and at Rio+20 Conference.
- As for the sub-regional Central Asian effect of the cooperation with Water Convention I have to strongly note that ideas of promoting PES, development of transboundary IWRM, water quality cooperation all together found reflection and support of CA countries in approved CAREC projects, those focusing as mentioned above, on small transboundary water cooperation.
- In use of this opportunity CAREC would like to thank along with UNECE and its Water Convention, donors and partners supporting above mentioned efforts, namely USAID and then Swiss, Norwegian, Finish Governments, EC and GIZ.

b) What direction should the Convention head in for the next 20 years? I.e., what should be done to address the remaining challenges for transboundary water management at the basin, regional and global levels?

- In the Central Asian prospect, there should be considerable efforts made toward overcoming, I strongly believe, of certain miss perception that the Water Convention works for benefits of only downstream countries.
- As far as Water Convention is concerned, this is a miss perception as well that cooperation can be forced;
- I call for good practices and lessons learnt by Switzerland and Austria to be shared with CA upstream countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to prove that the Water Convention works for benefit of both upstream and downstream countries
- It was great to have a Green Economy as key focuses of EfE and then Rio+20 Conferences. As far as water is concerned it is to be noted, specifically in the transboundary context, that the water use in Central Asia is among the most "brown" practices in Central Asia.
- Water Convention wide and the Pan-European wide, taking into consideration regional non-parties, cooperation is still of the greatest importance to achieve at list shared understanding and approaches toward trans-boundary waters in the Pan-European region
- As for the prospects of the Convention to go beyond Pan-European borders CAREC is always ready to share its expertise and practices to be disseminated

EC IFAS (Executive Committee of International Fund for saving the Aral Sea)

a) How has the Water Convention helped your organization to improve transboundary cooperation on the ground?

- EC IFAS has built an effective political platform for supporting transparency and equal participation of CA countries in decision-making processes, taking into account the interests and needs of all states in the region.
- The process of reforms initiated in the framework of Joint Statement that had been adopted by the Heads of CA states in 2009, opened a window of opportunity to revive regional cooperation in the Aral Sea basin.
- The main provisions of the Water Convention and other UNECE environmental instruments are incorporated in the third Aral Sea Basin Program-3 (ASBP-3) developed by EC IFAS jointly with IFAS regional bodies and in close cooperation with donor community.
- Activities and decisions taken during sessions of the UNECE Meetings of the Parties to Water Convention helped to foster acceptance of the Convention by Central Asian states.
- Numerous multilateral meetings, dialogues and national consultations conducted in the framework of EC IFAS and UNECE has contributed to the recent accession of Turkmenistan to the 1992 Water Convention.

The support of the Convention from its CA participants is expressed in the following:

Kazakhstan – Development of the National Plan on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

Uzbekistan – Considerable works on modernization of irrigation infrastructure and monitoring systems, which led to significant reduction in water consumption.

Turkmenistan – National Policy Dialogues on IWRM, water supply and sanitation. Revision of the national legal frameworks for water management and protection.

- The number of CA states which are parties to the Convention are encouraged to deepen synchronization of water law principles with Water Convention as well as to develop and implement jointly IWRM plans in transboundary basins.

b) What direction should the Convention head in for the next 20 years? I.e. what should be done to address the remaining challenges for transboundary water management at the basin, regional and global levels?

- It is important to develop tools on harmonization of existing multilateral and intergovernmental agreements, as well as national water policies in compliance with the UNECE Water Convention. To reach such harmonization in the coming 20 years, the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and its Secretariat is requested to improve the mechanism of explaining provisions and principles of the Convention.
- It should be noted, that when considering opportunities of a country to ratification or accession to the Water Convention and also during the implementation process after having ratifying it, numerous questions arise regarding the procedural, legal, administrative, technical and practical aspects of the requirements for the proper implementation have many questions.
- Therefore, based on the analysis of responses provided by the countries, there is a need in the development of explanatory and recommendatory guidelines of a global nature, and / or that consider regional characteristics (natural, political, ethnic etc.) targeted to specific groups of countries. It is also necessary to take into account the relationship of attracted to the Convention country with other riparian countries on the shared transboundary waters.
- Cooperation in Central Asia was based on 20 years experiences, and new cooperation frameworks have being developed in a dynamic way. It is important that Afghanistan join this work. Afghanistan does not have the observer status in the regional structures yet. Other neighbouring countries are also not relevant to cooperation under IFAS - the only political platform with the presence of all five Central Asian states. In this respect, there is a need in the amendments to the Convention, with the envisage of ways and stages of such cooperation.

Environmental NGOs have been the key in pushing for transboundary water management agreements and have prepared through 5 regional meetings for this 6th Meeting of Parties of the Water Convention.

We are very glad that finally after 13 years, tomorrow the Dniester treaty will be signed. We welcome Dniester treaty not only because it is finally going to be signed but especially because it is environmentally balanced, it fully takes into consideration an Integrated River Basin Management approach as well as multi-stakeholders approach, including NGOs members in the River Commission.

The Dniester river basin treaty should be model for the other river basins in the EECCA region, and we call on the countries of the other river basins in particular the Dnieper, Kura and the rivers in Central Asia to speed up their efforts to sign similar treaties.

In particular in Central Asia there is no time too loose. We know that the immense problems are mostly a political problem, with existing technologies and funding water-waste can be easily reduced by 50%, as well as water-pollution... So we hope that with the new parties to the Convention in Central Asia, finally real measures for progress can be taken.

Of course, the signing of river basin agreements is just the beginning of hard work for their implementation, in which effective public participation is essential, in accordance with the guidance documents elaborated in the framework of the Water Convention and its Protocol on Water & Health.

We see that for the future, that the issue of increasing the quality of water bodies becomes more and more important, - including pollution from extractive industries including uranium and gold mines – and a second key issue is climate change resilience.

We continue to offer our expertise and cooperation for the future progress of the water convention.

European Environment Agency

Statement by David Stanners, Head of International Cooperation

a) How has the Water Convention helped your country/organization to improve transboundary cooperation on the ground?

“Environmental information is an essential component of the environmental policy process. Since the mid-1990s, the landscape of environmental information and assessments has become considerably more populated. This includes national-level 'state of environment', thematic, sectoral and statistical reports and many others. At European level, the second assessment of transboundary rivers and lakes, coming from this convention, is the most recent example, as are EEA's most recent reports on European waters.

In this process of producing and delivering the first and second assessments, this Convention has had a positive influence on filling some data gaps and improving the timely availability of information.

However, the data and information is still far from harmonized or equally accessible across the region. Most significantly, perhaps, the influence of the many environmental reports and assessments on the policy process and on improving the environment is unclear. These are just some of the findings from EEA's Assessment of Assessments report presented to the Astana Ministerial conference in September last year.

b) What direction should the Convention head in for the next 20 years? I.e., what should be done to address the remaining challenges for transboundary water management at the basin, regional and global levels?

“We have two recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Improve the linkage and use of assessments in the policy process - particularly pertinent given the recent launch of the EU Water Blueprint to safeguard Europe's waters.

Future assessments should be explicitly commissioned by policymakers, specifying the policy needs at different stages of the policy cycle. By translating these policy needs into relevant policy objectives, and relevant indicators, assessments can then be targeted to provide more pertinent input to the policy debate. More investment in policy performance and effectiveness indicators and analysis is needed for water assessments. Furthermore, the exchange of established practice examples should be promoted to demonstrate the cost-efficient use and benefits of different approaches for tackling key issues.

Recommendation 2: Develop a process of regular environmental assessments and collaborate in the development of a shared environmental information system across the region to support this.

The Assessment of Assessments report demonstrates the need for a system of assessments designed to address multiple thematic and sectoral needs and policy processes from national to pan-European levels, as well as globally, and one which is closely interlinked with and served by a shared environmental information system for the whole of Europe (and linked globally).

The Convention has an important contribution to make to this and will benefit greatly from the access it will give to cross-thematic and cross-sectoral information and data to support its work.

By developing a Regular Process of environmental assessments in the transboundary water field, this will support and mainstream the various assessments arising for example from the individual transboundary river conventions.

Moreover, by participating in the development of a shared environmental information system across the pan-European region (covering all environmentally relevant themes and sectors), this will improve the quality and comparability of data and improve access to this information for multiple uses and users. Such efforts should of course be supported by the necessary capacity-building if they are to be most effective.

The EEA stands ready to work with the Convention on these issues and looks forward to strengthening our collaboration in the future.

Thank you.

Global Water Partnership (GWP)

a) How has the Water Convention helped your organization to improve transboundary cooperation on the ground?

The UNECE Convention has been an important foundation for:

- The agreements on the basin management plan for the Danube basin, where GWP has been providing technical input as well as support for wide stakeholder involvement;
- The on-going regional discussions and modelling work being done on the Aral Sea basin;
- Assisting in advancing the level of management in basins where cooperation is well established, like in the Sava River under the lead of the International Commission of the Sava River Basin, where assistance was provided by UNECE in the field climate change. In addition, GWP-Mediterranean is complementing the overall efforts by providing technical assistance in enhancing stakeholder involvement;
- Initiating and gradually establishing cooperation at the Drin River Basin in concert with GWP-Mediterranean (GWP-Med);
- Assisting in launching IWRM dialogues in Caucasus region – a transboundary basin of Kura – Araks where GWP Georgia and GWP Armenia were able to influence and advocate for IWRM principles;
- Contributing to the promotion and success of a regional dialogue on policy and technical issues on TWRM in South-eastern Europe under the Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process coordinated by Germany, Greece and the World Bank and facilitated by GWP-Med;
- Promoting common understanding regarding transboundary water related issues through the Assessments it prepares; its latest TWRM Assessment was released during the Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference in Astana, 21 - 23 September 2011; GWP-Med prepared the part focusing on South-eastern Europe.
- In addition to the Convention, the Protocol on Water and Health stimulated the cross sectoral cooperation between water services and the health sector (for example in Romania, Bulgaria, and Georgia).

b) What direction should the Convention head in for the next 20 years? I.e., what should be done to address the remaining challenges for transboundary water management at the basin, regional and global levels?

- The UNECE Convention offers a good way forward for countries in other regions to address transboundary issues.
- GWP believes that expanding the scope of the UNECE Convention to cover other regions will be a positive benefit to those countries in providing a sound legal instrument for transboundary agreements. The results of the International Roundtable on Transboundary Waters in Southern Mediterranean, 26-27 November 2012, in Rome, organized by UNECE, UfM and GWP-Med, back-to-back with the UNECE MoP, has validated that approach through sharing experiences and identifying opportunities for further cooperation.

International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS)/Международный Фонд спасения Арала (МФСА)

а) Какую роль сыграла Водная Конвенция в Вашей организации для улучшения трансграничного сотрудничества?

- Исполком МФСА построил эффективную политическую платформу для поддержания прозрачности и равноправного участия центрально-азиатских государств в региональных процессах принятия решений с учетом интересов и потребностей всех сторон.
- Процесс реформ, инициированный с принятием Главами государств Совместного заявления в 2009 году, открыл историческое окно возможностей для возрождения регионального сотрудничества в бассейне Аральского моря.
- Основные положения Водной Конвенции и других экологических инструментов ЕЭК ООН включены в третью Программу Бассейна Аральского моря (ПБАМ-3), разработанную Исполкомом МФСА совместно с ее региональными организациями в тесном сотрудничестве с донорским сообществом.
- Согласованные действия и решения, принятые в ходе сессии Совещания Сторон Конвенции, способствовали продвижению процесса присоединения к Конвенции государств Центральной Азии.
- Ряд многосторонних заседаний, национальные консультации и диалоги, прошедшие в рамках ИК МФСА и ЕЭК ООН, способствовали недавнему присоединению Туркменистана к Водной Конвенции 1992 года.

Поддержка Конвенции странами Центральной Азии выражается в следующем:

Казахстан – Разработан и направлен в Правительство РК для утверждения Национальный План Интегрированного Управления Водными Ресурсами (План ИУВР).

Узбекистан – Проведены эффективные мероприятия по модернизации ирригационной инфраструктуры и системы мониторинга, которые привели к существенному снижению водопотребления.

Туркменистан – Национальные диалоги по политике в сфере ИУВР, водоснабжения и санитарии. Ведется пересмотр национальных правовых документов по управлению водными ресурсами и их охране.

- Проект по безопасности плотин под эгидой Конвенции по трансграничным водам помогает странам Центральной Азии в разработке, пересмотре и гармонизации своего национального законодательства в области безопасности плотин и других объектов водохозяйственной инфраструктуры, а также в укреплении организаций, отвечающих за безопасность плотин.
- Присоединенные к Конвенции страны должны углублять синхронизацию водного законодательства и водной Конвенции, а также начинать внедрение элементов ИУВР на бассейновом и хозяйственном уровнях.

б) В каком направлении следует развиваться Конвенции в течение последующих 20 лет. Что необходимо сделать для решения имеющихся проблем в области рационального управления трансграничными водами на бассейновом, региональном и глобальном уровнях?

- Следует отметить, что при рассмотрении странами возможности ратификации или присоединения к Конвенции, а также в процессе ее осуществления после ратификации, возникают множество вопросов касательно процедурных, юридических, административных, технических и практических требований к надлежащему осуществлению

- Мы высоко ценим существующие **инструменты** по гармонизации имеющихся многосторонних и межправительственных соглашений, а также национальных водных политик в соответствии с положениями Конвенции ЕЭК ООН. Для достижения гармонизации в ближайшие 20 лет, Совещание Сторон Конвенции и ее Секретариат призываются оказать дальнейшую поддержку в разъяснении положений и принципов Конвенции. В нашем регионе существует необходимость в продолжении повышения осведомленности и наращивании потенциала в данном направлении.
- Существует также необходимость дальнейшего развития аналитических инструментов, глобального характера, и/или учитывающие региональные особенности (природные, политические, этнические и т.д.), ориентированные на конкретные группы стран, включая прибрежные государства конкретных бассейнов. Одним из таких примеров может быть работа по взаимосвязи: вода – продовольствие – энергия, предложенная для нового плана работы в рамках Конвенции.
- Сотрудничество в Центральной Азии было основано на 20 летнем опыте, где наблюдается динамичное развитие новых рамок сотрудничества. Важно, чтобы Афганистан и другие страны присоединились к данному процессу. МФСА – является единственной политической платформой, где присутствуют все пять центрально азиатских государств.

Для приобретения глобального характера, важным шагом является внесение поправок к Водной Конвенции.

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

a) How has the Water Convention helped your organization to improve transboundary cooperation on the ground?

The UNECE Water Convention made a very innovative and strategically important move, when it invited Ramsar Convention wetland ecosystem and biodiversity experts to work with water resources managers in the preparation of the Second Assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters. This cooperation created substantial ground work in view of bridging remaining gaps between the concerns of wetland managers in view of the maintenance of the provision of ecosystem goods and services, and the concerns of water resources managers. Such cooperation is particularly challenging in a transboundary context where different national regulations, policies and approaches are applied to shared natural resources, including water, and ecosystems. However, specifically in the Pan-European region, much progress has been achieved in this field, and much experience and know-how is available, also for use in other regions.

b) What direction should the Convention head in for the next 20 years? I.e., what should be done to address the remaining challenges for transboundary water management at the basin, regional and global levels?

Water is an essential, a precious and a finite resource for all life on earth, including human life. Aiming for a long-term, sustainable development approach, it is important to recognize that freshwater is, to a large extent, delivered and cleaned for human consumption by natural processes linked to the hydrological cycle. These processes are performed by healthy, natural and near-natural ecosystems related to the water cycle, subsumed since the 1960s under the term of wetlands (including rivers, lakes, ponds, marshes, peatlands, coastal lagoons, etc.). Such ecosystem services are provided at low cost, as long as the functional systems are maintained. Working towards a full integration of the accounting of ecosystem services (in economic terms) in the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus, in cooperation and with support provided by the wetland experts of the Ramsar Convention, seems to be a promising way forward for the UNECE Water Convention, at all levels, from local to global levels, and particularly with a water catchment (or river basin) approach. The Ramsar Convention is happy to announce the launch of its TEEB report on the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity focusing on water and wetlands on 2 February 2013, World Wetlands Day.

REC (the Regional Environmental Center)

Statement by Dr Radoje Lausevic, Deputy Executive Director of the REC for Central and Eastern Europe

Your Excellencies, Dear delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) I would like to thank to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe for their invitation to this key event in the Water Convention development.

The Regional Environmental Center is known for being actively involved in majority of the UNECE Water Convention activities and contributing to its introduction in its 17 partner countries in CEE and beyond, namely Ukraine, Belarus and Caucasus countries. We have assisted our partner countries through a number of projects to build capacities of the competent authorities for improving quality and sustainable use of water resources with particular focus on the integrated river basin water management.

The Regional Environmental Center congratulates the UNECE for their prominent work and achievements in implementing the Water Convention and for the forthcoming entry into force of the amendments, opening it to the countries outside the UNECE region and becoming a global instrument. We welcomed coupling of the Convention with the UNECE/ WHO-EURO Protocol on Water and Health activities and the new EU water policy which creates broad coherence between sectors.

Above all, we express our acknowledgement that the Water Convention provides a sound framework in supporting effective transboundary water cooperation, especially at regional and local level, to ensure long-term sustainability and to prevent possible negative transboundary impacts in the basins. Although the REC's partner countries have different economic, cultural and historical facets, they all are interconnected by their rivers, lakes and seas and today they are facing common challenges. We are particularly proud on improved transboundary cooperation in Drina river basin (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia), facilitated by the REC. In the next 20 years, particularly having in mind climate change issues, the integration and link with other sectors, such as agriculture, energy and navigation, should be strengthened. The work to facilitate implementation of joint measures dealing with identified significant water management issues, in the light of ecosystem services, should be continued.

With its more than 20 years of expertise, the REC offers to continue fostering transboundary cooperation in order to protect and ensure the quantity, quality and sustainable management of water resources. With its headquarters in Hungary, the REC will offer full assistance to Hungarian authorities who are organising a major international water event in 2013 - Budapest World Water Summit. We hope it will be excellent platform to further facilitate and help transboundary water cooperation.

Thank you for your attention!

UNCCD (The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification)

Delivered on behalf of Mr. Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD by

Ms Elisabeth Barsk-Rundquist, Director of Programmes and Officer-in-Charge, Global Mechanism of the UNCCD

Mr/Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The UNCCD is delighted to participate in this landmark 6th session of the Meeting of the Parties, which, with the entry into force of the amendments, will open the Convention to countries outside the UNECE region and set the path for its future evolution as a global instrument.

Globalization of the Water Convention will provide a broader basis for tackling water issues in the sustainable development arena. It will open doors for increased synergy and complementarity and allow for lessons learnt from other sectors, and other conventions, to be applied in the context of sustainable water management.

Water energises most sectors of our economy and society. Everything from basic food production to advanced industrial technologies depends on it. Moreover, the dynamics of land, water, climate and biodiversity are intimately connected. It is not difficult to see the commonalities between the issues and challenges facing the Water Convention and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification - the UNCCD - which I represent.

It is in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, - the UNCCD's specific focus - that the problems of water scarcity are the most acute. The Convention's 195 parties work together to improve the living conditions for people in drylands, to maintain and restore land and soil productivity, and to mitigate the effects of drought. Needless to say sustainable water management is an essential element in this equation.

Established in 1994, UNCCD is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. Since its inception, the UNCCD has collaborated closely with the other Rio Conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The UNCCD aims to meet these complex challenges through integrated approaches resulting in technical and financial solutions that support the best possible use of natural resources. It is in this spirit and with a desire to extend its collaboration model to the Water Convention that I am here today.

The UNCCD is particularly committed to a bottom-up approach, encouraging the participation of local people and facilitating cooperation between developed and developing countries, particularly around knowledge management and technology transfer, including making the case for investment in sustainable management of natural resources and revealing the cost of inaction, mainly through landscape approaches to sustainable development on the ground, involving all stakeholders in finding solutions.

In the face of increasing demand on the planet's natural resource base, to achieve water, food and energy security in order to safeguard the livelihoods of billions of people across the globe, we must collaborate both across borders, and across Conventions. I look forward to discussing with you over the next three days, how the UNCCD may support in meeting this challenge.

Thank you for your attention.

UNRCCA (The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia)

a) How has the Water Convention helped your organization to improve trans-boundary cooperation on the ground?

UNRCCA implements a project "Central Asia and Afghanistan: Regional Cooperation on Trans-boundary Water Sharing" aimed at facilitating regional dialogue and building national capacity for mutual understanding on trans-boundary water issues as well supporting the development of positive relations between Afghanistan and Central Asia with respect to trans-boundary water issues. The UNECE Water Convention has been used as an example how Central Asian countries could apply an overarching legal framework for water management and trans-boundary water cooperation in Central Asia, awareness-raising and establishment of an early warning mechanism.

UNRCCA using its convening power became a platform for regional consultations on issues related to the management of trans-boundary water resources. The experience of the implementation of mechanisms of the Water Convention among the diversity of parties was promoted by the Centre. The fact that the Convention lays down a balanced approach, based on equality and reciprocity, creates conditions conducive to a step-by-step accession of the upstream CA countries first to individual instruments and then to the whole system. These efforts are supported by capacity-building activities on international water law in Central Asian countries. Trainings on international legal instruments in the area of trans-boundary water management provided by UNRCCA in cooperation with UNECE presented good opportunities for young diplomats and civil servants from CA states to familiarize themselves with the mechanisms of the Water Convention and spread this knowledge in their respective countries.

There is a growing understanding in the region that Central Asian countries need to develop their inter-state relations on the basis of international law and best practices and in this regard the UNECE Water Convention plays an important role.

b) What direction should the Convention head in for the next 20 years? I.e., what should be done to address the remaining challenges for trans-boundary water management at the basin, regional and global levels?

Some countries feel that an adequate dispute resolution mechanism is lacking in the region. There is a

widespread opinion that in the absence of such a mechanism tensions among the countries of the region cannot be resolved. Therefore the Convention might be further developed to include a more robust dispute resolution mechanism that will lead to the peaceful, impartial and fair resolution of disputes and provide a strong incentive to negotiate mutually agreeable solutions.

Finland

Statement by Hannele Nyroos, at the Ceremony of signature of the bilateral Treaty on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Development of the Dniester River Basin

Dear Parties of the treaty,

The Governments of Ukraine and Republic of Moldova have been working hard for many years to adopt this new Treaty. It is a great pleasure to celebrate this event particularly when it happens in this meeting of the parties. This meeting testifies also other historical events, like globalization of the Water Convention.

Many areas of cooperation in Dniester River have been already established such as monitoring, reducing vulnerability to climate change and protecting aquatic ecosystems. Increased public awareness, broad stakeholder cooperation and long term engagement have built trust and confidence in this area.

The Treaty can be considered also as an excellent pilot, which provides lessons learned for many other areas.

Finland has together with Sweden financed this project. Also many other partners have been involved to this work. We would like to congratulate the parties of the Treaty. We extend these congratulations also to UNECE Secretariat, OSCE and UNEP. Now is time to celebrate. However, this is just a start, but a very good start in a long process aiming to set the Treaty to praxis on the ground.