

**Statement of Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Montenegro  
H.E. Aleksandar Stijepovic at the high level segment Special session  
"Water and Peace"**

**The ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection  
and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes**

**Wednesday, 29 September 2021**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Hosts, Distinguished Representatives of the Parties to the Convention,

As a representative of Montenegro, a state party to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, I am honored to address you at this very important event.

We would like to remind you that Montenegro became a signatory to this convention in 2014, which irrevocably decided to consistently respect and apply the provisions of the Convention and thus show its commitment to water conservation and protection and the promotion of regional cooperation and peace in general.

When it comes to water and peacekeeping, the Western Balkans region is extremely rich in water potential, but in the recent past has had negative experiences with conflicts that are not motivated by water disputes, but close cooperation on water conservation can be a chance to improve and establishing good neighborly relations and lasting peace.

Waters, especially rivers and lakes, represent one of the basic development potentials for Montenegro. In terms of water richness compared to its surface, Montenegro is one of the richest areas in the world. The main feature of the hydrography of Montenegro is the existence of two approximately equal catchment areas of the Danube and the Adriatic. About 47.5% of the surface of Montenegro belongs to the Adriatic water area, and about 52.5% to the Danube area. As much as 95% of river flows in Montenegro are formed on its territory. The largest percentage of groundwater is used for water supply, as much as 90 percent. In addition to rivers, Montenegro is rich in beautiful lakes, which represent a significant tourist potential for our country.

In addition to numerous challenges, Montenegro is committed to raising the level of regional and international cooperation in the field of protection and use of transboundary watercourses, primarily in preventing, controlling and reducing water pollution, as well as sharing hydro potential with countries with which it shares wealth.

In order to achieve these goals, our country has concluded a significant number of bilateral and multilateral agreements with interested countries, primarily neighboring, as well as international organizations.

In order to protect against the harmful effects of water, which are manifested through floods, water erosion and torrents, the Government of Montenegro has joined several regional projects to regulate riverbeds as long-term flood protection, which includes a number of works, facilities, measures and others. required activities.

The growing lack of water resources and their irrational consumption and insufficient protection, along with the unfavorable consequences of climate change, represent a limiting factor of economic development in many regions of the world, including the region of Southeast Europe.

The plan of our Government is to make additional efforts in the coming period in order to protect the environment, especially the implementation of projects related to wastewater treatment and the establishment of measures to prevent, control and reduce water pollution. In the light of today's world aspirations, significant investments in our country will be related to the development of the green agenda in the near future, and priority will be given to establishing measures for wastewater treatment throughout the country, as already mentioned.

In the end, we send the message that if there is no water, there is no life, there is no blue, and there is no green. That is why waters are borders, but also points of connection.