

Statement
by Ms. Iuliana CANTARAGIU
Minister of Environment of the Republic of Moldova

at the High-level special session on “Water and Peace”
part 2: Accelerating progress on transboundary water cooperation to
achieve sustainable development

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to participate in this **Meeting of Parties to the Water Convention** and to represent the Government of the Republic of Moldova at this important event.

For the Republic of Moldova the **environmental and economic conditions** and, implicitly, the **wellbeing and health of the population**, are to a great extent dependent on the **transboundary rivers (Dniester and Prut)**, which we share with **Ukraine and Romania**.

In this respect, it is a **priority for the Moldovan Government to cooperate with our neighbours** to significantly reduce the impact, maintain the waterflow and decrease the pollution level of the Dniester and Prut Rivers, and subsequently, the Danube and Black Sea. The cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine on the sustainable use and protection of the Dniester River is ensured through the **Intergovernmental Commission** installed for that purpose. As for the Prut River, the development and signing of a trilateral agreement between **Romania, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine** and the establishment of a joint body for sustainable management and protection of the Prut River would be the most appropriate way forward.

Within these bodies, with the support of the Convention, we aim for the prevention of degradation and restoration of ecosystems, **maintenance of the natural flow and volume of the water, conservation of biodiversity**, as well as prevention and mitigation of the **consequences** caused by natural and **anthropogenic factors**.

The Republic of Moldova has **continuously expressed concerns** on the **challenges faced in ensuring the sustainability of the Dniester River basin** resulting largely from anthropogenic activity. One of these challenges is the operation of the **Dniester Hydropower Complex** located in the upper basin of the Dniester River.

In that regard, it would be **appropriate to consider the development of a mechanism** under the Convention for the **assessment of social and environmental**

risks in the operation of Hydropower Complexes, risks which occur from non-respect of the **hydrological regimes**, and which are aggravated by the **regional effects of the climate change** and are becoming increasingly evident in Moldova in the last years.

Recent studies developed by a group of scientists and experts on the impact of Dniester Hydropower Complex on the Dniester River reveal that **there is an impact on the quality of water and on the ecosystems** at least 150 km **downstream the dam**. To be green, **the technology used should not harm the ecosystems and should not affect watercourses**.

The **development of a compensation mechanism for the loss of ecosystem services** would give the opportunity to rehabilitate ecosystems downstream the dam built for hydropower purposes. The provision of the compensation mechanism should be part of any bilateral or multilateral agreement between countries for the sustainable use of transboundary watercourses in hydropower purposes.

The Water Convention continues to offer an important platform for bilateral cooperation aiming at finding solutions for the **equitable and fair management of shared water resources**, hydropower constructions on transboundary rivers, and ensuring the balance between the **ecosystem services provided by the river and its economic use**, including for electricity production.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, I would like to **reconfirm our commitment to efficiently implement the Convention and ensure consistency in promoting cross-border cooperation policies** in the field of water management and protection of Dniester and Prut transboundary water courses, for the benefit of our population, economy and ecosystems.

Thank you for your attention!