

**STATEMENT- INTERVENTION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

**to the
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“Water and Peace”**

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**Delivered by
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Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentleman, dear colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to greet you here in Geneva today on behalf of Republic of Croatia.

I would like to thank our hosts for organizing this meeting.

Waters in the Republic of Croatia have a special status - water resources are one of the most important national resources protected by our Constitution. Among the EU countries, Croatia recorded the highest freshwater resources per inhabitant followed by Finland and Sweden.

Being aware of the vulnerability of this precious resource, we are committed to implementation of Drinking Water Directive as well as Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, with strong support of EU funds. This is the way how we contribute also to achievement of SDG 6.

Since a significant number of our watercourses in Croatia have a transboundary character, international cooperation in the field of water management with our neighbouring countries is an important component of the Croatian water policy.

When talking about the role of transboundary water cooperation in fostering trust, stability and peace, as you may know, we have very instructive example of successful transboundary cooperation in Sava region between countries in Sava basin, after war in 90-ies.

Acknowledging the great political, economic and social changes that have taken place in the region, and accepting an idea to cooperate in sustainable development, utilization, protection and management of water resources in the Sava River Basin, the basin countries accepted a challenge and managed to conclude the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin.

Although that was huge challenge in that time, not less important is our cooperation under the umbrella of Water Convention and Danube River Protection Convention.

Croatia also has very successful bilateral cooperation with neighbouring countries: Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, and Monte Negro and expecting its establishment with Serbia.

Croatia is very proud to be part of 5-country Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube, recently approved by UNESCO as the world's first five-country biosphere reserve. We congratulate all on this remarkable success. 42% of this reserve is located in the Republic of Croatia, which we are particularly proud of:

its cross-border dimension is the basis for cooperation and strong potential for future projects that contribute to nature, climate resilience, sustainable tourism and the preservation of traditional heritage.

Let me conclude, during all this year, water management cooperation has become very important catalyst for fostering peace and stability in this Region.

Thank you for your attention!

