

UNECE 9th Session of the Meeting of the
Parties to the Water Convention

Intervention from the Floor
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Council

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Good afternoon to everyone,

The subject of transboundary waters is essential for the future of our planet, since at least half of the world's population live in transboundary basins.

It is also essential if you consider the threats on water.

First of all, it should be underlined that before climate change, the first threat is the population growth. Because population growth takes place mainly along rivers, at their mouths, and in coastal regions. The increasing population requires increasing quantity and quality of water every day.

However, although growing human activity creates enormous pollutions, it also creates an obligation to ensure water security and access to water for all. And this issue is more acute on transboundary basins, as we are experiencing floods and droughts which disturb domestic and agricultural water use.

All these difficulties will increase in the coming decades. And this is why the protection and use of rivers and multi-national lakes requires re-thinking new actions from the concerned stakeholders.

So, in order to take action, in the name of the World Water Council, which, let me recall today, gathers nearly 400 organizations and governments from 70 countries, I would like to express some proposals of answers.

First : Faced with water-related disasters, excess or lack of water, we should apply along the basins, the triple principle of prevention, then evaluation of damage and first aid, then repair and reconstruction. Solidarity and international cooperation are still insufficient in this field.

Second: We should increase the water supply thanks to technological innovations and impose a regulation of the demand by a better management of the uses as well as a clear fight against waste of all kinds.

Three: We should take into account the absolute necessity of an equitable and sustainable share between water for man and water for nature.

Four: We should make the fight against pollution of rivers and lakes an opportunity to strengthen the security of water. Step by step, the treatment of wastewater, domestic and agricultural effluents, is increasing and in a few decades will be the rule. Accepting the reuse of wastewater is the revolution in progress, after that of desalination, and it will contribute to recharge the flows of rivers and groundwater.

Five: This new or retreated water mass should be largely and efficiently devoted to a more ecological and environmental-friendly food production.

Six: all these actions should be carried out with respect and promotion of the right of access to water for all. This right is an obligation to be implemented in the constitutions or founding texts of each State.

Seven: water security in international basins should be a political priority. Water is politics. Dialogue, nothing but dialogue, should be the rule between the parties.

Eight: We have, with the government of Senegal, as Minister Thiam said this morning, an important milestone to make water a real planetary priority.

Help us! Come and participate in the ninth World Water Forum in March 2022 in Dakar.

Thank you