



Misión Permanente de la República Dominicana ante la Oficina de las Naciones Unidas,
la Organización Mundial del Comercio y otras Organizaciones Internacionales en Ginebra

**Words of Ambassador Virgilio Alcántara,
permanent representative of the Dominican Republic
and regional coordinator GRULAC Environment**

**Questions and Answers about the Water Convention: Opportunities for Latin
America and the Caribbean?**

December 7, 2021

Distinguished Mrs. Sonja Koeppel, Executive Secretary of the Water Convention
and Mrs. Chantal Demilecamps, moderator of the event,

Invited panelists,

Dear colleagues and members
of our permanent missions in Geneva,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a real honor and a pleasure to be here, among you, in the aims of addressing
an essential issue for the achievement of a sustainable and inclusive
development of our countries and, in that sense, for the establishment of a
governance system able to guarantee the environmentally sound exploitation of
water resources in Latin America and the Caribbean.

We hope that this presentation will inaugurate a process of dialogue between
our countries, centered on the challenges we face concerning water and the
threats that loom over our countries in the face of the growing scarcity of this
essential liquid. We would also like to stimulate an exchange on the different
options and mechanisms that we could eventually adopt to contribute to an eco-
responsible management of our water resources, including transboundary rivers
and lakes, shared aquifers, as well as of their ecosystems and biodiversity.





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To enrich this exchange, we would like to begin by considering other international experiences, to gain a better understanding of the obstacles and opportunities that collective agreement, as well as the adoption of international mechanisms and the development of cross-border cooperation, pose in relation to this challenge.

This is the basic reason that led us to invite the Secretariat of the Convention on Transboundary Rivers and International Lakes, to present their invaluable experience and allow us to learn about an existing instrument. We also appreciate the opportunity to get acquainted with the experience of Hungary and the impact that the adoption this Agreement has had in the country.

Dear colleagues, it is only from the promotion of real consensus and of active cooperation that we will be able to guarantee the comprehensive management of the water basins and other water resources, and thus be capable of contributing to the preservation of their ecological continuity, therefore protecting their ecosystems and Biodiversity.

We are deeply convinced that the search for instruments and options, at the regional level, could contribute to ensuring that the projects related to the exploitation of water resources, as well as those devoted to the preservation of the integrity of underground aquifers, respect the principles of scientific rationality, and the technical considerations required to help ensure that they do not have a harmful impact on watersheds, on the environment and on the species, including the human species.

Likewise, we are certain that the adoption of common legal instruments, based on the principles of international law, minimize uncertainty and contribute to favor the necessary technical and scientific considerations in regard to those initiatives that, in one way or another, involve water management, minimizing the risk of conflict derived from its use and exploitation.

Moreover, we should not limit this reflection to rational management, in terms of the preservation of the resource itself, but our countries should also consider it's impact that on our efforts to prevent and control natural disasters and





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catastrophes linked to water, such as floods, responsible for a large part of the damage that these phenomena cause in our region, especially in the Caribbean area.

Therefore, we should invest ourselves in the wide-spread adoption of water management principles to collectively guarantee the inclusive and sustainable development of our countries, as well as the preservation of the necessary conditions to bequeath a habitable land to future generations.

Finally, we hope this opportunity will translate into a positive dialogue that will allow us to better understand this agreement and its scope. And by doing so in a collective context, such as GRULAC, it will also allow us to learn about the concerns and expectations that this instrument may raise among us, thus nourishing an exchange for determining whether if the participation of our countries in this agreement could represent a step forward in a more sustainable management of water resources.

Thank you very much for your kind attention!

