

**Pan-European Regional Preparatory Meeting
for the United Nations 2023 Water Conference
Geneva, Palais des Nations, 12 – 13 April 2022**

Session 3. Strengthen water governance at national and transboundary levels

Statement submitted by Ms. Ruth A. Richardson, International Network of Liberal Women, a non governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls is one of International Network of Liberal Women (also known as INLW) strongest strategic pillars. This implies enhancing the role of women as drivers of climate change, and directly contributing to SDG 6 on clean water, clean environment, innovation and infrastructure, and to SDG 5 on gender equality.

As established by UN Water, the absence of safe drinking water and effective sewage and sanitation systems imposes serious limitations on the economic, political, and societal emancipation of women. First, water collection, usually performed by women, is an arduous and time-consuming domestic burden that impacts their capacity to develop other skills, or work. And second, women are primarily responsible for water provision and its domestic and agricultural use, they are traditionally excluded from its management.

International Network of Liberal Women (INLW) together with the Dutch Water Authorities implores this body to ensure and to address the impacts of climate change are all impacted by the challenge water scarcity.

International Network of Liberal Women (INLW) and the Dutch Water Authorities calls thus the (UNECE) United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and its member states to:

Include women in all aspects of development planning and implementation on water scarcity and sanitation, including consultation, funding, leadership, infrastructure instalment & training;

Conduct gendered analysis when considering adaptation and mitigation options and when monitoring the impacts of programs addressing water scarcity, hygiene, and sanitation;

Progressively eliminate inequalities in access to water and sanitation by 2030.