

## UNCDF Statement

### UNECE Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 2023 UN Water Conference

Geneva, 12-13 April 2022

- Thank you Madame Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues. I am proud to be here today to **represent the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)**, UN's flagship catalytic finance entity for the world's 46 LDCs.
- Heading towards the **2023 UN Water Conference**, we believe this is an important moment to talk about the future for transboundary and multisectoral water cooperation as well as financing for water and peace.
- Therefore, I want to **thank UNECE** for organizing this regional meeting and for its efforts in the context of funding and financing for transboundary water cooperation and basin development. I would also like to congratulate UNECE for its recent **publication** on this topic, presenting innovative Financing Initiatives for transboundary water cooperation, including the Blue Peace Financing Initiative.
- But before talking about solutions, let's have a look into the **challenges** in this field: **Mobilizing sufficient financing** remains a major challenge in implementing the 2030 Agenda, especially for SDG 6.
- The **way financing currently approaches water and related investments** is overly administrative, country-based and sectoral, resulting to oversized projects and lack of strategic planning. Meanwhile, River Basin Organizations lack access to international capital markets.
- **To address these challenges** and the systemic nature of global risks including climate change, pandemics, and threats to peace and security, we must reform our institutional, policy and financial architectures; we must strengthen multilateralism; we must create incentives, including financial incentives, for transboundary and multisectoral cooperation; we must find better ways to sustainably manage our limited natural resources; and we must support stakeholders on all levels to do so.
- This is why **UNCDF together with its partners has launched the Blue Peace Financing Initiative** at the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Dakar.
- This Initiative is as follow-up to the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace and aims to **promote access to capital** for local governments and River Basin Organizations. It does so by using water as entry point for transboundary and multisectoral cooperation frameworks and transforming them into **investment platforms through capacity building and capital mobilization activities**.
- In collaboration with **Switzerland**, we are currently testing this innovative approach in West Africa together with the Gambia River Basin Development Organization (**OMVG**).
- The Blue Peace Financing Initiative will **provide a new financial incentive** for countries and sectors to cooperate and sustainably manage their shared water resources.
- It will **change the financial sector's perception** of water from looking at it as a distinct sector to recognizing it as multisectoral and regional impact investment opportunity.
- It will **lead to more sustainable economies and peaceful societies** and contribute to the 2030 and Addis Agendas as well as the International Water Action Decade.
- **Our vision** is to bring the Blue Peace Financing Initiative and with it a strong financial incentive for transboundary water cooperation and peaceful agreements around shared water resources to any region with transboundary basins, including the Pan-European region and we hope the **2023 UN Water Conference will highlight the importance** of innovative financing for transboundary water cooperation. Thank you.