



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

17 November 2017

Excellency,

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/222 of 22 December 2016, Member States decided to proclaim the period from 2018 to 2028 the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, to commence on World Water Day, 22 March 2018.

The Decade aims to put greater focus on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources and to strengthen cooperation and partnership at all levels in order to help achieving internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In this context, I have the honour to share with you a concept-note for the formal launch of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028.

It is my hope that this high-level event will attract the highest possible level of participation from your Government.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Miroslav Lajčák

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

CONCEPT NOTE

LAUNCH EVENT

International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028

22 March 2018

UN General Assembly, UN Headquarters

Background

Water is critical for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger, and is indispensable for human development, health and wellbeing. Water related challenges, including limited access to safe water and sanitation, increasing pressure on water resources and ecosystems, and an exacerbated risk of droughts and floods, have received increasing attention on the global arena.

Recent **milestone agreements** and outcome documents on sustainable development, such as the **2030** Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and the Paris Agreement have placed water **at their heart**. Goal 6 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030. Guaranteeing sustainable **water** management **is a vital** element to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant goals in the social, environmental and economic fields.

In its resolution 71/222, the General Assembly proclaimed the period from 2018 to 2028 the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, to commence on World Water Day, 22 March 2018, aiming to **further improve** cooperation, partnership and capacity development in response to the **ambitious 2030** Agenda.

Furthermore, Sustainable Development Goal 6: “Ensure access to water and sanitation for all” is scheduled to be reviewed at the High Level Political Forum session, in July 2018.

Objectives

The International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-**2028** builds on the achievements of the previous “Water for Life” Decade 2005-**2015**, and creates a **solid platform** to advance cooperation and partnerships at all levels for **the implementation of water related goals and targets**. It will also put a greater focus on the integrated management of water resources. The Decade will contribute to the achievement of these goals by facilitating the sharing of good practices and providing a platform for advocacy, networking and partnership building.

The objectives of the launch event are threefold:

1. Officially launch the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028;
2. Present the action plan of the Decade;
3. Exchange views about how the International Decade for Action can help advance the implementation of water related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

At the launch event, the action plan of the Decade will be presented and discussed by Member States, panelists as well as stakeholders present who are eager to accelerate progress on water related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Date and venue:

The official launch of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028, will be convened on 22 March 2018, “The World Water Day”, at the United Nations Headquarter, in New York.

Event Format, Outcome and Participation

The launch event will consist of an opening segment, a plenary meeting and panel discussions that shall be informal, inclusive, open-ended and interactive, with the participation of Member States, representatives of the UN System, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders.

The outcome will be a President's summary, which will be circulated to all Member States and other stakeholders.

Guiding questions

The following questions aim to facilitate interactive Dialogue for the event.

- How can the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028 support the implementation of the water-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? How can the discussion at the launch event feed into the review of SDG 6 at 2018 HLPF?
- What are the challenges to implement the water-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda and eventual solutions or best practices to be shared in the context of the Water Decade?
- How can the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028 enhance and further promote multi-stakeholder cooperation and partnerships at all levels?
- What is the role of women and youth in promoting the objectives of the Water Decade?