
**The adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution
entitled "International Decade for Action" Water for
Sustainable Development", 2018 – 2028**



On 21 December 21 2016 the UN General Assembly adopted with consensus a resolution A/RES/71/222 entitled "International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028", sponsored by the 177 UN member states. As you might be aware, the initiative for proclamation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development“ was launched for the first time by H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan during the 711st World Water Forum in the Republic of Korea.

In accordance with the resolution (OP3) the period from 2018 to 2028 is proclaimed as the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" to commence on 22 March 2018 and terminate on 22 March 2028 (22 March – World Water Day).

In accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution (OP4) the objectives of the Decade will be mainly focused on:

- ✓ sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental goals;
- ✓ implementation and promotion of related programmes and projects;
- ✓ furtherance of cooperation and partnership at all levels in order to help to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In addition, the resolution (OPS) highlights the importance of promoting efficient water usage at all levels, taking into account the water, food, energy, environment nexus.

In addition, the resolution identifies the following objectives to be pursued:

- ✓ improving knowledge generation and dissemination, facilitating access to knowledge and exchange of good practices, generating new information relevant to the water related Sustainable Development Goals;
- ✓ pursuing advocacy, networking and promoting partnership and action by different actors to implement the water-related goals and targets;
- ✓ strengthening communication actions at various levels for the Implementation of the water—related goals.

This resolution invites the Secretary-General, with the support of UN-Water, to take appropriate steps to plan and organize the activities of the Decade at the global, regional and country levels, taking into account the outcomes of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005—2015, and the work of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

As you know, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan along with other Heads of 10 UN member states is a member of the High-level Panel on Water. First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water resources of Tajikistan has been appointed as a Special Representative of the President to the High-Level Panel on Water.

In accordance with the resolution the following important events will be convened:

- ✓ Two working—level dialogues by the President of the General Assembly to be convened during the 71st UNGA session to discuss improving the integration and coordination of the UN activities on water resources;
- ✓ Review of the implementation of the Decade at the 77th UNGA session.

In January 2018 a preparatory process for convening the UNGA working-level dialogues will begin. A preparatory process for the midterm review of the implementation of the Decade in accordance with the present resolution will begin during the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, i.e. in Autumn of 2018.

As noted above, the initiative for proclamation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” was launched for the first time by H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan during the 7th World Water Forum, which took place last year in April in the Republic of Korea. Speaking at the Water Forum the President stated that “... *the modern global challenges and threats, including the financial and economic crisis. Population growth, climate change, increase of natural hydro-meteorological phenomena. Water scarcity and, as a result, increasing levels of poverty, spread of infectious diseases, child and maternal mortality still require the mobilization of our efforts and relevant measures*”.

In this regard, the Head of State proposed that after completion of the International Decade for Action “Water for Life”, 2005—2015”, to work on preparation of a new

Decade, which will become a solid platform and promote coordination and promotion of all efforts to address the issues and problems related with water resources. In addition, the new Decade is aimed to continue implementation of the indicated steps of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life, 2005–2015", enriching it with new measures and efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

It is widely known that the initiative to proclaim the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015" was also launched by the President of Tajikistan in 2003. That year, by the initiative of Tajikistan, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution, according to which the period of 2005-2015 was proclaimed as the International Decade for Action "Water for Life".

Subsequently, as part of this decade Tajikistan initiated to proclaim 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation. Within the framework of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" and in accordance with the resolutions of the UN General Assembly three interactive dialogues of the UN General Assembly were convened in 2010, 2013 and 2015. In addition, the Government of Tajikistan in cooperation with the United Nations prepared and convened in Dushanbe the following important events:

- ✓ The Mid-term Comprehensive Review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", June 2010;
- ✓ High-level International Conference on Water Cooperation, August 2013;
- ✓ High-level International Conference on the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", June 2015.

In July 2016, the UN Secretary-General issued a report on the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005- 2015 (A/71/260). According to this report (para 40) "The Decade was responsible for many accomplishments. No other 10-year period in the history of the United Nations has witnessed as many water-related activities and achievements". In addition, the report noted that "the Decade helped maintain momentum, provided the impetus for continued actions and activities and helped water become the focus of a level of attention greater than any witnessed previously" (para 42). Furthermore, the Decade, as the report says, "has shown where the shortfalls lie and what slows down progress on water—related goals and targets. There are still a myriad of constraints on human, institutional and financial resources " (para 44).

Report of the Secretary-General ends on a very positive note about the last Decade: "The International Decade for Action, "Water for Life" 2005-2015, proved that through milestones attained consistently over a given period. Results, at many levels, can be achieved. After 10 years of concerted effort and in comparison with the situation in 2005, the global water community is now in a much different position and has acquired a more positive orientation. While a large amount of work remains to be done, it is clear that much can be accomplished by building on the steps taken during the Decade " (para 48).

The preparatory work for promotion of the new Decade, aimed at continuation of the work of the previous Decade, was begun by the Ministry/the Government in advance by including a number of additional events in the High-level International Conference on the Implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" convened by the Government of Tajikistan and the UN in June 2015 in Dushanbe. As a result of discussions within the Conference the initial concept of the new decade was prepared that was later improved with participation of water experts.

In addition, during the High-level Symposium on SDG 6 and Targets "Ensuring that no one is left behind in access to water and sanitation" held this year in August in Dushanbe we were able to attract the attention of all participants to this initiative. The final document of the Symposium included some very important elements of the water issues, which were then used in preparation of the new draft resolution of the UN General Assembly.

The initial draft resolution of the UN General Assembly entitled "International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018— 2028" was distributed among the permanent missions of the UN member states in mid-September 2016. Then, within the framework of the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly, which deals with economic and financial issues, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations held a series of informal negotiations with the participation of the experts of UN member states. During the negotiations the draft resolution was finalized taking into account the Views and suggestions of all interested member states. The negotiation process was successfully concluded on 30 November 2016 and the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus the resolution entitled "International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development",

2018-2028" (A/C.2/L.12/Rev.1).

**Botschaft der Republik Tadschikistan
in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Berlin**