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НАМОЯНДАГИИ ДОИМИИ ЧУМҲУРИИ ТОҶИКИСТОН ДАР НАЗДИ САҲА

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE OSCE

DUSHANBE DECLARATION ON WATER

OUTCOMES FROM THE HIGH LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE MIDTERM COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION "WATER FOR LIFE" 2005-2015 (HLIC) DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN, 8-10 JUNE 2010

[1] Upon the invitation of the Government of Tajikistan and as welcomed by the UN General Assembly in its resolution 64/198, Heads of States and Governments, Ministers, Government delegations, Heads of UN entities, Representatives of International and Regional Financial Institutions, civil society and the business community from 75 Countries met in the HLIC convened in Dushanbe from 8 to 10 June 2010.

[2] The High Level International Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life 2005-2015" (HLIC) focused its in-depth deliberations on six themes: (i) Accelerating progress towards water-related IADG, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and ensuring involvement of women; (ii) Transboundary water cooperation; (iii) Water quality; (iv) Water resources and adaptation to climate change, disaster risks reduction; (v) Sustainable financing; and (vi) Integrated Water Resource Management, energy, agriculture and food security. It is also built on the outcomes of the high-level interactive dialogue of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly in New York on 22 March 2010, World Water Day.

[3] The outcome of the HLIC consists in a number of important conclusions and recommendations contained in the present Dushanbe Declaration on Water.

[4] The Government of Tajikistan will submit the Dushanbe Declaration on Water to the UN General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session for appropriate consideration.

[5] The Conference reaffirmed the critical importance of water for environmental protection and sustainable development, including poverty and hunger eradication, public health, food security, hydropower, agricultural and rural development. The HLIC renewed the commitments made to achieve the internationally agreed upon goals on water and sanitation, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium

Declaration, the provisions of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and stressing the need to include water and sanitation as national priorities for the sustainable development and poverty eradication strategies. The HLIC also took note of the Ministerial Declarations of the 5th World Water Forum. The work done within the UN System in support of countries, in order to reach the aforementioned goals, was also recognized. The decisions and resolutions of relevant United Nations organs, organizations and bodies regarding water, sanitation and other related issues were highlighted by the Conference.

[6] The HLIC recognized the importance of multilateral frameworks under the United Nations to address all issues related to water and sanitation to promote cooperation among riparian states both through bilateral and multilateral arrangements and to ensure an appropriate follow-up to those issues, in line with commitments made in that regard, as reflected, inter alia, in Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

[7] The HLIC noted the achievements during the first five years of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015 on the implementation of water-related programmes and projects. These achievements were made possible by various efforts by developing countries, the donor communities and various United Nations and international organizations and civil society organizations. The HLIC also noted many major obstacles resulted from the persisting challenges and newly emerging issues resulting from the recent global crises, including the energy, food and financial crises coupled with the increasing impacts of climate change. In this context, the HLIC highlighted the following:

[8] Sustainable use, management and conservation of surface and ground water resources is vital for achieving progress in all fronts of economic and human development as well as safeguarding water quality and ecosystems, and the life-supporting goods and services they provide to humanity.

[9] Water resources management issues need to be addressed at local, national and, as appropriate, at the regional and international levels. All stakeholders including in governments, international organizations, private sector, civil society and academia should be engaged, as appropriate, taking into account social, economic and environmental factors and paying special attention to the livelihoods of the poor and most vulnerable people. In this context, stakeholders should also strive to ensure the participation of women in water-related development efforts, to work together towards achieving the goals of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015 as decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/217.

[10] In this context, the HLIC recalled Principle 2 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which states that "States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national boundaries". It is, therefore, the responsibility of national governments to define appropriate policies and sufficient budgetary allocations to the water sector.

[11] Water is central to achieving of the MDGs. Ensuring sustainable and equitable access to water**,** requires addressing extremes of water availability through proper water management, as well as providing adequate sanitation and wastewater services. Commensurate policies and action on water and sanitation are essential for lifting people out of poverty, for ensuring food and energy security, promoting a healthy society and contributing to sustainable development. Raising awareness of the central role of water resources in achieving Millennium Development Goals calls for continued communication and outreach campaigns.

[12] Progress in achieving goals to halve the number of people without access to safe drinking water, and adequate sanitation is slow and uneven. The HLIC delegates should reconfirm the commitment to make all efforts within our reach to attain these goals. The HLIC delegates should support the "Sustainable Sanitation - the Five Year Drive to 2015" initiative proposed in the Follow-up Conference on the International Year of Sanitation, January 2010, Tokyo.

[13] The HLIC calls on countries, if they have not done so, to consider setting up national committees and designating focal points in their respective countries to facilitate and promote activities related to the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015 during its second half.

[14] The lack of goals on the sustainable and productive uses of water as well as its management makes it harder for the international community to track progress, further complicated by inadequate and deteriorating networks of data collection and challenges in sharing the data.

[15] The United Nations system has an important role to support countries achieve the goals of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015, and meet emerging challenges by promoting cooperation at all levels and building capacity in water resources management and in provisioning of drinking water supplyand sanitation services. UN-Water will continue to facilitate the coordinated system-wide response necessary for the implementation of activities in support of the "Water for Life" Decade.

[16] Political will and financial commitments both from national governments and development partners should be further strengthened and be granted high priority in order to ensure the attainment of water-related internationally development targets during the remainder of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015 especially for developing countries despite the persistence of the current global economic and financial crisis. In this regard, countries should appropriately prioritize water and sanitation issues during the upcoming, MDG High-Level Plenary Meeting of the 65th General Assembly in New York, September 2010.

[17] International and regional financial institutions as well as public private partnership are important to mobilizing and facilitating financial flows towards various water related activities and should develop further mechanisms to respond adequately to the increasing demand for financial resources and for technical and institutional capacity building.

[18] South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation initiatives for water resources management should consider the different realities involved in each case. In

this regard, cooperation should be fostered not only through traditional financial means but also through a broader approach, that is, by promoting exchange of experiences, best practices and lessons learnt as well as sharing appropriate, environmentally sound technologies and know-how. In this connection partners in development cooperation can focus assistance on areas and countries that are off-track to achieve the MDGs, focusing on water related components of all MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals in accordance with national priorities and development plans.

[19] A gradual and sustained implementation of integrated water resources management at the level of river basins and groundwater systems, is central to meeting social, environmental and economic needs in an equitable manner.

[20] Climate change affects people's livelihoods and well-being mainly through adverse impacts on the hydrological cycle. It is vital to build resilience and reduce vulnerabilities to extreme events, namely floods, droughts and other hydro-climatic hazards. Managing increased variability in hydrological conditions by structural and non-structural measures is essential. It is important to build long-term resilience through strong institutions and water infrastructure, including well-functioning ecosystems, such as forests and wetlands. It is more effective to proceed from reactive and ad-hoc crisis management to proactive disaster preparedness and risk management based on adequate risk mapping and monitoring, all of which require scientific information and new tools for decision making. Thus, the promotion of scientific and technological development and cooperation among countries is essential and should be strengthened. The Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015), building the resilience of national and communities to disasters, provides the policy framework and guidance to address these challenges.

[21] The world's existing network of rainfall, snow-pack, glaciers and stream-flow observation and monitoring systems have seriously eroded. In many cases, the density is far below international standards for meaningful prediction or interpretation of data. The shrinking information base reduces the ability to monitor water quantity and quality, predict droughts, forecast floods, understand climate change implications as well as make appropriate water management plans. Enhancing hydrologic, hydrogeologic and meteorological data collection, assessment and dissemination capabilities are crucial and should be strengthened including as part of the implementation of the Global Framework for Climate Services. The improvement of water resource management and scientific understanding of the water cycle through cooperation in joint observation and research, as well as, for this purpose, the promotion of knowledge-sharing and provision of capacity-building and transfer of technology particularly to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, is crucial.

[22] Adapting production and support systems to global environmental change through development and implementation of water-saving methodologies and technologies in all sectors in need of water is of fundamental importance to ensure sustainable and efficient water resources management.

[23] Innovative and modernized efficient irrigation and drainage schemes and management approaches, that are technologically feasible and available for adoption, as

well as environmentally sustainable, are often required to improve productivity and efficiency of water use in agriculture in order to ensure food security, eradicate poverty and hunger, and protect the environment.

[24] Water as one of the sources of renewable energy is needed to generate power and power is needed to deliver water as well as many other basic services to populations. Sustainable hydro-energy generation may contribute to important progress in poverty reduction, mitigating climate change, and achieving sustainable development, particularly in developing countries.

[25] Protecting water quality enhances the availability of safe water. Pollution of surface and groundwater ought to be prevented through comprehensive and innovative policies and strategies, including by increasing public awareness and outreach activities directed to this goal as well as holistic approaches that promote the circular use of water through cost effective approaches, both central and decentralized, to address multiple human and environmental needs.

[26] Desalination and wastewater treatment for reuse can be strategic options in many water short areas. It is essential to make them sustainable, cost-effective and affordable.

[27] Water resources need to be managed with appropriate planning and governance systems to ensure that infrastructural and non-infrastructural measures are effective in ensuring sustainable water use and management. Investment in these areas should be given highest priority.

[28] Mobilizing financial resources from all possible sources for the wide range of water issues and promoting public as well as private investments are of fundamental importance. Targeting financing to areas in greatest need is important. Sustainable and accessible financing strategies including diversified credit and appropriate financial management mechanisms ought to be promoted and implemented by international financial institutions and development partners, with due attention given to the recipient needs and capabilities.

[29] The international donor community, according to national priorities of recipient countries, can further incorporate, as appropriate, water into the broader frameworks of development cooperation and focus assistance on areas and countries that are off-track to achieve the MDGs, focusing on the embedded and often neglected water-related components of all MDGs.

[30] Developing countries should be provided with sustained and predictable financial assistance and technology transfer, on fair and equitable terms, according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, in order to successfully address the challenges related to drinking water, environmental sanitation and the implementation of adaptation measures to climate change at the national level.

[31] It is essential to improve national level water governance through strengthened laws and regulatory frameworks, political and administrative accountability as well as public participation and transparency.

[32] Women and children are known to be the most adversely affected by the lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Women also are rarely sufficiently involved in the decision making processes, hence gender initiatives should be boosted in water resources management.

[33] Access to safe drinking water and sanitation, which is recognized by some countries as a human right, is inextricably linked to life, health, development, food, housing, education, physical security and freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment. The realization of this can be promoted through national efforts, with the appropriate international support.

[34] History has often shown that the vital nature of freshwater is a powerful incentive for cooperation and dialogue, compelling stakeholders to reconcile even the most divergent views. Water more often unites than divides people and societies. Riparian countries should strengthen dialogue and cooperation as well as take measures on mutually beneficial and rational use of transboundary water resources on the basis of recognized by them norms, principles and legislation. Specific and tangible steps could be undertaken by riparian countries, including through cooperation, in accordance with existing and future agreements. It is possible for parties with divergent interests to benefit from those resources with specific arrangements tailored to a given basin's characteristics.

[35] Recognizing that transboundary water cooperation needs to be guided by regional and international agreements, as well as should be fostered among countries including within existing mechanisms and modalities of water diplomacy.

[36] Acknowledging that water is a cross-cutting issue, the above-mentioned messages should be communicated also to the decision makers and stakeholders outside the water domain to achieve broad endorsement and consensus on a common aim that requires an integrated and well-coordinated approach. Decisions in other sectors and those related to development, growth, security and livelihoods need to incorporate water as an integral component, including responses to climate change, food and energy challenges and disaster management. Synergies should not be lost due to narrow sectoral approaches.

[37] The participants expressed sincere appreciation to the Government of Tajikistan for hosting the conference and for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to all participants.

[38] The HLIC also expresses appreciation for the assistance and support provided by the United Nations system organizations, headquarters and country teams, including UN-Water, as well as other regional and international institutions in the preparation of this Conference.