

Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends of Water

With my participation in the conclusion of this event dedicated to water, I would like first to thank you and congratulate you for the quality of your presentations and of the discussions.

Water, today, has its place in the climate debate. And I would like to express our gratitude to our colleagues from the United Nations for having contributed to that.

Yes, Climate is Water, as water is climate.

Because, of course, climate evolution has an impact on water resources. First of all, climate

increases the intensity and the frequency of natural water-related disasters and crises.

But let's not make climate change responsible for all our difficulties and all our misery.

We owe the urgent need for access to water also to the demographic pressures of rapid world population growth. Tensions and conflicts arise due to urbanization, in megacities which are the quote-unquote "monsters" of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Urbanization bordering seas and oceans, rivers and lakes, creates parades of pollution poisoning water.

Tensions are also due to rising standards of living, every day consuming masses of freshwater.

Conflicts of use between agriculture, tourism, industry, potable water for populations sometimes create shortages and crises.

But, it's not enough to just notice the trend.

Collective, lasting, but especially equitable action is indispensable and urgent. Action must be based on values of solidarity and sharing. And on legitimate objectives that are clear and credible.

Let me say here on this day dedicated to water during this CoP24 in Katowice, how much the World Water Council is committed to the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action. And also to water and sanitation action. And the Council will stay

committed to it in the future. Moving forward. All together.

Turning toward the future, please allow me to make a few proposals on behalf of the Council that should be part of our priorities.

1. Increased priority for all forums for Water Security. Security of the resource in terms of quantity and quality. But also security of use. Encourage innovative technologies to better manage infrastrucutres and networks. Increase resource availability by reducing losses. In short, produce more and consume less.
2. Priority both for water for development and water for nature

conservation. The economy needs water. Biodiversity and ecosystems do as well. It is up to us to find the right balance.

3. Priority for everything that will enable us to ensure water for today, but also water for tomorrow. Ensure the waters of winter for use in summer. Wet water for dry times. We must learn again how to store water with dams and reservoirs that will put an end to thirst. We must use our intelligence to create multi-purpose infrastructures, with attention to equity and sustainability, out of respect for all those concerned populations, as well as for biodiversity.

4. Priority for strong water policy, building on at least three essential pillars: knowledge dissemination, shared governance, and increased financing.
5. Priority for resilience to face climate evolution. Resilience for all human settlements, both urban and rural, because urban growth is not a fatality.
6. Priority for a horizontal and multi-sector approach through the five finger alliance concept, linking water, energy, food, health and education, which are truly the societal fuel for resilience.
7. Priority for stakeholders on the ground. Action will come from parliamentarians who vote on laws and

budgets. They will be implemented by local authorities, NGOs, research centers and public and private enterprises.

8. Priority for climate financing dedicated to water and energy interdependencies through specialized funds, bi- and multi-lateral funds, and national and local budgets. Water and energy are the same combat!
9. Priority for hydro-diplomacy to support dialogue and cooperation in transboundary basins to encourage adaptation;
10. Priority for Africa through all the preparatory processes and realization of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Dakar in

2021. Priority for concrete responses for access to water for those most disadvantaged and most fragile populations.

Here are, dear colleagues, dear friends, some priorities to move forward. Once more, I ensure the support and engagement of the World Water Council to make water a priority in the climate debate. And I invite you all to continue to raise these priorities throughout the year as we move toward CoP25 and to join us during the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Water and Climate next year.

Thank you very much.