

## **Mobilizing Actions for Sustainable Water Development**

11:00-13:00, June 20, 2018

Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Mr. CAI ESheng,

Chairman, Finance Center for South-South Cooperation

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

Good Morning.

Three years ago, we gathered here in Dushanbe, for the High-Level International Conference on the Implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015. During that Conference, the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon spoke highly of the Decade that "In the course of one generation, 2.3 billion people – one-third of humanity – have gained access to an improved drinking water source; More than 1.9 billion people gained access to improved sanitation." Yet we know that this is not a final answer to water sustainability despite the outstanding achievements.

On World Water Day on 22 March 2018, the United Nations launched the International Decade for Action 2018-2028, decides that the objectives of the Decade should be a greater focus on the sustainable development and integrated

management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives and on the implementation and promotion of related programs and projects, as well as on the 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.

Today, we gathered again here in Dushanbe, for the High Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028. This conference focuses on Sustainable Water Development, which benefits future generations. In fact, as mentioned by UN Secretary General Mr. Antonio Guterres that “Our cities, our industries and our agriculture all depend on water. Yet, today, 40 percent of the world's people are affected by water scarcity; 80 per cent of wastewater is discharged untreated into the environment, and more than 90 per cent of disasters are water-related. More than 2 billion people lack access to safe water, and more than 4.5 billion people lack adequate sanitation services. Women and girls in low-income countries spend some 40 billion hours a year collecting water. The time spent could be much better invested in earning a livelihood or -in the case of girls - attending school. By 2050, at least one in four people is likely to live in a country affected by chronic or recurring shortages of fresh water.

Safe water and adequate sanitation underpin poverty reduction, economic

growth and healthy ecosystems. They contribute to social well-being, inclusive growth and sustainable livelihoods. There is this harsh daily reality for people in rural communities and urban slums in all regions of the world, and many of the most serious diseases in the developing world are directly related to unsafe drinking water, poor sanitation and insufficient hygiene practices. If the natural environment continues to deteriorate, and global water resources are still not sustainable, then by 2050, 45% of the global GDP, 52% of the world population, and 40% of the global food production will face risks.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

In September 2015, at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, 193 member countries adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among the 17 SDGs, Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all recognizes the importance of sustainable management of water resources and ecosystem for social development and economic prosperity, and emphasizes on the interdependence of various goals.

Ensuring universal access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030 requires that we invest in adequate infrastructure, provide sanitation facilities, and encourage hygiene at every level. Protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems such as forests, mountains, wetlands and rivers is essential if we are to mitigate water scarcity. More international cooperation is also needed to

encourage water efficiency and support treatment technologies in developing countries. UN Secretary General Mr. Antonio Guterres commented that: water has historically proven to be a “catalyst” for cooperation among countries, and the use of transboundary watercourses has played an important role in cooperation among nations.

Finance Center for South-South Cooperation is honored to be invited for this High Level Conference, and with Tajikistan government, we hosted a side event yesterday afternoon, with the theme of “Water-Use Efficiency and Water Environmental Governance”. Speakers have openly expressed views to contribute for Sustainable Water Development. Finance Center for South-South Cooperation, as an NGO established in Hong Kong, SAR of China in 2014, has made efforts in promotion of South-South Cooperation and Belt and Road Initiative, we are ready and will make every effort to provide possible service and support to water-related global cooperation in the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

The High Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028 matters a lot, for the basis of the future of human beings, and the Community of Shared Future for Mankind. Let us join hands together, and make our due contributions to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Thank you all.