Excellency Mr. Emomali Rahmon President of the Republic of Tajikistan

Honorable Excellencies

Secretary General of the Conference

Ladies and gentlemen, Representatives of Member States and international organizations.

On behalf of the Iraqi Government, I would like to express my sincere thanks for this generous invitation to attend the first meeting of the International Decade for Sustainable Development (2018-2028). I also would like to greet the organizers and supporters of this event as well as the experts who have gathered from different countries to exchange experiences and desire to work hard to achieve progress. And sustainable development concerning water issue.

The issue of water is one of the thorniest issues that needs to be resolved through implementing international law and conventions that govern supplying shares of water between countries, whether international or transboundary. The artificial borders played a role in dividing rivers water between countries and allowed them to exploit their resources contrary to the natural course of the river and the benefits of the Neighboring countries.

The construction of dams and Water storage lakes has made the imports of the countries where the river is flowing or crossing its soil so scarce to the extent that it becomes difficult to provide sufficient water for drinking, agriculture and even to think about storing it, in addition to bad quality and quantity of incoming water, which is contaminated or loaded with silt.
Iraq is also committed to all international conventions and treaties governing the sharing and exploitation of water. Its participation today is to confirm its sincere desire to cooperate internationally and to exchange views for the purpose of finding a unified attitude for the best way to use and develop them. More cooperation among countries in the water field will open new horizons. It will contribute to the development of agriculture, preservation of water resources, development of fisheries resources, fighting against pollution and global warming, creation of new jobs, elimination of terrorism, and development of economies and economic integration.

Iraq faces difficult challenges in providing adequate water resources (for agriculture and drinking), due to the lack of income. (For Most of our water comes from outside the borders), in addition to the Climate change that have affected the region, as well as the construction of many dams and changing rivers streams, added to that the (ISIS) intimidation and destruction of infrastructure and irrigation projects.

Mr. President

neighboring countries (Turkey, Syria and Iran) with whom we share historical and economic relations, are invited today to take into account Iraq's need for its water resources to develop its economy and agriculture sectors and to combat desertification and drought which effects all countries in the region by sharing the recourses of the Tigris and Euphrates in equitable manner to reduce the humanitarian suffering that the Iraqi people are facing especially in central and southern Iraq, As well as preventing the danger of drought of marshes in southern Iraq caused by the lack of water supplies, which has serious implications for the environmental and
biodiversity situation in that region. Especially as the marshes are listed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List 2016, and could go further to mass migrations from the territories that face drought and lack of water.

Finally, I wish to squeeze our efforts to reach tangible results and common concepts that serve the prospects of cooperation between the participating countries.