

**High-Level International Conference on International Decade for Action  
“Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028  
20-22 June, 2018 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan**

**Statement on behalf of the Government of the Republic of TURKEY  
Deputy Undersecretary Mr. ALİ RIZA DİNİZ**

**Excellencies,**

**Esteemed Ministers and Head of Delegations,**

**Dear Co-Chairs,**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Republic of Turkey, I would like to express my honor to address you all here in this beautiful country and extend my deepest appreciation to the Government of Tajikistan for their warm hospitality. The relations between Turkey and Tajikistan are based on the mutual cultural values in which we share with the great philosopher, Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi who says “harmony of feelings is beautiful than the unity of languages”... I also thank the UN agencies and Organizing Committee for their efforts to hold this Conference.

**Esteemed Participants**

Our world faces natural and man-made problems such as water scarcity, migration, unemployment, poverty, urbanization, lack of safe food, growing energy needs, environmental pollution, climate change, water-related disasters and gender inequality.

Turkey, locating at arid and semi-arid region, experiences floods or droughts periodically caused by the negative effects of climate change. We can say that Turkey is not a water-rich country and it is predicted that Turkey is likely to become a water stressed country by two thousand and thirty (2030). However, we are committed to sustainable and responsible use of water resources.

To solve these problems, Turkey has taken important steps in the management of water resources in the last fifteen years by making legislative arrangements, improving infrastructure, preparing actions plans and making investments in order to ensure every person to access safe drinking water and sanitation services.

The other important issue is the problems of people whom are forced to migrate from their homelands. As you all know, Turkey hosts the greatest number of refugees in the world today including almost three point six (3.6) million registered Syrians. The rise in water demand caused by migration puts more stress on limited water resources. To this respect, we believe

that water needs of vulnerable people including refugees and migrants should take priority in order to achieve the commitment of “leaving no one behind”.

Water management, improved water infrastructures and access to safe and reliable water and sanitation services are key elements to improve the living standards, human health and social wellbeing for all. From this point of view, we welcome the Water Action Decade, which provides a framework to support efforts to overcome water-related problems by mobilizing the implementation of programmes and projects for two thousand and thirty (2030) Agenda.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

During the development and adoption process of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in two thousand and fifteen (2015), Turkey supported the idea of a separate goal for water considering that access to safe drinking water and sanitation is a basic human right and water is a key element for sustainable development.

In this regard, Turkey attaches importance for highlighting the role of water in promoting international cooperation, capacity building and mutual technology transfer by the Declaration of the Sustainable Development Goal Six (6). We believe that development of capacity for water at national level, will also contribute to the success of two thousand and thirty (2030) Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this respect, I am pleased to mention that almost two (2) million people living in African and Middle Eastern countries has a chance to access safe drinking water as a result of our water drilling activities. Turkey also organizes training programs for the utilization of water resources and waste water to share its experiences with the experts of other countries.

**Distinguished Delegates,**

We welcome every step and every action to achieve the water-related goals. For that reason, this High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action hosted by Tajikistan is an important platform to mobilize the efforts of governments, UN agencies, international community and non-governmental organizations as well as other stakeholders for the effective implementation of water-related Sustainable Development Goals.

I would like to conclude by expressing our belief that the International Decade for Action on Water will mobilize joint efforts and enhance cooperation and dialogue to provide accessing to safe water and sanitation for all. I thank you again for giving this opportunity and would like to congratulate the government of Tajikistan for organizing this great event.

Thank You!