

On 21 December 21 2016 the UN General Assembly adopted with consensus a resolution A/RES/71/222 entitled "International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028", sponsored by the 177 UN member states. As you might be aware, the initiative for proclamation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" was launched for the first time by H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan which took place last year in April in the Republic of Korea.

In accordance with the resolution (OP3) the period from 2018 to 2028 is proclaimed as the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" to commence on 22 March 2018 and terminate on 22 March 2028 (22 March – World Water Day).

Speaking at the Water Forum the President stated that "... the modern global challenges and threats, including the financial and economic crisis, population growth, climate change, increase of natural hydro-meteorological phenomena, water scarcity and, as a result, increasing levels of poverty, spread of infectious diseases, child and maternal mortality still require the mobilization of our efforts and relevant measures".

In this regard, the Head of State proposed that after completion of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015", to work on preparation of a new Decade, which will become a solid platform and promote coordination and promotion of all efforts to address the issues and problems related with water resources. In addition, the new Decade is aimed to continue implementation of the indicated steps of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life, 2005-2015", enriching it with new measures and efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

It is widely known that the initiative to proclaim the International Decade for Action “Water for Life”, 2005-2015” was also launched by the President of Tajikistan in 2003. That year, by the initiative of Tajikistan, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution, according to which the period of 2005-2015 was proclaimed as the International Decade for Action "Water for Life". Subsequently, as part of this decade Tajikistan initiated to proclaim 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation.

Within the framework of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" and in accordance with the resolutions of the UN General Assembly three interactive dialogues of the UN General Assembly were convened in 2010, 2013 and 2015. In addition, the Government of Tajikistan in cooperation with the United Nations prepared and convened in Dushanbe the following

important events:

- The Mid-term Comprehensive Review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", June 2010;
- High-level International Conference on Water Cooperation, August 2013; and
- High-level International Conference on the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", June 2015.

This year in July, the UN Secretary-General issued a report on the implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015 (A/71/260). According to this report “The Decade was responsible for many accomplishments. No other 10-year period in the history of the United Nations has witnessed as many water-related activities and achievements”. Furthermore, the Decade, as the report says, “has shown where the shortfalls lie and what slows down progress on water-related goals and targets. There are still a myriad of constraints on human, institutional and financial resources”.

In accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution the objectives of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" will be mainly focused on:

- sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental goals;
- implementation and promotion of related programmes and projects;
- 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.

In addition, the resolution highlights the importance of promoting efficient water usage at all levels, taking into account the water, food, energy, environment nexus.

In addition, the resolution identifies the following objectives to be pursued:

- improving knowledge generation and dissemination, facilitating access to knowledge and exchange of good practices, generating new information relevant to the water-related Sustainable Development Goals;
  
- pursuing advocacy, networking and promoting partnership and action by different actors to implement the water-related goals and targets;
- strengthening communication actions at various levels for the implementation of the water-related goals.

This resolution invites the Secretary-General, with the support of UN-Water, to take appropriate steps to plan and organize the activities of the Decade at the global, regional and country levels, taking into account the outcomes of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, and the work of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.