



Australian Government



The Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA



The Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations



As of 9 March 2023

## Concept Note

# **The Sixth UN Special Thematic Session on Water and Disasters - Connecting Midterm Reviews of Water and Disaster Risk Reduction under Climate Change - The United Nations Headquarters, New York, the U.S.A. March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

## **1. Background and Objective**

The UN Special Thematic Sessions on Water and Disasters (STSWD) have been held biennially since 2013. The Sixth UN Special Thematic Sessions on Water and Disasters (STSWD6) – Connecting Midterm Reviews of Water and Disaster Risk Reduction under Climate Change- will be convened on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, right before the UN 2023 Water Conference to make inputs to its discussion and outcomes while pursuing its ongoing objective of raising awareness and promoting actions for building back better towards more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive society in the post-COVID-19 era by addressing the issues of water and disasters as well as other development issues, such as urbanization, food, and environment under climate change. The special focus of this edition is to connect Midterm Review of Water Action Decade and that of disaster risk reduction (DRR) under the context of Climate Change.

The Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, and recurrent disasters have stunned sustainable development of countries, casting blight onto the world. Negative impacts of those mega disturbances are felt in every corner of the world. They have taught us a hard lesson on the contemporary nature of risk: our global world is highly interconnected and equally fragile, presenting serious consequences for our societies' health, food security, peace, and stability.

Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring a livable future for the next generations under climate change and disasters requires transformation into quality-oriented societies that are sustainable, resilient, and inclusive. It is vital to raise political awareness and share the experiences and good practices with practical guidance amongst leaders, private sector, civil society and all stakeholders to build back stronger from devastation of the catastrophes that are still impacting people and society, especially the poor.

STSWD6 will keep momentum of the previous Sessions in raising high-level political awareness and urging actions on the issues of water and disasters among UN member states. The Session will focus on connecting priority issues and actions on Midterm Review of Water Action Decade and that of disaster risk reduction (DRR) under the context of climate change reflecting various lessons of COVID-19 and promoting actions to realize a sustainable, resilient and climate adaptive society in the post-COVID-19. The session will be contribution to UN 2023 Water Conference to be held right after STSWD6 and other major events on water, disaster risk reduction, climate change and relevant topics, including the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in May 2023; UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2023; and the UN Climate Change Conference as well as Biodiversity Conference.

## **2. Expected outcome**

- Chair's Summary on the outcomes of the Session
- Messages and recommendations of the Session to be delivered to the UN 2023 Water Conference, March 22-24, 2023, Midterm Review Conference of Sendai Framework for Action in May 2023, COP28, 2023 and other relevant major events.

## **3. Organizers/sponsors**

UN Member States (Australia, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan, The Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Sweden and Tajikistan and others), High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP), Water and Climate Coalition Leaders (WCL), and National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) of Japan

## **4. Venue and Date**

Trusteeship Council, The UN Headquarters, New York on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

## **5. Provisional Agenda**

- (1) Opening remarks and introduction of the Session by H.E. Dr. Han Seung-Soo, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea / Chair of the High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP) / Member of WCL**
- (2) High-level Panel Discussion (10:00-11:30) - Connecting Midterm Reviews of Water Action Decade and DRR under Climate Change**

**Moderator:** H.E. Mr. Mark Harbers, Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands / Member of WCL

### **Panelists:**

- H.E. Dr. Basuki Hadimuljono, Minister of Public Works and Housing, Republic of Indonesia
- H.E. Prof. Hani Sewilam, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Arab Republic of Egypt / Member of WCL (tbc)
- H.E. Ms. Yoko Kamikawa MP, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Japan / Former Minister of Justice, Japan
- Ms. Robyn Colosimo, United States Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
- H.E. Dr. Bambang Susantono, Head of the Nusantara Capital City Authority, Republic of Indonesia
- Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, Minister for the Environment and Water, Australia
- H.E. Mr. Teodoro Estrela Monreal, Director General for Water, Ministry for the Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, Spain
- Mr. Pablo Bereciartua, Chair of Global Water Partnership / President of the Argentinean Engineering Centre (Centro Argentino de Ingenieros – CAI)
- Mr. Woonchong Um, Managing Director General of Asian Development Bank
- Ms. Paola Albrito, Director, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

### **(3) Science and Technology Panel (11:30-13:00) -Showcases of Science and Technology application, connecting, water, DRR, and climate change-**

**Moderator:** Prof. Gretchen Kalonji, Dean, Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction, Sichuan University and Prof. Toshio Koike, Executive Director, The International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM)

- Keynote
  - Mr. Abou Amani, Director of the Division of Water Sciences, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Secretary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP)
- Presentations
  - Ms. Claudia Herrera, Executive Secretary, the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC), Honduras
  - Mr. Samuel Joseph Gama, Principal Disaster Resilience Officer, Malawi
  - Mr. Kazufumi Onishi, Mayor, Kumamoto, Japan
  - Dr. Mizan B. F. Bisri, Kobe University, Japan and Members of U-INSPIRE
- Comments
  - H.E. Dr. Han Seung-Soo, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea / Chair of the High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP) / Member of WCL (tbc)
  - H.E. Ms. Yoko Kamikawa MP, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Japan / Former Minister of Justice, Japan (TBC)
  - Mr. Saroj Kumar Jha, Global Director, Water Global Practice, the World Bank Group (tbc)

### **(4) Plenary Session (15:00-16:45)**

- Opening Remarks
  - H.E. Dr. Han Seung-Soo, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea / Chair of the High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP) / Member of WCL
  - H.E. Dr. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
  - H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations
  - Prof. Petteri Taalas, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) / Member of WCL
- Remarks by His Majesty Willem-Alexander, the King of the Netherlands
- Keynote Lecture by a high-level representative of Japan
- Keynote Speeches
  - H.E. Mr. Sirojiddin Muhridin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan
  - H.E. Mr. János Áder, former President of Hungary / Member of WCL
  - H.E. Professor Danilo Türk, former President of Slovenia, Chair of Global High-level Panel on Water and Peace, Lead Political Advisor for Geneva Water Hub

**(5) Special Session on Water, DRR and Climate Change (16:45-17:45)**

**Moderator:** Dr. Stefan Uhlenbrook, Director Hydrology, Water and Cryosphere, Water and Cryosphere Branch, World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

- Presentations on the results of the survey of 92 Water Ministers by water policy group
- Panel Discussion (panelists are to be confirmed)
  - H.E. Prof. Hani Sewilam, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Arab Republic of Egypt / Member of WCL
  - Mrs. Hannele Pokka, Professor/Former Minister of Finland / Member of WCL
  - Mr. Matthias Berninger, EVP Public Affairs, Science, Sustainability & HSE at Bayer/ Member of WCL
  - Mrs. Lindsey Blodgett, Former President of the World Youth Parliament for Water / Member of WCL

**(6) Wrap-up and closing (17:45-18:00)**