



Permanent Mission  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
to the United Nations  
New York

**Statement**

**by**  
**Ambassador Jürgen Schulz**  
**Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany**  
**to the United Nations**

**in the General Assembly**

**on**

**the International Action Decade**  
**“Water for Sustainable Development”**

**22 March 2018**

**(check against delivery)**

Thank you, Mr. President,

First, I would like to thank His Excellency, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, for organizing this launch of the International Decade for Action: Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028. I would also like to thank His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, for initiating this Water Action Decade.

The sustainable management of water resources is the basis for implementing the universal human rights to clean drinking water and sanitation. It is also a precondition for achieving many other of the Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda. These include, for example, reducing poverty (Goal 1), combating hunger (Goal 2) and preserving ecosystems and biodiversity (Goal 15). Moreover, this issue is also closely linked with Goal 14, protecting the oceans, as a considerable share of marine pollution comes from river basins. However, population growth, urbanization, rising water demand in agriculture and industry and a changing climate make sustainable water management a challenge for countries around the globe.

We welcome the inauguration of the Water Action Decade and the action plan for further improving cooperation, partnership and capacities to implement the 2030 Agenda. We need cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary solutions to do justice to the differing needs of water users while protecting water resources and increasing resilience to extreme weather and the effects of climate change. Successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal for water depends on cooperation among all stakeholders within a country and transboundary cooperation between

countries. Efficient use of existing resources requires transparency, political will, clearly defined responsibilities, accountability, the availability and exchange of standard data on quantity and quality of water resources, and the involvement of local people.

During the Water Action Decade, efforts to achieve water-related goals should be publicized in a targeted way. Germany supports the UN Secretary-General in his efforts to improve coordination within the UN system and would welcome work to strengthen UN Water. Beyond this, member states play a key role. In the name of the Federal Republic of Germany, I would like to encourage the United Nations to create a legitimate, inclusive space that secures a platform for political dialogue and leadership on water issues for member states and other relevant actors, guaranteeing continuous exchange. This kind of space, which is still lacking, would make it possible to jointly identify gaps in the implementation of the water-related Sustainable Development Goals, to prioritize necessary efforts and to prepare appropriate General Assembly decisions. The goals and measures of the Water Action Decade are an important basis for actively supporting the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 6. I am certain that we can pool our strengths to reach our shared goals and ensure a better future for all.

Thank you, Mr. President.