



**Mission Permanente
de la Principauté d'Andorre
auprès des Nations Unies**

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Elisenda Vives Balmaña, Permanent Representative of the Principality of
Andorra to the United Nations**

Launch Event International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028
(22 March 2018, UN General Assembly, UN Headquarters)

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Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, 22 March we celebrate the World Day of Water. Also today we have the honor to attend the launch of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028. An initiative approved by all Member States last 22 December 2016 through resolution 71/226. Andorra in that date was among the cosponsors of the resolution.

We would like to take this opportunity to support its launch. Water is one of the main drivers to development and a scarce resource that requires the international efforts and its special attention.

Water and sanitation are fundamental for the achievement of other sustainable development goals such as eradication of poverty, end of hunger, access to sustainable and affordable energy or ensuring healthy lives for all.

Today, 2.4 billion people lack access to basic sanitation services. Each day, nearly 1,000 children die due to preventable water and sanitation diseases. More than 80% of wastewater from human activities is discharged into rivers or sea without any previous pollution removal.

These are some examples of the challenges that we have ahead. Let's take the opportunity of the International Decade for action to gather our efforts for the common goals.

Andorra is currently working on achieving the targets of SDG 6.

With 1.276 km of rivers, Andorra considers itself a country of water, with a good quality and quantity of water resources. Because of its position in the middle of the Pyrenees, Andorra is also the origin of other rivers.

In 1996 the Government set up the Plan of Sanitation 1996-2020. The protection of environment and natural resources is a priority of the Government of Andorra and the Plan intends to respond to this goal with 4 sanitation stations that treat 100% of water coming from human use. The capacity of the stations doubles the number of residents because of the high number of tourists and visitors the country receives every year.

The results are continuously monitored by a network of stations that collect data about the chemical and physical components and the biological quality of the water after its sanitation.

Local councils are also part of the general plans through its infrastructures. In addition, every year, around 700 km. of rivers are cleaned from solid contaminants with excellent results.

Education is also an important component of the initiatives of Andorra in the implementation of SDG 6. The Green Schools Project aims at raising awareness, understanding and sharing good practices on environmental issues within the students of the country. Furthermore, every year the Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Sustainability celebrate and organize several activities to commemorate the World Day of Water. The civil society is also committed with this initiative.

Like other environment matters, transboundary cooperation is also essential for plans and technical developments. In this sense, Andorra is carrying out different actions with the neighbor countries.

Our commitment is also with the international efforts. The Andorran Official Aid for Development funds international projects for development with the aim of facing environmental problems, most of them, related to water and sanitation.

The launch of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” should allow us to have the ideal platform to exchange good practices in the management of water resources. Also it should strengthen the cooperation and partnership at all levels in order to achieve internationally agreed water related goals and targets.

The objectives of the International Decade for Action are clear and are fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda. They should be pursued by improving knowledge generation, facilitating access to knowledge and the exchange of good practices and promoting the existing partnerships and the new ones to implement the water-related sustainable development goals.

Water is life and Andorra would like to be and active partner for life.

Thank you.