

**International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018 - 2028**  
**Launch Event, UN General Assembly, 22 March 2018**  
**Statement by Jose Luis Rocha, Ambassador and PR of Cabo Verde**

Mr. President

Ladies and Gentlemen

Protocol Observed.

I would like to thank and convey my congratulation to the President of the General Assembly for the organization of this commemorative Event to mark the World Water Day, but also to launch the International Decade of Action “Water for Sustainable Development”

The usefulness of both, Water Day and Decade, keeps the momentum on the role this important resource plays and on its relevance for life in the earth or even for the survival of the human kind.

The Nexus relating Water – Development – Peace and Human Rights - does not need further demonstration, rather has to be pushed permanently to the ultimate consequence of serving the sustainable development, in particular the SDG 06, to ensure access to water and sanitation for all, and leaving no one behind.

Indeed, Water, the life factor, and its availability, are relevant to eradicate poverty and hungry, to promote health and the wellbeing trough drinkable water, sanitation, housing, education, to create growth via agriculture and

other economic activities and to sustain peace by way of its cooperative use at national and regional levels.

Cabo Verde, my own country, has a critical water shortage in terms of per capita availability, and this represents one of the main obstacles to its development. The islands are located in the Atlantic extension of the Sahara desert or the Sahel belt, which determines extremely low and irregular cycles of rain, at the same time the cause of several droughts, diseases, and famines that marked their history.

Contrary to what the imaginary associated with islands may lead one to think, because of this location, the lack of water accentuated by desertification has devastating effects on the fragile ecosystems and agricultural production. Moreover, significant part of the drinkable water is imported since it is produced by desalination whose main factors, energy and equipment, are also imported.

Mr. President

To conclude this short statement, allow me to focus in three major areas that will shape future transformation for the Water sector:

### **One: Water inclusivity**

Many SIDS are exposed to water scarcity derived from the rainfall because of multiple factors, among others, geographic location, size, climate change and capacity building.

This is one more specificity that this category of countries faces as part of their global problem, and so, SIDS need to be part of the global solutions, adapted to their reality, ways and means to achieve the SDG6. Leaving no SIDS behind in ensuring access to water and sanitation to all, is imperative.

## **Two: Water integrated management**

Global solutions to ensure access to water and sanitation for all, should strive in the best and recognized practices that targets sustainable and integrated management of water resources.

Skipping one size fits all solution, integrated and tailored management will address inter alia, data and indicators to measure efficiency and risks, governance by way of policies, legal framework and institutions, water assessment plan to match different sources with different uses, infrastructures, including climate change adaptation projects (dams, renewable energy....), science and technology to forge innovation and cost reductions.

## **Three: Water funding, cooperation and partnership**

Access to Water and Sanitation for all, cannot be implemented without access to Funding by all.

Institutional cooperation and strategic partnership are important to make it work at the national level and for the management of transboundary water common assets.

Again, funding must target Water services, infrastructure, and innovation, as well as funding mechanisms with clear and accessible eligible criteria.

I Thank YOU!