

Intervento dell'Italia

Distinguished President of the General Assembly,

Distinguished delegates,

Access to safe water is essential to human health, environmental sustainability, economic prosperity, peace and security.

Italy, a Mediterranean country is familiar with many challenges related to water scarcity and droughts. Through the work of the **UNESCO World Water Assessment Program (WWAP) based in Italy in Perugia**, we are able to have a clear assessment of the state, use and management of the world's freshwater resources.

And the situation is grim. Still, more than **2 billion people are living in water stress**, with the pressure of population growth, and **water resources are continuously decreasing** due to climate change, with tragic consequences both on migration, food security and conflict.

Water is an essential element for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the fight against poverty, food security, sustainable agriculture, health and well-being, the sustainable development of cities, the management of terrestrial and marine resources ecosystems, combating desertification, building resilience to climate change and to catastrophes, **addressing the root causes of migration**.

Italy adopted the right to water as an essential human right.

And, as a long term strategy in conflict prevention, Italy actively engages in the collective effort to ensure that climate change and water scarcity, because of their impact on peace and security, remain on the agenda of the Security Council for **adequate risk assessment**, promoting the concept of *preparedness* of vulnerable countries.

The lack of water is a threat to development, to peace and security, and ultimately... to LIFE.

The **African continent** is one of Italy's top priorities for cooperation in water management as it is the most affected by recurring droughts. The **Lake Chad basin**, visited with the Security Council, is the one of the **most urgent examples of water scarcity** and of its dramatic effects on the livelihoods, food security, biodiversity, and peace and security. Italy also engages in partnerships globally, in Middle East, Asia and Latin America.

Water is essential to life. I commend the launch of this international decade of Action "Water for Sustainable Development" with the best wishes of success.

Thank you.