



Joint statement of the Group of Friends on Water and Peace in Geneva at the Budapest Water Summit 2019 (Preventing Water Crisis)

As delivered by Ms Andrea Aeby, representing the Swiss Chair, on behalf of the Group of Friends on Water and Peace

Budapest, 16 October 2019

Monsieur le Ministre,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Members of the Panel,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am taking the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends on Water and Peace and would like first to thank Hungary to host this important Summit.

[The Group of Friends]

The objective of the Group of Friends, which consists of more than 40 countries, is to help shaping the global agenda by maintaining an open space for dialogue on multi-sectoral and transboundary issues relating to water and peace. It is located in Geneva, which hosts major actors on water-related issues, such as UN-Water and the WMO.

[Situation/risk/stakes]

Sustainable water resources management is a major global challenge of the 21st century. Water as a vital resource is facing unprecedented challenges as we hear during this Summit. Given the centrality of water, sustainable water resources management and water cooperation at all levels are essential for achieving all Sustainable Development Goals, for ensuring stability and peace and for promoting and protecting human rights, including the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation.

[The potential of water]

Despite the complexity of the challenges, and because of its fundamental importance, **water can become a theme for collaboration and can be transformed from a source of potential**



crisis into an instrument of peace, cooperation and development. It is this positive vision that the Group of Friends wishes to convey.

[The Report of the Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace]

The Report of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace was released in 2017 and we welcome the results achieved so far in the follow up of its recommendations. The work undertaken has the clear objective to leverage water as an instrument for peace – in other words, to strengthen a Blue Peace Movement. Furthermore, we acknowledge the reflection conducted by the Global High-Level Panel (on Water and Peace) during this Summit on topics that would merit further development. And we welcome the Global Observatory on Water and Peace.

[Commitment/call for action]

We thank Dr Danilo Türk, President of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, for presenting the Panel's reflections here today as well as highlighting the main achievements so far. We invite all States to work with us as the Group of Friends on Water and Peace. We are, and will stay engaged, in taking an active part in shaping of the international agenda on water and peace as shown, for instance, with the Data for Water and Peace initiative. The UN World Data Summit in Berne in 2020 will be an occasion to broaden the Water for Data Coalition.

We are committed to contributing to a global dynamic on the crucial topic of water and peace. We encourage all stakeholders to make use of the space for dialogue and trust building that actors of the International Geneva offer in order to prevent and manage water-related crisis. In particular, we recognize the collaborative work of the Geneva Water Hub and its role facilitating scenarios to promote exchanges on water-related issues and to formulate solutions in a discreet and trustworthy environment. We take this opportunity to thank the Geneva Water Hub for the support given to the work of the Panel as its Secretariat and for the follow-up work.

Thank you for your attention.