

Distinguished Excellencies and guests,

Two years onward, the report of the Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace is now available in four languages, with a brief in Hungarian.

On behalf of the Chairman of the Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace, the Geneva Water Hub, and the Swiss Development Cooperation, we are glad to be launching the Arabic Version of the Panel report, A Matter of survival, مسألة بقاء, here at the Budapest Water Summit.

We would like to celebrate with all of you all present another important milestone in the advancement of the global architecture to prevent and resolve water related conflicts recommended by the Panel.

Today, there is more than 20 states in Africa and Asia whose official or co-official language is Arabic, the 5th most spoken language globally (420 million of the World's population speak Arabic)

More importantly, the Arab Region, as emphasized by many reports, is the most water scarce region in the world, and is expected to more serious due to climate change. In addition, a significant part of the water resources are shared with one or more neighbouring country.

Transboundary water resources are at the core of the livelihood, sustainability and stability of the region. Therefore, water cooperation is crucial and water diplomacy is becoming increasingly an indispensable tool in relationships among Riparian countries.

In 2015, 3 out of the 15 co-convening countries that established the GHLPWP were Oman, Jordan and Morocco, which have actively contributed to the development of the recommendations. Furthermore, one of the 4 brainstorming and consultative meetings of the Panel was held in Jordan in May 2017.

The engagement of the three countries continues today, through the Group of Friends on Water and Peace, among other active roles. This has encouraged more Arab-Speaking countries to join the discussions and contribute to taking the recommendations to Action.

The globally increasingly recognised water-peace nexus has been long manifested and recognised at the regional and national level. The region has extensive know-how, experience and contribution to make in the process of advancing this new global framework to prevent and resolve water-related conflicts, and to facilitate the use of water as an important factor of building peace and enhancing the relevance of water issues in national and global policy making. It is not by chance that the Global observatory on Water and Peace, a recommendation of the chapter on new means of hydrodiplomacy, was launched in Jordan in March 2019.

Furthermore, we hope that the various tools developed to date, and in the future will assist the region in resolving its water related challenges.

We hope that this Arabic version will resonate with a larger audience in the Arab World, and will encourage more active participation of leaders, experts, academics and citizens as we work hand-in-hand to overcome the challenges of water.

We also hope that this version of the report will be a reference for researchers and academics in the Arab World.