



Arab Region Joint Commitment to Accelerate Achievement of Water Security for Sustainable Development

UN 2023 Water Conference side event
(Thursday, 23 March 2023, 15:30 - 16:45, Room 5)

Background

The Arab region is one of the most water scarce regions in the world with 19 States of the 22 below the water scarcity threshold. This is further complicated by high proportion of transboundary waters resources, high population growth rates, climate change, inefficient use of water and occupation and conflict.

The Arab Ministerial Water Council Adopted the Arab Water Security Strategy to Meet the Challenges and Future Needs for Sustainable Development (2010 – 2030) in 2010; however, the achievement of water security in the region needs to be highly accelerated to meet the agreed upon goals.

Arab regional engagement in the Water Action Decade constitutes resolutions, recommendations and positions adopted by Arab States in intergovernmental and regional forums, including those adopted by the Arab Ministerial Water Council of the League of Arab States, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and regional consultations on water such as the Cairo Call for Action from the Cairo Water Week.

An Arab regional preparatory meeting for the mid-term comprehensive review of the Water Action Decade was also convened by ESCWA in partnership with the Technical Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Water Council in May 2022. It consolidated regional priorities and progress on internationally agreed-upon water-related goals to inform the global mid-term review in an outcome document. Recommendations were grouped under six thematic priorities and four accelerators to move towards the achievement of the Decade's goals in the region.

The regional thematic priorities include (i) integrated water resource management, (ii) water for all, (iii) transboundary water cooperation (iv) water and climate change, (v) water use efficiency, and (vi) water across sectors / non-conventional water resources.

Proposed accelerators include (i) financing for water, (ii) data to inform decision-making, monitoring and implementation, (iii) innovation, and (iv) capacity development and regional knowledge networks.



القطاع الاقتصادي

إدارة البيئة والإسكان والموارد المائية

الأمم المتحدة للمجلس الوزاري العربي للمياه

Objective

The side event will highlight the Arab region's endeavors to adopt transformative commitments and build cross-sectoral partnerships to further strengthen collective action on water in the Arab Region. It will also highlight commitments made to or to be made to the Water Action Agenda by Arab States and national and regional stakeholders, aiming to accelerate the implementation of the water goals, and improving water security in the water-scarce Arab region.

A particular emphasis will be made on means of accelerating the delivery of water and related cross-sectoral goals through the regional priorities and accelerators referenced above.

Related thematic interactive dialogue:

ID 5: Water Action Decade: Accelerating the implementation of the objectives of the decade, including through the UN Secretary-General's Action Plan.

Lead Organizations: League of Arab States - Technical Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Water Council

Organizing partners and contributors:

- **Member States:** Ministers of the Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC), which requested regional engagement in the UN 2023 Water Conference by Resolution no. (Res. 263/ S.14 - 30/11/2022):
- **Organizations:** United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)



Proposed Program

Thursday, 23 March

Moderator	Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherrane, Cluster Leader, Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, ESCWA; Director, Arab Centre for Climate Change Policies
5 minutes	Setting the scene: Joint Priorities for Water Action in the Arab Region <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ambassador Shahira Wahbi, Head of the Technical Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Water Council, League of Arab States
20 minutes	Panel 1: Challenges and Priorities to Water Security in the Arab Region
Panelist:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">H. E. Aun Thiyab Abdullah, Minister of Water Resources, IraqH. E. Mazen Ghoneim, Head of the Palestinian Water Authority, PalestineH.E. Tawfiq Al-Sharjabi, Minister of Water and Environment, Yemen
10 minutes	Interventions from the floor
25 minutes	Panel 2: Initiatives and Commitments to the Water Action Agenda from the Arab region
Panelist:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">H.E. Hani Sweilam, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Topic of intervention: Water at the Heart of Climate Action in COP27 and Beyond... Egypt's Needs and Commitments to the Water Action Decade</i>H.E. Nizar Baraka, Minister of Equipment and Water, Morocco<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Topic of intervention: Water, Food and Energy Nexus</i>Dr. Amgad Elmahdi, Water Sector Senior Specialist, Green Climate FundDr. Nizar Zaied, Water Lead, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)
10 minutes	Interventions from the floor
5 minutes	Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">Dr. Rola Dashti, United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Executive Secretary, ESCWA