

## **Make Every Drop Count: An Agenda for Water Action**

### *An Open Letter from the High Level Panel on Water*

The world is facing a water crisis. Water is a precious resource and one of the greatest global risks to economic progress, poverty eradication, peace and security, and sustainable development.

This crisis is due to major gaps in access to water supply and sanitation, growing populations, pollution, degrading ecosystems and the effects of climate change.

The High-Level Panel on Water proposes a new Agenda for Water Action, transforming our water challenge into an opportunity. We need to make every drop count.

We urge a new approach: rethinking how we understand, value and manage water as a precious resource, catalysing change and building partnerships to achieve the water-related goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The social, cultural, economic and environmental values of water to society need to be re-assessed. Water needs to be allocated in ways which maximise overall benefits to our societies. These benefits include clean water for drinking, producing our food and energy, and the benefits we derive from healthy rivers, lakes, aquifers and wetlands.

Sound policies, transparent governance and innovative approaches, at the national and local level, are needed to make water management and water and sanitation services attractive for investment, and disaster resilient. We need to put in place the policies that will allow for at least a doubling of water infrastructure investment in the next five years.

The many changes required will not be easy, but we have no choice. We call on our fellow leaders to take action now, inspire collaboration and drive an integrated approach across government.

An inclusive approach will be necessary, drawing in sectors such as agriculture and leaders such as city mayors and CEOs. New partnerships and ways of working will be crucial. Governments, communities, the private sector and researchers will need to collaborate. Where river basins and aquifers cross boundaries, neighbouring countries and communities will need to work together productively, to achieve results that will benefit all parties.

We have to be responsible as individuals too. We should all value water as a precious resource, use it wisely, not waste or pollute it, and inspire others to do the same.

Our report offers an agenda and recommendations for action that reflect our distinct perspectives and experiences as leaders from different regions of the world, and our short video shows how the world can respond effectively to the challenges we face.

The International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development” commences on March 22, 2018. We ask you to join with us in committing to valuing water and taking action to address our water challenge within this decade.

Whoever you are, whatever you do, wherever you live, we all have a shared responsibility to change the future of water.

Make every drop count. It's time for action.

March 14, 2018

**Members of the High Level Panel on Water:**

|                      |                                                                        |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mauritius (Co-Chair) | President, H.E. Mrs. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim                               |
| Mexico (Co-Chair)    | President, H.E. Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto                                 |
| Australia            | Prime Minister, H.E. Mr. Malcolm Turnbull                              |
| Bangladesh           | Prime Minister, H.E. Mrs. Sheikh Hasina                                |
| Hungary              | President, H.E. Mr. János Áder                                         |
| Jordan               | Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, H.E. Mr. Hani Al-Mulki         |
| Netherlands          | Prime Minister, H.E. Mr. Mark Rutte                                    |
| Peru                 | President, H.E. Pedro Pablo Kuczynski Godard                           |
| South Africa         | President, H. E. Mr. Jacob Zuma (membership through February 14, 2018) |
| Senegal              | President, H.E. Mr. Macky Sall                                         |
| Tajikistan           | President, H.E. Emomali Rahmon                                         |
| Special Advisor      | Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, Dr. Han Seung-soo      |