



**Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations
New York**

STATEMENT

by

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**High-Level Interactive Dialogue
International Decade for Action – “Water for Life”
Progress Achieved and Lessons Learned
for Sustainable Development**

New York, 30 March 2015

-Check against delivery-

Distinguished Secretary General,
President of the General Assembly,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Let me express my gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for organizing this high-level interactive dialogue devoted to discussions on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Decade for Action including the lessons learned and best practices.
- I align my statement with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.
- We are approaching the end of the Decade and are on the eve to set-up the Post-2015 agenda. Without water there is no life, thus it is natural, that its importance will be reflected in the post-2015 agenda. We need to discuss on lessons learned and focus on future actions on water related issues.
- Slovakia naturally highly appreciates the fact that the issues related to water are adequately reflected in the **new sustainable development agenda**.
- Dealing effectively with **water and sanitation** is fundamental to fighting **poverty**. Despite the progress we have achieved so far, 750 mil. people live without access to water. 37% of those people live in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Water is important for almost every goal we are talking about. Let me take a few: **Education**. Over half of the developing world's primary schools don't have access to water and sanitation facilities. 443 million school days are lost each year due to water-related diseases.
- **Healthcare**: Nearly 1 out of every 5 deaths under the age of 5 worldwide is due to a water-related disease. Diarrhea caused by inadequate drinking water, sanitation, and hand hygiene kills an estimated 842,000 people every year globally, or approximately 2,300 people per day¹.
- **Economic development**: According to the World Health Organization, for every \$1 invested in water and sanitation, there is an economic return of between \$3 and \$34.
- **Security**: absence of effective management of water resources can endanger stability and security in some regions. Universal access to safe water will increase global security.
- A few areas where Slovakia offers its assistance.

¹Tropical Medicine and International Health. 19, no. 8 (2014): 894 - 905. Burden of disease from inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene in low- and middle-income settings: a retrospective analysis of data from 145 countries.

- **Water purification**: Slovakia has good experience with **water purification** and is keen to share its approaches in this area with other countries. We developed a close cooperation with **Western Balkan** countries by providing development assistance in the form of technical cooperation based on knowledge sharing and capacity building for water management and purification systems.
- **Natural disasters, flood management**: As a consequence of demographic and economic pressures together with **climate change** many countries are likely to experience water problems, including **flood issues**. Slovakia is committed to **prevention and aims at reducing damage caused by floods** by creating efficient system of prevention.
- **Regional cooperation in Danube river basin**. Trans-boundary water co-operation provides an effective means for addressing water management challenges at the regional and national levels also by involving the private sector.
- At the EU level, Slovakia supports intensifying the cooperation of **countries in the Danube Region** by common problem solutions as well as by more effective use of existing water resources. In the framework of the **EU Strategy for the Danube Region**, Slovakia, together with Hungary, is the leading country for coordinating the environmentally focused activities of the Danube Region Countries.
- **Energy**. Slovakia supports the concepts of **regional cooperation** between neighbours and effective use of potential water sources. The trans-boundary waters are shared between two or more countries and are one of the most important and vulnerable freshwater resources on the planet.
- We have to promote **innovative and effective solutions** to address **sustainable global and regional water challenges**. How we will cope with this challenge depends on key decision-makers in water solutions from across governments, regional institutions, international organizations, research and science, academics and private sector.
- Distinguished Secretary General, Distinguished President of the GA, water is a **powerful tool for cooperation** across borders, sectors and communities. Addressing issues relate to water we may help reaching many other goals. We need to ensure that water is a source of partnership not of conflict.

Thank you.