



## 10<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, Bali, Indonesia

Opening session of Ministerial Day, Monday 20 May 2024

Speech of Mr. Loïc Fauchon, President of the World Water Council



*"Water is now Diplomats, because we can only move forward together, by sharing our work, our successes, and sometimes even our failures."*

Dear Minister,



Ministers, Excellencies, dear friends.

On behalf of the World Water Council, co-organizer with the Government of Indonesia, it is my pleasure and honor to welcome you to this ministerial segment of the political process of the 10<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.

We are very honored that you have agreed to participate in the ministerial meetings of our political process.

How can we discuss water and its future without your presence and active participation?

Over 100 nations and states are represented in this room today. It means a lot about the importance of our work.

This importance has been reflected in the preparations for this ministerial segment.

Since January this year, under the leadership of Ambassador Tri Tharyat and President Benedito Braga, whom I would like to pay tribute to, a great deal of work has been carried out, resulting in a declaration approved by nearly 70 countries, and which will be presented to you during these meetings.

What do Indonesia and the World Water Council expect from the results of these ministerial meetings at the heart of this Forum?

First and foremost, a dialogue. A dialogue to "Save water for shared prosperity".

As I said at the solemn opening of the Forum this morning, the availability of water is suffering due to multiple crises: climatic, demographic, urbanistic, as well as health and food crises.

The planet is in a fragile state, water is at the heart of our survival but also of solutions, and we all have a huge responsibility.

Yes, dear ministers, dear friends, we are gathered here in Bali to put an end to the plundering of water and to ensure that it is equitably shared.



And you have a pre-eminent role to play to reach these objectives. You have the legitimacy and experience to do so. But also, I am sure, you have conviction and will.

We know most of the solutions, in innovation, finance or governance. Everywhere, it is a question of implementing a Water Security policy, based on the one hand on improving the quantity and quality of water resources, and on the other hand on controlling water demand, water needs and uses.

Many of you here are implementing national water policies, you have experience in water transfers and river restoration like in China or Senegal, and in careful exploitation of groundwater like in Europe, or the desalination of sea water, as in the Emirates or Spain, the reuse of wastewater in Mexico or Singapore, or the creation of aquatic nature reserves, as in Indonesia or Brazil.

And so many other examples of good practice around the world.

Innovative solutions are gradually being developed, in particular due to the development of "unconventional resources", powered by solar, wind and other renewable energies. Like for example in Morocco and Egypt.

And I could mention many projects on every continent...

We need to help expand these new technologies and bring them to populations who are currently deprived of prosperity.

Considering recent pandemics, and under-nutrition here and there, it is necessary to pay full attention to water for health and water for food. And let us truly face it, there is still a lot of progress to be made in both sectors.

Considerable effort is also needed to clean up the air, land and seas where our precious rivers will scatter our solid waste and liquid effluents. Yes, water health policies require awareness and commitment.

When it comes to food, the challenge is to cope with the divagations of climate. And giant cities with their enormous suburbs, which are constantly increasing areas of poverty and injustice.



The number of people to feed is rising rapidly in Africa, much of Asia and South America. Only a very proactive policy of financing and governance will enable us to meet this demand: to give sufficient place to farmland with controlled irrigation, to supply sufficient bio-friendly fertilizers, and to help farmers to settle and also be “nature keepers”. It is now crucial to implement appropriate land-planning policies to stabilize the countryside and our rural environment.

Yes, dear friends, even if much has been done, and done well, there is still a long way to go.

At the same time as an increasing water resource policy is needed, our most important challenge still lies with population and consumption where major savings can be made. Every individual must now be acutely aware of the scarcity of water, its value, and contribute to its preservation.

Everyone must also be aware that the consequences of neglect and inaction cause droughts and floods. To this end, large-scale awareness-raising programs will help to change consumption patterns and habits.

The time has come for sobriety to avoid waste, but also sobriety to balance the sharing of water for humans and water for nature, to maintain biodiversity and respect ecosystems.

You know all this, dear friends, just as you know the absolute priority that must be given to wastewater treatment, in towns of course, but also in rural areas.

I repeat here with conviction that urban growth and giant mega-cities should no longer be considered as inevitable.

So what else is needed to advance the cause of water?

First of all, we need to convince all our political, economic and social leaders that water is a major issue for this century, and to "stop ignoring water".



Secondly, to share that "Water is politics", and that, in each of our countries, regions and local authorities, this slogan, which is now well known, is both an awareness and an obligation for everyone, and particularly for the world of politics and media.

As I said this morning, and will repeat again throughout the week, "Water is now Diplomats", because we can only move forward together, by sharing our work, our successes, and sometimes even our failures.

In the years to come, our World Water Council will engage to play a role as a receptacle for commitments and solutions, by developing information sharing and actions.

We propose to create with you a movement and a shelter, the "Save and Share Water Shelter".

So, dear ministerial friends, we need you to get involved with us, so that we can establish effective and lasting cooperation as part of our joint efforts for the future of water.

Let me wish you excellent working meetings.