Statement of the High Level Panel on Water

May 25th, 2017 Cancun, Quintana Roo

On the occasion of the 2017 Global Platform on Disaster risk Reduction, we the members of the High Level Panel on Water wish to draw the attention of leaders, governments and all stakeholders to the increasing strategic role of water in the global agenda.

Water is the life-blood of our planet, and is central to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, while floods and storms threaten lives and property. Sustainable water management is necessary for successful disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

The close nexus between climate change and water, including droughts, floods and the higher degree of uncertainty of rainfall levels, needs to be understood to achieve better and more action-oriented implementation. Integrated flood and drought management particularly require participatory multi-stakeholder approaches for developing solutions and reducing water-related disaster risks. Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is an effective way to strengthen resilience for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and therefore we invite all leaders and all stakeholders to join this approach.

In our Action Plan launched in September 2016, the HLPW has committed itself to tangible actions to help the international community advance internationally agreed targets on water related DRR. They include: analysis of water crisis risks and good practices on managing mega-floods and droughts; a platform where states can share and exchange lessons and good practices; maximizing the use of existing knowledge and creating a knowledge base and tools for better understanding the impacts of water-related disasters, to facilitate decision making; a call for projects to strengthen water security and the economic resilience of marginalized communities, with a focus on impact for women, girls and people with disability within those communities; and states and organizations to improve water use efficiency for resilient economies, climate action and human settlement, including new technologies, policy reforms, and innovative solutions.

We reiterate our commitment to place water, including water-related disasters, at the center stage of all of the development discussions in the global arena, since water not only affects economic growth, but is also a major humanitarian issue.

We underscore the imperative urgency to take immediate actions to reverse the current trends of water scarcity, floods and water related disasters; we reiterate our Call to Action on Water¹, and will work at the highest level with the United Nations Organization and the World Bank to increase awareness and synergies among other leaders and multi-stakeholders, in regard to this urgent call.

High Level Panel on Water

The High Level Panel on Water, co-convened by UN Secretary-General and President of the World Bank Group, was launched in April 2016. Its current membership is as follows:

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

More information on the Action Plan of the Panel is available at:

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/HLPWater

¹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/11296Joint%20Statement%20HLPW.pdf