

HLPF 2020

Virtual side event: Integrated Water and Energy Solutions: A Transformative Pathway to Sustainable Development (7/7, 12h-13h30)

Opening remarks by the PR of Brazil, Ambassador Ronaldo Costa Filho

- I am pleased to be here with you today to see the UNDESA – Itaipu Binacional Sustainable Water & Energy Partnership bearing fruit, even during these challenging times we live in.
- In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how different aspects of sustainable development are intertwined, and how important it is to approach them from a holistic perspective.
- Here at the UN, member states have been discussing in the last few months a review of the format of the High Level Political Forum, and one of the main points of the negotiations is how to better integrate the different SDGs in our debates and deliberations.
- The partnership between Itaipu and UNDESA, through its Solutions Network, sets a good example of an initiative that manages to bring together two different fields, the energy community and the water community, to advance experiences and solutions on SDGs 6 and 7.
- The importance of access to clean water and sanitation is clearer than ever now, and sustainable energy is a key building block of a vision to build back better in our recovery efforts from the pandemic. Both issues are of timely importance.
- In regards to water and sanitation, we had a very important recent development in Brazil that I believe shows that even during this pandemic we can advance towards sustainable development. Last month, the Brazilian National Congress approved the new regulatory framework for water and sanitation services. The previous model, through which only public resources were used to build and advance WASH infrastructure, was clearly insufficient, and would not lead us to achieve our own domestic targets. With the new law, the private sector will have incentives to invest and partner up with the public sector in enhancing our efforts. It is a good example of how the right enabling environments can leverage new resources and put us on the right path.
- I hope that this event provides yet another space for these debates to move forward and I look forward to hearing its key messages.