WATER AND SANITATION: NATIONAL CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES
- SLIDE 1 -

Distinguished members of Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It truly is an honour to stand before you and to join you on this important day you discuss may be one of the most crucial issues for humanity.

I don't need to recall how fundamental is the issue of water, both for present generation and future generation.

- SLIDE 2 -

Distinguished members of Parliament,

It is one of the biggest shame of the humanity that today in 2014 the access to water and sanitation is still a problematic question for millions of persons.

And we should not believe that this is an issue for only some countries. We're living in a world of solidarity, whether we like it or not, we're going to share the benefits and the disastrous consequences of our behaviors.

Well, I don't want to bore you with tone of data like the fact that still today, 1 billion people are forced to practice open defecation around the world... But still, the only word that comes to my mind is shame. Especially since most vulnerable part of the population, I mean children, women, minorities, are the main victims of the situation.

In 2014, no one should be left behind when it comes to such a basic right for dignity as the right to water and sanitation.

- SLIDE 3 -

Distinguished members of Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is our duty to make of the Human Right to Water and Sanitation recognized in 2010 by the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Right Council a reality.

And for that, we need national governments implication... But not only! We also need and I may say as a priority the implication of local authorities to make of water and sanitation a priority issue, especially in their expenditures.

When it comes to that subject, one main principles should apply: transparency, so as the main stakeholders, I mean local population, could be informed and be able to participate in the process of decision. It is fundamental when we know that corruption in the water sector is widespread.
In order to fight against these plagues, the principle of accountability should also remain central.

- **SLIDE 4 –**

Distinguished members of Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen,
When it comes to the question of quality of water, there is a fact that we should be well aware of, it is the fact that most of wastewater, specially in developing countries, just flows into rivers, without any kind of treatment... you can imagine the kind of impact this can have on the right to a safe drinking water but also the impact on the all ecosystem...

But it’s true that The treatment of wastewater requires significant amounts of energy (and demand for energy to do this is expected to increase globally by 44% between 2006 and 2030 especially in non-OECD countries where wastewater currently receives little or no treatment).

This leads me to another challenge we’re facing.

- **SLIDE 5 –**

We’re witnessing today of an extraordinary economic development and growth of population: these two factors as you can imagine exert a terrible pressure on natural resources and mainly on water.

To say it in a few words, we’re facing an inter-sectorial competition: we need water for industry, we need water to produce energy, we need water for agriculture, we need water for basic human needs.

All these sectors are eventually inextricably linked so that actions in one area commonly have impacts on the others, as well as on the ecosystems.

Ladies and Gentlemen, one question:
How do we make with these competing needs?

- **SLIDE 6 –**

We need to start acting in such a way as no planning; no decision could be taken in isolation. One word comes to my mind: interdependence.

This is a word reflected in the concept we should tend to: the concept of integrated water resource management.

It could seems to be a lot of complicated words... The main idea behind the concept is to develop a process promoting a development and management of water but also land and other related resources which is coordinated. As a consequence, this process should lead to a management of resources maximizing
economic and social welfare, for all in an equitable manner, and of course without forgetting the sustainability of ecosystems since sustainable development is also a main principle for water management...

What point if we get water today but if future generation don’t?

Another point is that definitely, in order to have an integrated water resource management, we need more coordination between ministerial bodies: ministries of health, of environment, of industry of agriculture... All these bodies should be at least engaged in a dialogue process about the management of water!

Only with this kind of dialogue will be able to think about better water allocation schemes, mainly based on a clear priority that should always be the human being and his ecosystem.

Distinguished members of Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen,

So yes we’re facing a period of challenge for water governance, however, it is also a period of great opportunities!

The water challenge can be managed and we have tons of good practices that can be shared.

It is now the perfect timing for conducting national general assessment of water policies and to be engaged in a drafting or real water codes!

- SLIDE 7 -

It is also a time for international action. As you know we’re approaching the end of the process of the MDG’s, the Millenium Development Goals.

In the context of the Rio + 20 Conference, we need to advocate for a specific sustainable development goal dedicated on water, since water should be a priority in the post 2015 Agenda.

Water as an SDGs should be based on these 3 principles:
- the right to a safe and affordable water should be realized
- we should develop an integrated approach of water management
- clear focus should be on wastewater treatment

Distinguished members of Parliament, the subject is so important that I will not try to conclude this presentation in a few words... The only thing I would like to say is that, more than never, Distinguished members of Parliament, your voices matter!

- SLIDE 8-

Thank you for your attention.