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UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
71st session
Side-event on Revitalizing/Consolidating efforts
towards the implementation of water-related SDGs and targets
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Statement

by His Excellency Vladimir Makei
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Belarus

I would like to thank the organisers of this event – Tajikistan, United Nations Development Programme and Department of Economic and Social Affairs – for letting me be part of this esteemed panel. It's very composition shows the diversity of actors involved in the implementation of the water related Sustainable Development Goal and tasks. I can only wholeheartedly welcome such variety of participants since it is exactly what the Sustainable Development Agenda is about – bringing all stakeholders together to achieve the objective of leaving no one behind and sustaining progress and prosperity.

I am grateful to Tajikistan for showing an example of how water cooperation should unite countries and people. Just recently, we have witnessed such cooperative approach at the Dushanbe Symposium on implementing SDG 6 on water and sanitation.

“Water for Life” was the title of the International Decade of Action in 2005-2015. Indeed, throughout this decade we learned through action how water related issues influence the very essence of human lives, be it through access to quality drinking water, sustainable agriculture or collective use of transboundary water resources. But life requires sustainable development. So, I truly appreciate the initiative by the President of Tajikistan to unite further international efforts on water and sanitation through a new international decade on “Water for Sustainable Development”. Belarus as a member of the Group of Friends of Water could actively contribute to such decade with my country's experience in many areas, including efficient management of water resources or tackling water pollution as one of the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe.

All of us will need to make considerable efforts to achieve the goal of water for sustainable development as indeed all other Sustainable Development Goals. Apart from our national efforts we hope the UN system will do its utmost on this track. As we discussed this issue at the high-level GA debate last April, this will require full involvement and coordinated use of all available international resources. It is necessary to set in motion all mechanisms and processes approved at the UN summit last year. The UN assistance to countries should come through accumulated expert advice, finance, technology, means of implementation.

Just like water and many other cross-cutting SDGs are comprehensive in their nature, the action on SDGs should also be integral and supported by all available capacities. Developing partnerships like the one we have in relation to water and sanitation is a means to multiply such resources and to ensure effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda through cooperation and dialogue.