

## **Declaration on the Importance of Engaging Youth in the Dialogue on Water and Human Rights**

October 2020

### **I. Identifying Threats and Objectives:**

Recognizing the fact that the most marginalized communities often lack the basic infrastructures and facilities to efficiently protect themselves against the spread of pandemics,

Recognising the exposure of the most vulnerable groups of society to the worst effects of climate change,

With the goal of achieving SDG 6 by 2030, and with the strong belief that it can only be achieved through an intergenerational approach,

### **II. Raising Awareness:**

We, a group of young professionals working in different water-related sectors and brought together by the common desire to promote the engagement of youths in the dialogue on water and human rights, commit ourselves to raising awareness about the importance of realising the human rights to water and sanitation in our respective endeavours.

We want to make the basic human rights to water and sanitation prominent through advocacy and awareness at all levels.

### **III. Protecting Marginalised Groups and Indigenous Peoples:**

In light of the increased vulnerability of certain groups to the worst effects of global pandemics and climate change, we will prioritise the needs of the most marginalised groups of society, including but not limited to women and girls, children, migrants, people with disabilities, the elderly, and minority groups, and will support projects that contribute to the realisation of their human rights to water and sanitation.

We will contribute to, and support projects that strive to find sustainable and equitable solutions to improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene for the most vulnerable people, to ensure that no one is left behind, and to provide a safe, secure and sustainable world to the future generations.

Recognising that access to clean water is essential to ensure the self-determination of Indigenous peoples, as well as to protect their ways of life, we will endeavour to pay particular attention to the demands of these communities and to promote Indigenous rights as recognised by the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention.

### **IV. Supporting Innovative Solutions:**

Contributing to this effort, we will support young people in innovative solutions, in the decision-making processes. We want to spotlight youth-led innovations, especially nature-based ones that solve local WASH challenges.

#### **V. Education, Participation and Gender Inclusion in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:**

Young people need to be included in policies that enable us to first access quality education so that we can contribute meaningfully to solves the challenges of water, sanitation and hygiene, and secondly, so that we are able to contribute to the decision-making processes in an educated manner.

Beyond demanding access to information and education, we want to advocate for the inclusion of young people in decision making and ensure their meaningful participation in the design and implementation of water related policies, thus moving away from an adult centred vision of water governance.

We will strongly advocate for gender equal participation in the dialogue and processes of achieving the global agenda of 2030, and we will strive to ensure that all women have equal rights and a significant role in achieving human rights to WASH.

We shall encourage the creation of agreeable platforms for women to discuss their challenges about WASH, share their collective wisdom and discuss solutions to solve the Water, Sanitation, and health related issues, such as Menstruation Hygiene Management (MHM), which are directly related to themselves.

#### **VI. Securing Financing:**

We will attract funds and allocate resources to designing and providing tools and mechanisms to ensure that all, including the most marginalised are:

- protected against the spread of global pandemics
- able to respond to the worst effects of climate change, and
- provided with sustainable solutions for water, sanitation and hygiene.

We will support awareness campaigns; projects that target innovative and human rights-based water and sanitation solutions for the most marginalised people; and education and inclusive decision-making processes by securing funding through pledges and campaigns, among others.

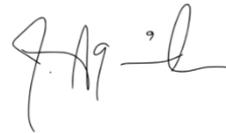
#### **VII. Developing Strategic Partnership with WASH and climate related institutions:**

We encourage the development of congenital platforms of dialogue and inclusiveness between youth networks and well-established WASH and climate related institutions, in order to share knowledge and experiences, as well as to help develop capacity building and training programs of young people, notably on SDGs 6 and 13.

**Supported by: Organisation of American States, Pakistan Youth Parliament for Water, South African Young Water Professionals, Swiss Water Partnership Youth, World Youth Parliament for Water, Young Water Solutions.**

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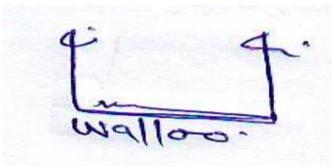
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