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## **The EPLO statement at the UN Water Conference in New York**

The EPLO participated at the 2023 United Nations water conference at the UN headquarters in New York from 22 to 24 March 2023 represented by the Director of the Institute of Sustainable Water Management and Water Law, Prof. Ioannis Katsoyiannis and the EPLO Director Prof. Spyridon Flogaitis. Professor Katsoyiannis gave a statement about the world water situation on the third day of the conference during the general debate, in the General Assembly Hall and, stressed among others that, although big efforts have been realized, there are still hundreds of millions of people without access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation, while water scarcity is threatening the available water sources in almost all the world. In addition, chemical pollution, which is still a big problem, endangers biodiversity.

The most important outcome of the conference is that a lot of investment is still needed to realize the water-action agenda and time is pressing. First thing is to have the right drivers in the legislation for cities, industries, agriculture, people and our environment, envisioning their roles for water.

During the conference, the EPLO and other stakeholders have run a first batch of discussions and meetings that will pave the way towards water smart societies. Furthermore, research and innovation must be at the heart of the water action agenda. Partnership such as Water4All - Partnership and Global Water partnership are more than relevant and Water-oriented Living Labs will facilitate and accelerate the implementation of solutions.

Circular processes for water and resource recovery solutions need to be further deployed. However, It is also by saving water that we will contribute to a water-smart society and resilient world.

Finally, the EPLO stresses that water is about peace. It is about sustainable development. It is about fighting poverty, supporting food systems and creating jobs and prosperity. Water is about human rights and gender equality. That is why water needs to be at the center of the global political agenda.