Dear Madame Commissioner,

Please accept the following statement for inclusion in the information you are considering in your human rights and water report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

The statement below has been signed by 185 organizations and networks from 48 countries.

I would like to alert you to other strong points which did not make it into the statement because of time issues.

One recurrent theme form those who commented was that Water should be removed from trade and investment agreements and at the same time, the human right to water and other human rights, must clearly trump corporate rights, at places such as the World Trade Organizations.

Prepaid water meters were also broadly condemned as an arbitrary cut-off.

Concern for nature and protection of nature was also related to the human right to water.

Finally, I would ask you to support the broadening of the definition of the right to water to be both an economic, social and cultural right, as well as being a political and civil right.

Anil Naidoo
Blue Planet Project.
To Madame Louise Arbour,


Dear Madame High Commissioner,

We are encouraged that you have been asked to provide a report regarding the Human Right to Water (HRTW); to the Human Rights Council. Lack of access to clean water for hygiene and personal use is at a critical stage in many parts of the world. The growing crisis will be intensified by the sweeping effects of climate change. The continuing lack of access to basic sanitation for over half the world’s people continues to lead to fatal disease and a lack of dignity. The time for action on both water and sanitation is well upon us.

A strong report from your office, pointing towards mechanisms for implementation of the human right to water and highlighting the importance of a rights-based approach in dealing with the water crisis, will have a major impact; both in how we interact with water and on future policy decisions of states and the international community.

The depth of the crisis cannot be overstated. Millions die needlessly and billions struggle daily with water scarcity and disease, loss of dignity and suffering that accompanies this avoidable scourge.

Governments have not invested the necessary political and financial resources to address this issue adequately, and the impacts are devastating. Strong and unambiguous affirmation of the HRTW may alleviate this deplorable lack of attention.

We hope your work complements that of the many organizations and activists around the world who continue the fight for water justice and sustainable solutions.

We, the undersigned international networks, civil society organizations and social movements, representing people from all corners of the world, coming from movements focused upon environmental, women’s, labour, social justice, human rights, peasant and other struggles, bring the following points forward for consideration in your upcoming report to the UN Human Rights Council.

We assert that the HRTW exists through its implicit and explicit recognition in international treaties, declarations and customary law which bind all governments. It is engendered in several existing human rights instruments as a binding obligation on the Parties. Nevertheless, the failure of the existing instruments to deal with the HRTW explicitly and directly, has allowed
several nations to incorrectly deny that such an obligation exists – underscoring the need for a
new instrument. Your study and recommendations must provide the impetus for moving toward
such a new instrument.

We request that all states move beyond simple recognition of the HRTW and develop compre-
hensive national plans to implement the HRTW, including making this right justiciable through
appropriate national legislation.

We support General Comment 15, approved by the UN Economic and Social Council (Novem-
ber 2002), in which water is seen as ‘indispensable for leading a life in human dignity’ and a
‘prerequisite for the realization of other human rights’. While General Comment 15 is a welcome
and necessary step forward, it is not sufficient, in and of itself, to deal with the need for a new
legally-binding instrument which will form the basis for moving towards implementation and full
realization of the HRTW.

We urge the UN, through the Human Rights Council, to designate an appropriate UN administra-
tive body to ensure, at all levels, adequate laws, policies, institutions, administrative procedures
and practices and mechanisms of redress required realize the HRTW. These measures must be
based on determined benchmarks to assess progress.

We understand that while governments remain the primary duty-bearers, non-state actors (in-
cluding transnational corporations and international financial institutions) have been playing an
increasingly powerful role in water; there have been resultant violations of the HRTW emanating
from market-based approaches to water management. We therefore affirm that that all entities,
public and private, must be held accountable to comply with the requirements of international
law concerning the HRTW and subject to mechanisms providing appropriate redress and com-
pensation to those harmed.

We assert that there can be no HRTW without comprehensive protection of the planet’s eco-
system and hydrological cycle; linked to the HRTW is the right of all living things, and the earth,
to have access to sufficient water; water is part of the global commons and a public trust, any
international agreements on the HRTW must address these issues of environmental protection,
sustainability and public control.

Finally, we call upon the Human Rights Council, as steps towards achieving these goals, to ap-
point a Special Rapporteur on Water and to move rapidly towards adoption of strong guidelines
for states to follow in the implementation of the HRTW; each of which is a necessary condition
towards the necessary implementation of an International Convention on the Human Right to
Water.

Signed:
International
African Water Network
Blue Planet Project
Center on Housing Rights and Evictions
COHRE
Citizen News Service
Diverse Women for Diversity
Ecumenical Water Network
Friends of the Earth International
International Forum on Globalization IFG
International Peoples Health Council (South Asian Focal Point)
Jubilee South-Asia/Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (JS-APMDD)
JUBILEO SUR/Américas
Public Services International
Citizen News Service

Angola
Federacao dos Sindicatos da Administracao Publica Saude e Servicos (FSAPSS)
Sindicato Nacional Independente dos Trabalhadores de Funcao (SNITSSFP)

Argentina
Comision Popular por la Recuperacion del Agua Cordoba
Instituto internacional de Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo- IIED

Bangladesh
BanglaPraxis

Bolivia
Coordinadora de Defensa del Agua y de la Vida
Federacion de Trabajadores Fabriles de Cochabamba
Fundacion Abril
Fundacion Solon
Movimiento Boliviano por la Soberania y la Integracion Solidaria de los Pueblos

Botswana
Botswana Civic Servants Association (BCSA)
Botswana Unified Local Government Services Association (BULGSA)
National Amalgamated Local and Central Government & Parastatal Manual Workers Union (NAL-GCPMWU)

Burkina Faso
ORCADE

Cameroon
Association Pour la Defense des Consommateurs (APDC)

Canada
Canadian Auto Workers Local 27
Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace
Canadian Union of Public Employees
Common Frontiers
Council of Canadians
Friends of the Earth Canada
KAIROS - Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
Manitoba Wildlands
Niagara Chapter Council of Canadians
Parksville/Qualicum KAIROS
Planetary Association for Clean Energy
Polaris Institute
Public Service Alliance of Canada - Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada
Sierra Club
United Church
Waterlooians.ca

Colombia
Campagna el Agua un bien Publico
CENSAT AGUA VIVA, Friends of The Earth Colombia
Ecofondo
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
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| Ecuador | Acción Ecológica - Ecuador  
Movimiento Mi Cometa  
Observatorio Ciudadano de Servicios Publicos  
Frente Nacional Por La Salud De Los Pueblos Del Ecuador  
Waskamuyu |
| Europe | EPSU European Federation of Public Service Unions |
| Finland | ATTAC Finland  
Friends of the Earth Finland |
| France | France Libertés Fondation Danielle Mitterrand Solidarité |
| Germany | Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland e.V. (BUND)  
Friends of the Earth Germany  
Fian Deutschland  
GRÜNE LIGA e.V  
Heinrich Boell Foundation Regional Office for Mexico, Centralamerica and Cuba  
Initiative Colibri |
| Ghana | National Coalition Against Privatisation  
People’s Health Movement Ghana |
| Grenada | Grenada Public Workers’ Union |
| Guinea | CECIDE Centre du Commerce international pour le Developpement |
| India | Focus on the Global South  
Indian Social action Forum – INSAF  
Initiative for Health, Equity & Society |
| Indonesia | Peoples Coalition for The Right to Water  
KRuHA  
Kenya  
All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) |
| Malawi | Civil Servants Trade Union (CSTU)  
Malawian Municipal Workers’ Union (MAMWU)  
Water Workers Union of Malawi (WETUM) |
| Malta | Friends of the Earth Malta  
Mauritius  
Federation of Parastatal Bodies & Other Unions FPBOU  
Government Servants Association (GSA)  
Local Authoriries Employees Union (LAEU) |
| Mexico | Alianza Mexicana por la Autodeterminación de los Pueblos Asociacion Nacional de Medicas Mexicanas A.C  
Centro de Derechos Humanos “Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez, A.C.”  
Centro de Ecologia y Desarrollo  
Centro Derechos Humanos “Fray Francisco de Vitoria, O.P.”, A.C.  
Centro de Servicios Municipales “Heriberto Jara, A.C.”  
Centro Mexicano de Derecho Ambiental, A.C.  
Centro Operacional de Vivienda y Poblamiento, Copevi A.C.  
Coalición de Organizaciones Mexicanas por el Derecho al Agua  
Colectivo Radar  
Consejo de Ejidos y Comunidades Opositores a la Presa La Parota |
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<td>FEDERACION NACIONAL DE TRABAJADORES DE AGUA PORABLE Y ALCANTARILLADO DEL PERU</td>
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<td>- FENTAP</td>
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<td>Scotland</td>
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<td>Centre for Applied Legal Studies</td>
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<td>Centre for Civil Society Environmental Justice Project, University of KwaZulu-Natal</td>
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<td>The Coalition Against Water Privatisation</td>
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| Mozambique   | Sindicato Nacional da Funcav Publica (SIN-AFP)                               |
| Namibia      | Namibia Public Workers Union (NAPWU)                                         |
| Nepal        | Collective Initiative for Research and Action (CIRA)                         |
|             | Rural Reconstruction Nepal                                                   |
| Neth. Antilles | Windward Islands Civil Servants Union                                        |
|              | WICSU                                                                         |
|              | Windward Islands Private Sector Union PSU                                    |
| Netherlands  | Both Ends                                                                    |
|              | Corporate Europe Observatory                                                 |
|              | Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights                               |

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|              | Corporate Europe Observatory                                                 |
|              | Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights                               |
Spain
Ecologistas en Acción
Ingeniería Sin Fronteras

Sri Lanka
Movement for National Land and Agricultural Reform (MONLAR)
National Farmers Assembly

Swaziland
Swaziland National Association of civil Servants (SNACS)
Swaziland Nurses Association (SNA)

Switzerland
Alliance Sud
Millenium Solidarity
Pro Natura - Friends of the Earth Switzerland

Tanzania
Irrigation Training and Economic Empowerment Organization – IRTECO
People’s Health Movement - Tanzania

Thailand
Focus on the Global South

Turkey
Supolitik Calisma Grubu/Turkiye’ (Working Group on Waterpolitics)

UK
Foundation for Gaia
Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland
UNISON
WaterAid
World Development Movement

Ukraine
The Trade Union of Public Service Workers of Ukraine

Uruguay
La Comision Nacional en Defensa el Agua y la Vida
La Federacion de Funcionarios de Ose - FFOSE- ISP
REDES-Amigos de la Tierra

USA
Coalition for a Strong United Nations
Corporate Accountability International
Food and Water Watch
Gender Action
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Other Worlds, USA
PDHRE, People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning
People’s Health Movement
Sierra Club
Sweetwater Alliance
The Alliance for Democracy
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom

Zambia
Civil Servants Union Of Zambia (CASWUZ)
National Energy Sector and Allied Workers Union (NESAWU)
National Union of Public Services Workers Union (NUPSWU)
University of Zambia and Allied Workers Union (UNZAAWU)
Zambia National Union of Health and Allied Workers (ZNUHAW)
Zambia United Local Authorities Workers Union (ZULAWU)

Zimbabwe
Public Service Association (PSA)
Zimbabwe Nurses Association (ZINA)
Zimbabwe Urban Councils Workers Union (ZUCWU)