

UNITAR GLOBAL WATER ACADEMY




SIDE EVENT @ UN WORLD WATER DAY

Addressing Water for Peace:

WATER GOVERNANCE IN CONFLICT AND HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS

 **22** MARCH
2024

 15:00-16:30
(CET)

 Building A, Room V,
Palais des Nations,
Geneva, Switzerland

Aim: This panel will explore the multilateral and environmental drivers that amplify water insecurity in the face of conflict and disasters, in addition to offering capacity-building solutions to improve water diplomacy, governance, and ultimately safe access to communities ravaged by war and disasters.

Background

Water is intrinsically linked to conflict. Inequitable access to safe drinking water is further exacerbated within a rapidly changing climate as potable water sources become scarcer. Global environmental change, including climate change and alterations in land use, is driving water insecurity across rural, agricultural, and urban settings. Disruptions to food production and urban development arising from water scarcity can be a source of great tension and potential conflict when access to essential resources is limited. Further, water insecurity may intensify political and social tension, particularly during times of crisis. Working together across borders and disciplines to safeguard our freshwater supply during conflict and disasters, provides opportunities to not only enhance water security, but also foster climate action, food security, environmental sustainability, and ultimately, peace.

In this panel, we discuss multilateral and environmental drivers that amplify water insecurity, in addition to offering capacity-building solutions that improve water governance, particularly for those individuals who are most marginalized. Transdisciplinary collaboration is critical to ‘future-proof’ water governance by developing policies that improve water diplomacy, climate resilience, and transboundary cooperation.

UNITAR World Water Day Event

In its first annual celebration of the inauguration of UNITAR’s Global Water Academy, York University, and partners convene for World Water Day. This event will serve to engage wider stakeholders through the role of capacity building by creating a collaborative dialogue on the year’s thematic area of ‘**Leveraging Water for Peace**’ in relationship to training and education as a key solution. In promotion of the ethos of World Water Day, UNITAR will host the ceremony of the UNITAR Global Water Academy platform, and invite participants to engage directly with the shared United Nations, and academic resources that are providing training to upskill and change the blue economy we live in today.



Key messages for World Water Day 2024



Water for Peace



Water can create peace or spark conflict

When water is scarce or polluted, or when people struggle for access, tensions can rise. By cooperating on water, we can balance everyone’s water needs and help stabilize the world.



Prosperity and peace rely on water

As nations manage climate change, mass migration, and political unrest, they must put water cooperation at the heart of their plans.



Water can lead us out of crisis

We can foster harmony between communities and countries by uniting around the fair and sustainable use of water – from United Nations conventions at the international level, to actions at the local level.

“Without effective management of our water resources, we risk intensified disputes between communities and sectors and even increased tensions among nations. So far, water has historically proven to be a catalyst for cooperation not for conflict”.

Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations



Agenda

15:00

Opening Remarks



Mr. Alex Mejia
Director, Division for People and Social Inclusion
UNITAR



Dr. Rhonda Lenton
President and Vice-Chancellor
York University

15:15

Panel Discussion: Peace and Prosperity in Water Management



H.E. Amb. Sabri Bachtobji
Permanent Representative of Tunisia
to the United Nations Office at Geneva



H.E. Amb. Walid Khalid Obeidat
Permanent Representative of Jordan
to the United Nations Office at Geneva



Mr. Federico Properzi
Chief Technical Advisor,
UN-Water



Dr. Sangam Shrestha
Dean of the School of Engineering
and Technology,
Global Water Sanitation Center,
Asian Institute of Technology



Dr. Tamas Palvolgyi
Associate Professor,
Ludovika University of Public Service



Mr. Alan AtKisson
Executive Secretary,
Global Water Partnership



Dr. Rumina Dhalla
Director, Institute for Sustainable Commerce
Associate Professor, Organization Studies
and Sustainable Commerce
University of Guelph
Special Advisor, UNITAR

16:15

Questions & Answers Period

16:30

Closing Remarks



Dr. Amir Asif
Vice President,
Research & Innovation,
York University

