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**Ensuring safe water and sanitation for all: a solution through science,  
technology and innovation**

Statement by

Mr. Denis Naughten  
Chairperson  
Inter-Parliamentary Union Working Group on Science & Technology

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Intervention by

**Denis Naughten TD**

**Chairperson of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Working Group on Science &  
Technology**

to the

**Commission on Science and Technology for Development's,  
26<sup>th</sup> session**

on

**“Ensuring safe water and sanitation for all: a solution by science,  
technology and innovation”**

Geneva, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Firstly, my name is Denis Naughten, and I'm an Irish Member of Parliament and a former Cabinet Minister.

I'm addressing you as the Chairperson of Inter-Parliamentary Union Working Group on Science and Technology.

Our working Group is a Co-Sponsor of the IPU "Science for Peace Schools," hosted in CERN, which is intended to bridge the worlds of science and politics by initiating dialogue and helping create a community of parliamentary experts to address challenges together under the neutral umbrella of science.

We believe that it is important to connect science with peace, and at its core these schools are

- a space to exchange experience on evidence-based decision making and,
- to learn about the methods of scientific collaboration that can then be applied to political engagement.

The inaugural theme of the School was "Dealing with water scarcity: an opportunity to rebuild peace with Science."



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Focusing on water management and the exploration of new and renewable water sources, the School aimed to contribute to a positive technical cooperation environment for negotiations by proposing alternative technologies and modalities to lessen tensions related to water scarcity, thus encouraging coexistence between nations. Notably, participants agreed on the importance of implementing two regional projects on water in the Sahel region and in Palestine.

This will culminate in a follow-up conference for parliamentarians & scientists from across the globe focusing on water and food security from 19-24th June 2023 at the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and Education (ICISE) in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam.

To be a successful scientist, it is essential to have vision; commitment; and tolerance despite disagreements; these are the three fundamental aspects to initiation, realization, and success of scientific experiments to serve humanity.

This is the very same for a successful politician.

We both have the same goal to use our skills to solve problems and improve people's lives. And there is no greater goal than Sustainable Development Goal 6, providing water and sanitation for all.

But to achieve this, we need to ensure that both the parliamentary and scientific communities change the language they communicate so that they can engage directly with each other and use empirical evidence to inform policymaking.

It's also essential this science is accessible to all countries, and this can only be achieved through the facilitation of international cooperation to eliminate the risk of parochialism or duplication.

Water is the perfect "pathfinder project" to achieve that goal.

The clear evidence shows that countries engaging in bilateral and multilateral agreements tend to be more peaceful, as these agreements create more favourable conditions for direct investments in projects such as water.



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And I think it's important to note that this was the principle behind the establishment of CERN in 1954 when 12 European states pooled their resources for a world class research infrastructure in nuclear and particle physics to restore a peaceful collaboration within Europe.

The reality is that research communities depend on support policies and funding that are decided upon through the financial and legal frameworks for research discussions.

Members of Parliament have a vital role in these decisions, particularly in the multi-generational delivery of such objectives.

Thank you.

ENDS

Editors note:

The **Inter-Parliamentary Union Working Group on Science and Technology** is a global parliamentary focal point for issues related to science and technology helping to build bridges between science and parliament.

The **Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)** is a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the United Nations focal point for science, technology and innovation (STI) for development, in analysing how STI, including information and communications technologies (ICTs), serve as enablers of the 2030 Agenda.

It acts as a forum for strategic planning, sharing lessons learned and best practices, providing foresight about critical trends in STI in key sectors of the economy, the environment and society, and drawing attention to emerging and disruptive technologies.