UNITED NATIONS - NATIONS UNIES
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
MESSAGE ON WORLD WATER DAY
22 March 2010

Water is the source of life and the link that binds all living beings on this planet. It is connected directly to all our United Nations goals: improved maternal and child health and life expectancy, women's empowerment, food security, sustainable development and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Recognition of these links led to the declaration of 2005-2015 as the International Decade for Action "**Water for Life**".

Our indispensable water resources have proven themselves to be greatly resilient, but they are increasingly vulnerable and threatened. Our growing population's need for water for food, raw materials and energy is increasingly competing with nature's own demands for water to sustain already imperiled ecosystems and the services on which we depend. Day after day, we pour millions of tons of untreated sewage and industrial and agricultural wastes into the world's water systems. Clean water has become scarce and will become even scarcer with the onset of climate change. And the poor continue to suffer first and most from pollution, water shortages and the lack of adequate sanitation.

The theme of this year's World Water Day, "**Clean Water for a Healthy World**", emphasizes that both the quality and the quantity of water resources are at risk. More people die from unsafe water than from all forms of violence, including war. These deaths are an affront to our common humanity, and undermine the efforts of many countries to achieve their development potential.

The world has the know-how to solve these challenges and become better stewards of our

water resources. Water is central to all our development goals. As we mark the mid-point of the International Decade for Action, and look forward to this year's MDG Summit, let us protect and sustainably manage our waters for the poor, the vulnerable and for all life on Earth.

World Water Day co-ordination by UNEP

World Water Day visual identity & communication campaign by FAOWATE

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is coordinating the organization of the World Water Day 2010 campaign on behalf of UN-Water and in collaboration with FAO, UNDP, UNECE, UNICEF, UNESCO, UN-Habitat, WHO, and the UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication as well as with partner organizations such as International Water Association, World Wide Fund for Nature and World Water Council.