



The participants unanimously agreed on a DECLARATION as a framework document for their future work. The full text of this document is reproduced below:

'We, the young people and youth trainers from 15 countries of Europe: the Caucasasia, Central Asia, Latin America and Africa, assembled in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, for the European Youth Water Parliament to share our knowledge, skills and efforts aimed at providing solutions to issues connected with participatory water management, water quality, sanitation and hygiene.

Given that water is a limited natural resource and therefore a limited public good, highly required by people and other living creatures. Cognizant of the fact that people also depend on water to maintain their personal hygiene, as well as maintaining hygiene at public places like schools, universities and offices.

Knowing that deteriorated water quality resulting from contamination with toxic elements, other harmful chemicals, biological pollutants and irregular water supply are often the major causes for the failure to maintain proper hygiene in the living environment and thereby resulting in health problems for many people.

And being aware of the vital necessity of safe water for ensuring sustainable development of society, we pledge the following:

1. To raise public awareness of water management issues by initiating and coordinating various actions and events like Water Festivals, peaceful demonstrations and parades, publishing brochures, posters and launching media campaigns. The goals of these will be to promote the educational process of sharing knowledge and changing attitudes and practices of citizens and students in schools and involve them as active participants in water protection and water conservation campaigns;

2. To strengthen control and monitoring aimed at protecting water sources and lobbying the authorities to ensure effective penalties in order to prevent the abuse of water resources. We will promote the interaction of organizations (such as Non Governmental Organizations) in the sector of IEC (Information, Education and Communication). This will be done in collaboration with the relevant authorities, water supply and sanitation utilities and the private sector.

3. To establish WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) committees consisting of democratically elected students and experts in each school, to strengthen control and monitoring for maintaining proper hygiene, for providing enough clean and safe toilets, separate for girls and for boys, for providing and improving operating facilities for handwashing. We are raising our voice to enforce legislation and ensure effective penalties are introduced.

4. To initiate meetings and discussions between Youth and Authorities in order to promote positive changes on local and national level and eventually on the international level. To increase Youth participation in decision-making processes concerning WASH.

5. To launch Youth WASH Network for the promotion of the Human Right to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and proper hygiene for a safe environment and improved human health.'

At the closing session the participants swore to uphold the United Nations Resolution on Water as a Human Right.





Two important documents were produced during this meeting. One of these was the paper documenting the launching of the **YOUTH WASH**, a Youth Network for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene with the mission to promote Human Right to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and proper hygiene for safe environment and improved human health.

The goals of the network were:

- Mobilize the youth for reaching the UN Millennium Development Goals;
- Lobby national, local governments to focus on safe drinking water and adequate sanitation goals;
- Raise awareness about access to drinking water of high quality and adequate sanitation as a guaranteed Human Right;
- Encourage environmentally friendly behavior as a tool to improve human health and welfare in line with the concept of integrated water management;
- Lobby for the introduction of compulsory hygiene education and ensuring proper conditions at school level for practicing this knowledge;
- Lobby for the introduction of adequate national standards for public and school sanitation and hygiene; push for the enforcement of these standards via the national and local legislation;
- Involve collaborators at all levels, that is, international, national and local, as well as traditional leaders and influential groups.

Membership would include:

- NGOs;
- Civil society groups;
- Schools;
- Educational bodies.

Communication and Collaboration would involve the following:

- Joint projects;
- Joint campaigns;
- Joint publications;
- Bulletin (4 numbers yearly) - electronic and printed;
- Comparable research on the quality of water supply, sanitation and hygiene services;
- Workshops, training programs, seminars.

Coordination would be done through regional and national WASH coordinators and elected national youth representatives, forming the Network Coordination Board.

29 schools and NGOs from 10 countries signed to be members or initiators of this network.

