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Geneva and Copenhagen, 22 August 2025

Dear Ministers,

We have the honour to invite the Republic of Estonia to the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. The meeting is jointly organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe), at the invitation of the Government of Hungary. It will take place in Budapest at the Bálna Conference Center from 5 to 7 November 2025.

The Budapest Meeting of the Parties will mark 20 years since the entry into force of the Protocol on Water and Health – a unique international agreement linking sustainable water management and the prevention, control and reduction of water-related diseases. Since its adoption in 1999, the Protocol has proven to be a vital instrument in advancing water, sanitation, hygiene and health across the pan-European region. It has played a significant role in expanding access to safely managed water and sanitation services, improving the quality of drinking water, advancing hygiene practices and reducing the incidence of water-related diseases. Today, the Protocol continues to drive policies and mobilize practical action towards equitable access to water and sanitation services for all in all settings.

We warmly invite you to take part in the meeting's high-level segment, "Resilient water and sanitation systems for a safer and healthier future", scheduled for 5 November. The session will examine the role of water and sanitation systems as foundational pillars for resilience and health security in the face of mounting global challenges. As the impacts of climate change intensify, health emergencies become more frequent and environmental degradation continues, the ability of communities, health systems and economies to withstand and recover from shocks is under increasing pressure. Investing in safe, resilient and equitable water and sanitation systems is vital to protecting public health, maintaining essential services, preserving water resources and ecosystems and reducing vulnerability across sectors. This high-level segment will offer a valuable opportunity to share national experiences and perspectives, strengthen partnerships, and promote integrated approaches that embed water, sanitation and hygiene within broader policies for climate adaptation, emergency preparedness and health system strengthening. The outcomes of the high-level segment will feed into the preparatory process to the United Nations 2026 Water Conference (United Arab Emirates, 2–4 December 2026).

Mr. Andres Sutt
Minister of Energy and the Environment
of the Republic of Estonia
Tallinn

Ms. Karmen Joller
Minister of Social Affairs
of the Republic of Estonia
Tallinn

The general segment of the meeting will be dedicated to reviewing progress made since the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties in 2022 and shaping the future direction of the Protocol, while also focusing on its impacts and success stories at country and regional levels. It will include discussions on improving governance, enhancing resilience to climate change, the safe management of water supply and sanitation systems and services, small-scale water supply and sanitation, the prevention and reduction of water-related diseases, equitable access to water and sanitation, and water, sanitation and hygiene in institutional settings and public places.

The Meeting of the Parties is expected to adopt a forward-looking programme of work for the period 2026–2028. The programme will serve as the main instrument for supporting implementation, responding to the needs and priorities of countries and advancing progress in water, sanitation, hygiene and health across the region, in alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the regional commitments set out in the Declaration of the Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health. A new complementary Strategy for the implementation of the Protocol, to be adopted by the Meeting of the Parties, will set directions for future development and enhanced implementation of the instrument.

Furthermore, the meeting will discuss and adopt an innovative system of targets to ensure financial sustainability of the work under the Protocol, with the aim of complementing and supporting strategic action with the required resources. During a round-table discussion on financing, Parties will be invited to reflect upon the proposed targets and share their ideas on how to implement them. We invite your country to reaffirm its intention to support the implementation of the new programme of work through active engagement and contributions, both financial and in-kind.

Please find enclosed the provisional agenda, a practical information note, and a concept note providing further detail on the high-level segment. Additional information, including details on registration, accreditation, and financial support for eligible participants, is available on the meeting website: https://unece.org/MOP7_Protocol.

Given the Protocol's cross-sectoral nature, we highly recommend that national delegations include representatives from the health, water and environment sectors to ensure effective and coordinated participation. We encourage you to include female participants in your delegation. We would appreciate it if you could designate the members of your delegation, communicate their details to the joint secretariat by e-mail and arrange their online registration for the meeting by **5 October 2025**. Parties also need to submit their credentials to the joint secretariat by e-mail by **22 October 2025**.

Should you require additional information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the joint secretariat at protocol.water_health@un.org and at euwatsan@who.int.

We look forward to welcoming you and your delegation in Budapest.

Please accept, Ministers, the assurances of our highest consideration.



Tatiana Molcean
Executive Secretary
United Nations
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Hans Henri P. Kluge
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