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Interfaith Declaration on the Importance of Water as a Human Right and a Public Good

Bern, 22.03.2026

The undersigned, along with the participants of the **'World.Water.All of Us'** conference held on 22 March 2026 (UN World Water Day) at the House of Religions in Bern, Switzerland, invite religious communities around the world to associate themselves with the following declaration:

We are:

1. Representatives of a wide variety of religious communities.
2. Part of a multireligious, spiritual and secular humanity with many different voices.
3. People for whom all life on this earth is valuable and who feel connected with future generations out of a sense of responsibility.

We note that:

4. Water is the foundation of life; water means life. The global water cycle connects all living beings.
5. For us water also has – in particular – social, cultural, medical, ethical, religious and spiritual value.
6. As human beings, we are connected to one another through water (and other essentials of life) across all national, cultural, religious and other borders.
7. Water is fundamentally a common good for which we all share responsibility.
8. Safe access to water is a recognized human right.[1]
9. Many people lack safe access to clean drinking water and safe sanitation;[2] women and children are particularly affected by this.
10. Access to water and control over water lead to conflicts worldwide; however, they are also a part of solutions for peace.
11. Clean water and healthy ecosystems are interdependent.
12. Throughout the world, water is threatened by pollution, technological and economic exploitation and misuse.
13. Action is urgently needed.

We therefore commit ourselves to doing our utmost:

14. to highlight and strengthen the sources within our religious traditions that protect what is essential for our lives;
15. to respect access to water as a human right and a public good, and to act accordingly;
16. to advocate for safe access to clean drinking water and sanitation for all people of the world;
17. to take responsibility for clean water and vigorous steps to protect and restore ecosystems;
18. to protect water as an essential of life from pollution and to encourage ourselves to use water mindfully and economically;
19. to encourage our local religious communities to use water responsibly and to call for, at all levels, safe access to clean drinking water and safe sanitation;
20. to also use negotiations over water as a part of efforts to promote peace.

Signatories:

Participants in the conference **'World.Water.All of Us'** – Interfaith World Water Day 2026 on 22 March 2026.

[1] On 28 July 2010 the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 64/292 on the right to water and sanitation. In it, the Assembly explicitly recognizes this human right. It also calls on States and international organizations to provide developing countries with financial support, capacity building and technology transfer through international cooperation.

[2] UN, 26 August 2025: Approximately 2.1 billion people (one in four people on Earth) lack safe access to drinking water (safely managed drinking water). Approximately 3.4 billion people do not have safe sanitation facilities at home (safely managed sanitation).