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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE TO THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH**

**Geneva, 16 November 2022**

I am pleased to send my greetings to the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health.

Water is life.

Access to safe water and adequate sanitation is a basic human right and vital to health, dignity, and inclusive development.

As the COVID-19 pandemic painfully demonstrated, safe water and sanitation is a cornerstone of public health systems and the first line of defence in preventing the spread of infectious diseases.

The Protocol on Water and Health provides governments with concrete tools to improve lives, realize the rights to water and sanitation, build resilience to climate change, and prepare for future pandemics.

In doing so, it is supporting countries in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I encourage you to make full use of these tools, and I urge all countries to ratify the Protocol and strive for its full implementation.

As we prepare for the 2023 United Nations Water Conference, let us work together to achieve universal access to safe drinking water, hygiene, and sanitation, leaving no one behind.

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