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Seventy-eighth session  
Agenda item 18  
Sustainable development

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2023

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/78/461, para. 53)]

### 78/147. Central Asia facing environmental challenges: fostering regional solidarity for sustainable development and prosperity

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming* its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

*Recalling* its resolutions [75/278](#) of 18 May 2021 on declaring the Aral Sea region a zone of ecological innovations and technologies, [77/158](#) of 14 December 2022 on the proclamation of the International Year of Glaciers’ Preservation, [77/165](#) of 14 December 2022 on the protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind, [77/172](#) of 14 December 2022 on sustainable mountain development, [77/286](#) of 16 May 2023 on the proclamation of World Sustainable Transport Day and [77/334](#) of 1 September 2023 on the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028,

*Recognizing* the need to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,



*Recognizing also* the importance of the unique ecological and geographical significance of the Aral Sea region, recognizing the catastrophic consequences of the drying up of the Aral Sea, supporting the efforts of the countries of Central Asia aimed at preserving the Aral Sea, including the rational and effective use of the Aral water basin, and acknowledging the urgent need for sustainable development in the Aral Sea region, by promoting regional and international cooperation as well as financial and technical support, as appropriate, including, among other initiatives, through the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and the multi-partner human security trust fund for the Aral Sea region,

*Recognizing further* that mountain ecosystems are highly vulnerable to the increasing adverse impacts of climate change, extreme weather events, deforestation, forest fires and forest degradation, land-use change, land degradation and natural disasters, from which they recover slowly, and that mountain glaciers around the world are retreating and getting thinner, with increasing impacts on the environment, sustainable livelihoods and human well-being, while reaffirming the importance of the Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions proclaimed for the period 2023–2027 to give new impetus to the international community's efforts to address the challenges and problems of mountain countries,

*Noting* that, over the past decades, global warming has led to widespread shrinking of the cryosphere, with mass loss from ice sheets and glaciers and reductions in snow cover, and stressing the urgent need to raise awareness of and to promote and facilitate actions and sustainable measures towards preserving glaciers, while seizing the opportunities of the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation in 2025,

*Welcoming* the offer of the Government of Tajikistan to convene an international conference dedicated to glaciers' preservation in Tajikistan in 2025, and the offer of the Government of Kyrgyzstan to convene the second Global Mountain Summit in Bishkek in 2027,

*Noting* the intention of Turkmenistan to host the Regional Centre for Climate Change Mitigating Technologies, in cooperation with the Climate Technology Centre and Network,

*Noting also* the adoption, by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-ninth session, of resolution [79/8](#) of 19 May 2023 on the modalities for the establishment of the United Nations special programme for the Aral Sea basin,

*Recognizing* that water is critical for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger, that water, ecosystems, energy, food security and nutrition are linked and that water is indispensable for health, well-being and human development, including the empowerment of women, and a vital element of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant goals in the social, environmental and economic fields,

*Welcoming* the convening of the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development," 2018–2028, from 22 to 24 March 2023,

1. *Reaffirms* that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, presenting a serious challenge to the sustainable development of all countries;
2. *Emphasizes* the importance of strengthening regional cooperation to tackle environmental challenges in Central Asia, including the Aral Sea region, and promoting socioeconomic development and adaptation to climate change;

3. *Takes note* of the adoption by the Heads of State of the Central Asian countries of the regional programme known as “Green Agenda for Central Asia”, aimed at fostering sustainable development;
4. *Welcomes* the initiative of Uzbekistan to convene an International Climate Forum in Samarkand in 2024, dedicated to seeking coordinated approaches and solutions to environmental challenges in the Central Asian region for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
5. *Also welcomes* the initiative of Kazakhstan to organize a regional climate summit in 2026, aimed at strengthening the regional response to climate change;
6. *Further welcomes* the commitment of the multi-partner human security trust fund for the Aral Sea region to addressing climate change and promoting climate-resilient development in the Aral Sea basin and Aral Sea region in its next cycle, invites Member States and relevant international organizations to contribute to the trust fund, and calls for increased financial resources to support climate-resilient development projects in the Aral Sea basin and Aral Sea region;
7. *Encourages* the multi-partner human security trust fund for the Aral Sea region to prioritize projects and initiatives that are aimed at enhancing the climate resilience of communities in the Aral Sea basin and Aral Sea region, and to support initiatives that are aimed at implementing climate-resilient development projects and achieving climate-related goals in the Aral Sea basin and Aral Sea region, including those related to water management, building drought resilience, agriculture and disaster risk reduction;
8. *Recognizes* the importance of new and innovative technologies and best practices in combating desertification, drought and sand and dust storms and in achieving land degradation neutrality and drought resilience in Central Asia, welcomes in this regard the holding of the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and a high-level event on sand and dust storms in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 13 to 17 November 2023 to discuss action-oriented recommendations and address the challenges faced by the affected countries;
9. *Encourages* greater efforts by Central Asian countries, Member States, all relevant stakeholders and the international community towards the conservation of mountain ecosystems and the preservation of glaciers;
10. *Also encourages* the strengthening of the scientific and technological capacities of Central Asian countries to promote sustainable agriculture, sustainable patterns of consumption and production, afforestation and reforestation, the sustainable use of freshwater resources, the recycling of waste, energy efficiency, sustainable tourism, smart cities and sustainable transport, building drought resistance and combating land degradation, which will contribute significantly to climate change adaptation and mitigation in the region and in the world;
11. *Further encourages* the United Nations system, international and financial institutions, the private sector, investors and donors and other relevant stakeholders to continue to mobilize resources and provide capacity-building and assistance for addressing the environmental challenges in Central Asia.

*49th plenary meeting  
19 December 2023*