



**Communique Issued at the end of the Water Citizens National Forum Convened in Accra by ISODEC, COSPE and the Water Citizens Network of Ghana on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2015**

We civil society organizations gathered here in Accra for the First Water Citizens Forum on the Implementation of the Human Right to Water and Sanitation in Ghana recognizing the necessity of water to human life, health and dignity do hereby on this day affirm the following as fundamental principles that should guide state policy in relation to the management and control over water resources and its distribution, That:

1. Access to water is a fundamental human right essential for the sustenance of life,
2. Water is not and should not be an economic commodity to be bought and sold at the market place
3. Water is a natural resource which is part of our common heritage, to be used judiciously and preserved for the common good of our society and the natural environment today and in the future
4. The ownership, control and management of water should belong to the commons to ensure the security of our society
5. Water management policies and implementation should be designed to ensure equity and gender

On the basis of the above principles we commit on this day to promote and defend these principles.

We believe in the necessity of the linkage of local national and international struggles where people participate actively to defend, promote and advocate for water as a commons and an inalienable human right.

We commit to be involved in the sensitization of our fellow citizens about the necessity to defend human right to water and to organize and strengthening our demands for resolution by duty bearers entrusted with the responsibilities of state and the good of the commons.

We believe that there are not sufficient resources to satisfy the greed of everyone but there are sufficient resources to ensure universal access to water for the entire population.

On this basis we civil society organizations on this day demand that **the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing to**

Take responsibility for guaranteeing access to safe water through policies that are underpinned by the principle of the human right to water. We are worried about what we find in the recently launched Water Sector Strategic Plan of the Ministry which fails by its cost recovery focus and strategy to provide a credible commitment to the principle of the human right to water.



Revise and introduce for implementation in public water-management plans an unconditional principle of the human right to water and to work with sector partners including CSOs towards its full implementation and realization. We hold to the view that simple declarations of intents to the human right to water and sanitation are not enough.

Promote and strengthen the establishment of public or community-based services for the provision of water and sanitation

To prevent third parties such as private water providers (big and small) from interfering with enjoyment of the human right to water strongly holding on to our view of water as a good of the commons and not an economic good.

To recognize that water is a common good collectively owned by all and not an economic commodity.

To consider for implementation the WHO 50liters of water per person per day in Ghana to adequately guarantee the human right of all citizens to safe water

To ensure that the avenues for real participation are created in a decentralized manner that make citizens participation in water governance meaningful and real. We urge collaboration with Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development in this effort. Participation has to be active, free and meaningful and allow for a genuine opportunity to influence decision making.

To adopt immediate measures to avoid the introduction of prepaid water meters which pose a dangerous threat for the attainment of the human right to water.

#### **We call on the President and the Parliament of Ghana**

To ensure the inclusion of the human right to water in the ongoing review processes of the constitution review commission. A number of recommendations were made to the commission during its sittings. We are of the strong believe that both presidency and the parliament of Ghana would ensure that the voice of the people are made to reflect in the final document.

#### **We call on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

As Member of the Human Rights Council of the UN, to lend support to civil society demands, by opening negotiations for the discussion of a Proposal of a Second Optional Protocol to ICESCR on water and sanitation as a human right.

As member states participating in the UNDP led process for defining the post-2015 Agenda, we urge the Ministry to work with other African countries to support the higher priority of integrating in the Agenda the human right to water.

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Ghana can also promote a regional conference in order to present the proposal of a Treaty and to verify which one of the 13 member states of the Human Rights Council are available to support this proposal.

We urge all citizens to support Government efforts in this direction.

Signed:

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**(FORUM COORDINATOR)**  
On behalf of participant (See list attached)