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Your Excellencies, co-presidency, colleagues

May I start by thanking the Governments of Jordan, Egypt and France for the organization of this conference and the Government of Jordan for its kind hospitality.

Malta agrees with the declaration of this Ministerial Conference and with the guidelines for the strategy for water in the Mediterranean.

The strategy will be translated into policies at local and Euro Mediterranean level whilst initiating measures aimed at improving efficiency of water use and a more rational development of water resources. Within this perspective, the strategy will seek to develop synergies between existing and new initiatives so as to maximize the benefits of financial resources deployed.

This is important. It is applicable not only for regions but also for small isolated islands such as Malta.

The Maltese Government has recently launched a groundwater regulation programme aimed at further enhancing regulated and sustainable abstraction practices, and ensuring the achievement of the targets set by EU legislation for sustainability.

Malta focuses on the addition to paragraph 15 of the Ministerial declaration of a specific annex devoted to water projects.

We are pleased to note that among the priority concerns, *technologies and efficient water-use* has been included. In this theme Malta would be ready to identify concrete projects aligned with the strategy guidelines, which can be implemented in partnership with other Euro-Med partners.

Malta readily lends itself to demonstration projects, especially in R & D, which given the scale involved can be completed in short time-frames and results evaluated prior to larger projects undertaken elsewhere.

Efficient use of water resources is the first and foremost technology that needs to be applied; technology is here understood to include change in personal attitude driven by conviction and education – in fact, the cheapest and most secure cubic metre of water is one that need not be produced.

Malta recognizes the usefulness of projects concerning the application of eco-friendly technologies in desalination and water treatment and also the application of renewable energy technology to the development of water supply.

We have accumulated significant experience in seawater desalination technology, a matter of necessity consequent to our being a small and isolated water-scarce island – I must say that we are always ready to continue to share this experience with our partners.

On the other hand we are now embarking on a structured implementation of treated sewage effluent for irrigation and other secondary reuse. This is complimented by large scale rehabilitation of our sewerage infrastructure including collection and treatment. We seek to benefit from the experience of colleagues who have been down this road.

We augur the spirit of cooperation which is the basis of the declaration to continue to flourish.

I thank you for your attention.