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Agenda item 10
Outcome document

Letter dated 22 June 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

I have the honour to transmit herewith Canada's explanation of position regarding the right to safe drinking water and basic sanitation (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its attachment circulated as an official document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

(Signed) Guillermo E. **Rishchynski**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 22 June 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Explanation of position

Canada is pleased to join consensus on the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). Canada remains fully committed to sustainable development and to the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future. Canada also recognizes that water is fundamental to sustainable development.

Canada recognizes the human right of everyone to safe drinking water and basic sanitation as essential to the right to an adequate standard of living, and therefore, implicit under article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Canada interprets the right to safe drinking water and basic sanitation as the right to a sufficient quantity and safe quality of reasonably affordable and accessible water for personal and domestic uses (i.e., for drinking, cooking and for personal and household hygiene), and to basic sanitation that is safe and hygienic. Water and sanitation services should be physically and economically accessible on an equal and non-discriminatory basis.

Canada further recognizes that the right to safe drinking water and basic sanitation does not encompass transboundary water issues, including bulk water trade, nor any mandatory allocation of international development assistance.

Canada undertakes to continue efforts towards the progressive realization domestically of the human right to safe drinking water and basic sanitation through national and subnational actions, with a particular emphasis on people living in vulnerable situations.

It is with this understanding that Canada joins consensus on the outcome document.
