**UN-WATER 2020 High-level Political Forum**

**Official Launch of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework**

**Statement by Nada Al- Nashif**

 **UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights**

9 July 2020

Excellencies,

Dear colleagues,

 The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework is being launched in the tenth anniversary year of the General Assembly's formal recognition of the human rights to water and sanitation.

 Resolution 64/292 explicitly acknowledged that clean drinking water and sanitation are rights in themselves, and that they are essential to the realisation of all other human rights. Today, SDG 6 enshrines those rights as a core commitment of Agenda 2030.

 But we are not on track to achieve Agenda 2030 – and the COVID-19 pandemic is pushing us even further back from those aspirational outcomes.

 We must marshal our forces to recover swiftly and effectively from this setback. “Building back better” requires repairing the gaps in human rights protection, which have made our societies so vulnerable to this global upheaval. The pandemic should spur us to adopt strong, transformative measures to heighten the powerful protections that human-rights-based policies can provide – by promoting public health, public confidence in official guidance, and greater social and economic resilience.

 We need to deliver on the right to clean water and sanitation. And we need to address other forms of discrimination and deeply-entrenched inequalities, which disproportionately affect women and children, minorities and indigenous peoples, older people, people with disabilities, migrants and the urban poor.

 We need immediate and accelerated action [as highlighted in the Global Acceleration Framework] to address systemic weakness and underinvestment in the water and sanitation sector, as well as in education, health and other relevant areas.

 Framing water and sanitation as fundamental human rights raises the level of accountability, and emphasises the need for people’s participation in achieving these goals.

 Development that is centred in human rights is more powerful, more sustainable and more effective. It promotes empowerment, inclusiveness and equal opportunities for all.

 As part of the UN-Water, through the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, our Office is committed to supporting the global effort to make the human rights to water and sanitation a reality.

Thank you.