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Dear Prof. Wimmer,
Excellency Secretary General Dahiyat,
Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues!

Welcome to today's Blue Planet Berlin water Dialogue on behalf of the partners supporting this special dialogue format, the Senate Department for Economics, Energy and Public Enterprises of Berlin, the Water Berlin International Trade Fair and the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

Welcome to this unique venue. This lecture hall was an integral part of the former Pathological Museum which opened in the year 1899. Famous pathologist Rudolf Virchow and his successors taught here and trained their students by studying a broad variety of specimen.

Dear Mr Dahlyat, thank you very much for your affirmative comments on our bilateral cooperation which we seek to deepen even further and thank you for providing us with a faceted insight into the challenges your country is facing in terms of water and energy management and the approaches your Government is pursuing in addressing them. Among other issues you referred to climate change.

Only one and a half week ago the 23rd Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement concluded in Bonn. One day of the multifaceted program accompanying the negotiations was dedicated particularly to water – the water action day. More and more water is recognized as an important factor in the context of climate change and related policies. However, the focus is very much on water as a transmitter of the consequences of climate change and is therefore mainly discussed in the context of adaptation to the effects of climate change rather than in the context of mitigation. The water sector and water management in a more general sense is not yet seen as a factor in mitigation strategies or as an element in the National Determined Contributions countries have committed to. By the way this is also still true for the German Climate Protection Plan 2050.

But there is quite a potential for contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through proper management of water utilities, improved water infrastructure, intelligent solutions for enhancing energy and resource efficiency in the water sector as well as by mutually integrating water and energy networks more effectively with a view to optimizing their interaction.

The water sector can be a provider of reliable renewable energy, both for heat and electricity, which as a co-benefit can open a second line of revenues for water utilities and complement other renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power. Beyond that there is huge potential for reducing energy demand. Every drop which must not be pumped or treated saves energy and greenhouse gas emissions while reducing costs. Reducing non-revenue water is therefore not only a water management priority but is also contributing to mitigating climate change.

On the other hand we have to realize that achieving the objective of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development to provide everybody with improved sanitation and at the same time the sub target of halving the proportion of untreated waste water will require additional energy. We therefore must enhance the efficiency of our

treatment systems and find clever ways to make use of the resources buried in the waste water or in the residuals remaining after treatment , such as the sludge.

In Germany we just recently introduced a stepwise ban on using sludge from larger waste water treatment plants as fertilizers combined with a requirement to reclaim the phosphorus from waste water or sludge. The necessary investment in the recycling technologies will have to be implemented within the next ten years. Already during the preparatory phase for this legislation the development of relevant technologies has experienced a boost which shows that legislation can trigger innovation.

Today we will hear reports on very different but successful examples on how energy and resource efficiency in water management can be fostered in different parts of the world.

I wish you an inspiring day of interesting presentations, lively discussions and intense networking.