



# USIBWC

Office of the Commissioner

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## United Nations 2023 Water Conference

The UN 2023 Water Conference, the first held in 47 years, was held at UN Headquarters in New York on March 22-24, 2023 and was hosted by Tajikistan and the Netherlands. The vision statement of the conference, “Our Watershed Moment: Uniting the World for Water,” was meant to focus on exactly that— bringing the world’s leaders together to discuss the topic of water and the importance of working together to address emerging issues and concerns. Some 10,000 participants from around the world gathered at UN Headquarters to address the water crisis and ensure equitable access to water for all, which is the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal 6– On Clean Water and Sanitation.

### World Water Day, March 22

The opening of the UN 2023 Water Conference kicked off on World Water Day (WWD), which is observed world-wide on March 22nd every year. The theme of this year’s WWD, “Accelerating Change,” was meant to be complementary to the conference theme. Water affects us all, and therefore addressing the water and sanitation crisis will need everyone to take action—uniting the world for water. WWD is celebrated world-wide, and the selection of the date as the start of such a significant conference was a great way to stress the importance of the issue, the day and the event.

### Commissioner Giner selected as U.S. delegate for UN

Dr. Maria-Elena Giner, P.E., Commissioner for the U.S. Section of the IBWC, was selected as one of the alternative representatives for the UN General Assembly at the UN 2023 Water Conference. Commissioner Giner was the U.S. delegate for the conference’s interactive dialogue on Transboundary and International Water Cooperation. In her remarks, Commissioner Giner had the opportunity to talk about the IBWC and its mission to representatives from all over the world. She also spoke about the effects of climate change and the severe drought in the U.S., and how advances in U.S.– Mexico cooperation on transboundary water issues can be replicated worldwide. Specifically, Commissioner Giner touched on how our binational cooperation allows the Commission to engage, address, and at times even resolve issues before they become political issues between the two countries, and how the IBWC can serve as a transboundary model for the rest of the world.



Commissioner Giner speaking as the U.S. Representative on Transboundary and International Water Cooperation at the UN Plenary Session.



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## Women's History Month at the UN Water Conference

For the first time in history, and occurring during Women's History Month, the U.S. was represented by an all-female delegation at the UN 2023 Water Conference, to include the U.S. Ambassador to the UN. This historic event called for a photo op! The Public Affairs component of the conference and the participating agencies worked together to get a group photo of as many members of the delegation as possible. The photo included Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield (two at center), flanked by delegation representatives from the various U.S. agencies, including Commissioner Giner (third from right).



## U.S. and MX Represent IBWC at UN Conference

The IBWC was well represented at the 2023 UN Conference. U.S. Commissioner Giner and Mexican Commissioner Resendez were both in attendance at the event in various capacities. Both Commissioners participated in a panel on "Managing for Uncertainty in an Era of Climate Change" to discuss how the IBWC has worked together to find possible solutions to the drought crisis affecting the Colorado River, and how we manage water issues along the U.S.– Mexico border. The IBWC is a model for binational cooperation and an excellent example of how sharing a common interest and working together towards achieving goals go a long way in setting achievable milestones and establishing workable solutions.



*"If we understand the complex relations and interlinkages, value water holistically, and manage water inclusively at all levels and across all interests, then water can be the dealmaker, the leverage point for a green economy, climate resilience and a more sustainable and inclusive world."*

*- Vision Statement, UN 2023 Water Conference*

Top Picture: Some members of the all-female U.S. Delegation at the UN 2023 Water Conference. Bottom Picture: IBWC Commissioners Giner and Resendez at an interactive panel discussion the drought crisis in the Colorado River.