

**Declaration of the Ministers and Senior Officials of the Caspian Sea Littoral States  
on Strengthening Cooperation to Address the Caspian Sea Water Level Decline  
18 November 2024  
Baku, Azerbaijan**

We, the Ministers and Senior Officials of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, and Turkmenistan (hereinafter referred to as the Sides),

*Having met within the margins of the 29<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) to address the critical issue of the significant decline in the Caspian Sea level observed in recent decades,*

*Recognizing that the Caspian Sea, the world's largest enclosed inland body of water, is of immense ecological, economic, and cultural importance to the littoral states and their populations,*

*Acknowledging the severe effects of the current and future decline in water levels on ecosystems, biodiversity, coastal communities, and key economic sectors, including fisheries, navigation, tourism, and infrastructure,*

*Understanding that this decline is driven by a complex combination of climatic, hydrological, and anthropogenic factors, necessitating a robust, coordinated regional response based on sound scientific research and sustainable management practices,*

*Reaffirming collective responsibility to both present and future generations for the preservation of the Caspian Sea and the sustainable development of the region,*

*Recognizing the profound environmental, economic, and social implications of these challenges,*

*Hereby declare the following:*

1. The Sides reaffirm their commitment to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention), signed on 4 November 2003 in Tehran, which serves as the foundation of collaborative efforts to protect the marine environment of the Caspian Sea.

2. The Sides also recognize the importance of the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Hydrometeorology of the Caspian Sea, signed on 29 September 2014 in Astrakhan, which further strengthens collective efforts to understand and address the environmental challenges and to improve methods for predicting the state of the Caspian Sea, including Caspian Sea level fluctuations.

3. The Sides stress the urgent need for joint action among the Caspian Sea littoral states to mitigate the impacts of the declining Caspian Sea levels. The Sides strive to strengthen their collaboration ensuring that their actions are scientifically informed, coordinated, and effectively address the region's environmental and socio-economic challenges.

4. The Sides acknowledge the long-standing and alarming trend in the Caspian Sea level decline. On the initiative of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan the Sides aim to establish a working group of Caspian littoral states to identify the causes of this decline and to develop measures to prevent further shallowing.

5. The Sides call upon the international community to recognize the global significance of the Caspian Sea's environmental challenges and express their willingness to make efforts in monitoring, research, and sustainable management of the Caspian Sea.

6. The Sides encourage collaboration with regional and international research institutions of the UN system to advance the understanding of the factors driving the Caspian Sea's water level fluctuations.

7. The Sides reaffirm their willingness to work collaboratively, leveraging expertise, resources, and political will of their countries to address the urgent issue of Caspian Sea level decline. The Sides call upon regional and international organizations, programmes and scientific institutions of the UN system to provide technical and financial support to ensure the long-term sustainability and resilience of the Caspian Sea region.