

An invitation to a **Sustainable Use of Waters-Precondition for a World without Hunger** by high-level decision-makers and participants prompted my presence as I am very interested in learning about the political and intersectoral approaches necessary for establishing Integrated Water Resource Management and progress towards SDG 6.4. I reflected on the challenges based on my personal experience of water scarcity and water stress. I was born in the twin island republic of Trinidad and Tobago, an archipelagic republic in the southern Caribbean between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, northeast of Venezuela. I can vividly remember the



joys of having an abundance of the live giving sustenance, and, oh, the perils related to the lack and limitation of, for individuals, families, businesses and communities. My story began more than five and a half decades ago, though I remember as recent as 2014, in Flint, Michigan-United States, the struggles and hardships of the people related to insufficient water treatment, where over 100,000 residents were potentially exposed to high levels of lead in the drinking water.

It is clear, globally, this issue is very **REAL**, the time is **NOW**.

While statistics are in abundance regarding the issue of water scarcity and stress, what emerged from this session was enlightening, to learn that 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly are all on board to coordinate, cooperate and collaborate towards shifting the world onto a sustainable and resilient path, with the goal of "leaving no one behind." The interest of the panel and the participants was infectious as discussions surrounding issues of human resources; financial deficiency/management; data observations, access and management; eco-systems; eliminating inequalities; improving water quality; capacity building; improvement programs; integration of resources and creating a universal agenda was addressed.

I ask myself, what can I do to help the UN to achieve SDG 6.4? While being present at the United Nations is a great opportunity to feel a sense of belonging, I believe I must make an extra effort to be continually conscientious about personal water usage as I continue to further educate myself about the SDG's issues and developments. I will use my knowledge to educate, enlighten and engage others.

I invite you to journey with me to 2030 so that 'no one gets left behind.'

Veronica Ward