G20 agrees on measures for universal water access

The G20 Development Ministerial Meeting began on Monday (22) at Galpão da Cidadania in Rio de Janeiro. This non-governmental organization (NGO), founded by renowned Brazilian sociologist Betinho, a leading global activist against hunger, hosted the event. The opening statement called for universal access to drinking water and basic sanitation. The meeting was co-chaired by Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira, Minister of Cities Jader Barbalho Filho and Minister of Planning and Budget Simone Tebet.

During the opening session, Minister Mauro Vieira called for sanitation and water distribution investment to meet Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He praised G20 countries for their commitment to the agreed action proposals. “Drinking water and basic sanitation are vital not only for economic and social progress but also for upholding human rights, including health and a sustainable environment,” the Brazilian foreign minister said.

Minister Simone Tebet discussed the urgent global and national challenges related to access to water and sanitation. “The United Nations reports that 2.2 billion people worldwide lack access to safe drinking water and 3.5 billion lack basic sanitation. In Brazil, 32 million people still lack access to safe drinking water and 90 million lack treated sewage,” the minister noted.

Tebet outlined the goals of Brazil’s Multi-Year Plan (Plano Plurianual/PPA) and New Growth Acceleration Program (Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento/PAC) to improve these statistics for all Brazilians by 2027. “We aim to provide safe drinking water to 98.3% of urban households and ensure 87.7% have access to treated sewage by that time,” she emphasized.

Minister Jader Filho highlighted the Federal Government’s initiatives in key areas, including water supply, sanitation, stormwater management and solid waste management. He underscored the importance of climate adaptation and the need for substantial investments to address climate change impacts. “We are implementing policies and programs designed to strengthen the resilience of our infrastructure and communities,” he said.

The opening session of the G20 Development Ministerial Meeting emphasized the urgency of addressing access to drinking water and basic sanitation challenges. Ministers reinforced the need for international cooperation and sustained investments to ensure these resources reach the entire population, promoting health, equality and sustainability.