United Nations
Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Canada
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POSITION OF CANADA REGARDING WATER FLOW CRISES WORLDWIDE



General information

Canada shares the Columbia river and the Great Lakes with the US. Bilateral treaties define how the water can be used, how the water level is regulated to avoid floods and how to maximize the power production of American power plants, for which Canada gets a part of the Power.

During the drought in 2025 in California Trump threatened to use Canadian Water to solve it. Since then Canadians are worried that he wants to get Canada's fresh water resources especially in the Great lakes area, where the water resource is considered a public resource on both sides of the border. In theory the use of this water is strongly regulated through treaties, but Trump has proven to be unreliable..

The Biden administration agreed with Canada on essential positions for a modernized Colorado river treaty, which governs the flood control and power production with the Columbia river, but Trump has paused the negotiations. Some Canadians believe that the treaty is a bad deal and Canada would profit more by having their own power plants. For this reason and to avenge Trump's tariffs they want to quit the treaty, but the termination period ends long after Trump's term of office.

Position on the matter

Canada has treaties for all the relevant cross country water bodies but they are often outdated today. Regarding the Colorado river treaty, the new version should include recompensation for the flood protection, measures for the ecosystems around dams, the rights of the indigenous people in the area of the river and more flexibility for Canada regarding water flow to counter droughts. Secondly, Canada wants to protect water as a resource from abuse by the Trump administration.

Proposed solutions

Canada supports an international solution for water flow conflicts. In a resolution they want the protection of water as a public resource, non-economic goals like Ecology should be respected and upstream countries should get a fair recompensation for their efforts and have more flexibility for water usage.

Potential Blocks

In general, countries who want that rivers are regulated through international treaties, want more flexibility for upstream countries and support non-economic goals like Ecology are possible allies.

Read More

The Guardian: US pauses water-sharing negotiations with Canada over Columbia River
CBC: For 60 years, this Canada-U.S. treaty governed money, power and a river. With Trump's threats, what now?
Financialpost: Forget tariffs, Trump may be targeting the Great Lakes and Canada's freshwater next

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