United Nations
Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

United States of America

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POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA REGARDING WATER FLOW CRISES WORLDWIDE



General information

The US shares the Columbia river with Canada and the Colorado river and the Rio Grande with Mexico. Their use is governed by bilateral treaties, many of which are outdated, causing recent conflicts through droughts in the south.

The Columbia river is controlled through dams in Canada to prevent floods and increase the output of US hydroelectric power plants. There have been negotiations for modernizing the treaty, which governs the compensation for Canada and other aspects, but Trump paused them. During a drought in 2025, Trump threatened to use Canadian water to alleviate the situation in California, which strained relations with Canada.

The Colorado river originates in the USA. The countries agreed to a reduced water volume supplied to Mexico, due to the drought. It's Counterpart, the Rio Grande (aka. Río Brava) originates in Mexico. However, in recent years Mexico has not been able to supply the US with the agreed water volume or even consistent amounts. This has led to a lot of dissatisfaction from farmers and companies in Texas, making this issue paramount for the Trump administration.

Position on the matter

Although the US is both a downstream and an upstream nation, they have larger conflicts with rivers where they are downstream. In general they want to get more water in a regular continuous flow, with the purpose of using it for the economy. To achieve this the Trump administration even cut off a Mexican city from fresh water supply.

Proposed solutions

The US supports effective international cooperation to reduce conflicts, but wants to preserve national sovereignty. In the end the agreements should be achieved through bilateral negotiations and treaties, which of course benefit the US as the most powerful nation on their Continent..

Potential Blocks

Other countries that support international diplomacy in general but want to preserve the freedom to negotiate for themselves. Opponents are countries that want to establish strict international rules.

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DW: Fight over water intensifies as Colorado River dries up
The Conversation: Water wars: a historic agreement between Mexico and US is ramping up border tension
CNN: A water war is looming between Mexico and the US. Neither side will win
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?
Financial Post: Forget tariffs, Trump may be targeting the Great Lakes and Canada's freshwater next

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