Water is key for peace and stability

WATER is life, and we all need water for our existence and survival. As much as humans need water for survival, animals and the entire environment also need water for their existence. Without water there is basically no life and the world would perish. That is why people will go to the extreme and do anything to get water.

In celebration of World Water Day on Friday, under the theme "Water for Peace", we were reminded of the importance of water in fostering peace and stability among communities and nations.

This theme aims to galvanise communities across the world to share water resources to enhance peace instead of conflict. Thus, the theme entails that water can be a tool for peace when communities and countries co-operate over this precious shared resource, but water can also spark and intensify conflict when access is denied and usage unfairly shared.

When water is scarce or polluted, or when people have unequal or no access, tensions can arise between communities and countries.

In South Africa, World Water Day is more than significant as it comes immediately after the celebration of Human Rights Day. World Water Day is significant as access to water is a basic human right, and this calls for the government to ensure that communities have reliable access to water.

More than 3 billion people worldwide depend on water that crosses national borders. Rivers know no boundaries. Yet only 24 countries have co-operation agreements for all their shared water, and the good thing is that South Africa is one of these is living peacefully with its neighbours. Co-operation agreements also ensure countries sharing a watercourse have equitable access to quality water which calls for the parties to also prevent the pollution of the water resources.

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