

SPEECH BY HONOURABLE JUMAA HAMIDU AWESO (MP), MINISTER FOR WATER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE UNITED NATIONS WATER CONVENTIONS ON 1ST DECEMBER, 2022

- Honourable Shaibu Hassan Kaduara (MBW), Minister responsible for Water, Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar;
- Eng. Anthony Sanga, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Water;
- Dr. Allan Kijazi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Settlement and Household Cooperation;
- Your Excellency Madam Maimuna Tarishi, Permanent Representative of United Republic of Tanzania to United Nations-Geneva;
- Ms. Shalini Bahuguna, Representative of UNICEF in Tanzania on behalf the United Nations;
- Mr. Jocelin Cornet, Team leader regional integration, infrastructure, digitalisation, on behalf the Delegation of the European Union to Tanzania;
- Mr. Harry Liiv, Chair of the Bureau of the 1992 United Nations Water Convention;
- Madam Sonja Koepfel, Secretary of the Water Convention;
- Heads of Water Basin Organizations including Zambezi, Nile Basin, Lake Victoria Commission and Songwe Commission;
- Representatives of various organizations and water stakeholders within and outside Tanzania;
- Government Officials and Members of the Private Sector;
- Dear Participants;
- Invited Guests;
- Members of the Media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen, I greet you in the name of the United Republic of Tanzania.

I am very pleased to welcome you to Tanzania, specifically to Dar es Salaam City, for the National workshop related to the two United Nations Water Conventions and Tanzania's accession process. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the Secretariat to the 1992 Water Convention for working with the Ministry of Water to organize this workshop.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is an important workshop where issues of transboundary water cooperation will be discussed. In the same weight, the rationale as to why Tanzania should accede to the United Nations Water Conventions will be presented leading to a road map for accession, with immediate next steps to take and responsibilities to consider.

Ladies and gentlemen, as you are aware, Tanzania is a country of transboundary waters. It is Party to the international community and enjoys certain rights and obligations resulting from ratification of several regional and international instruments related to water. Tanzania is riparian to fourteen trans-boundary water bodies and eight transboundary aquifers with neighboring countries. This number makes Tanzania unique in Africa as far as transboundary water cooperation is concerned.

Ladies and gentlemen, sustainable development and management of such transboundary water resources requires cooperation, mutual understanding and agreement among the riparian states. Such cooperation involves joint coordination and collaboration in planning as well as joint soliciting of funds for targeted interventions in riparian areas.

Ladies and gentlemen, basing on that context, Tanzania is part to a number of regional and international transboundary institutions and agreements for management of those shared water resources. Through

that cooperation, a number of programmes and projects related to transboundary waters are being implemented. Those institutions include Joint Songwe River Basin Commission; The Nile Basin Initiative; Joint Tanzania-Mozambique Water Commission; Zambezi Watercourse Commission; Lake Victoria Basin Commission and Lake Tanganyika Basin Authority.

Ladies and gentlemen, It is worth mentioning that, provisions of many legal instruments for Water Cooperation where Tanzania is a party to, which includes the Revised Protocol on Shared Watercourses in SADC signed in 2000 and came into force in 2003 and that of the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement signed in 1999 are largely drawn from the 1992 United Nations Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non Navigational uses of International Watercourses.

Ladies and gentlemen, therefore, the desire of Tanzania to accede to both United Nations Watercourse Conventions is to reaffirm our international commitment and to strengthen our regional cooperation on water. You may note that, despite Tanzania not being a party to the Water Conventions, it has been actively involved in activities under the Conventions. These include, implementing Sustainable Development Goal Number 6 (on water and sanitation) specifically dealing with transboundary water cooperation. As well; Tanzania is anticipating to implement Water Convention Programme of Work for the 2022-2024 period.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is also worth mentioning that in 2013, a briefing workshop to Tanzania stakeholders about the two Water Conventions was conducted. The workshop highlighted the benefits Tanzania would draw by being a party, the obligations of being a member

as well as the accession procedures. It is my sincere hope that, the proposed recommendations from the briefing are still useful and will be updated through this workshop aiming to move the agenda of acceding to the Conventions forward.

Ladies and gentlemen, in that regard, I wish to thank the Water Convention Secretariat for accepting our request to organize this national workshop to reactivate the discussions started in 2013 with this time involving more stakeholders. Our plan is to finalize the process of acceding to the Conventions by September, 2023.

Ladies and gentlemen, I do hope that, by the end of this workshop, all of you who are present here will be fully aware of the two conventions, the benefits and obligations of Tanzania being a party, and establish the road map for the accession process. Let me end my speech by underlying the following:

- a) Transboundary Water Cooperation is key for international cooperation;
- b) Transboundary Water Cooperation is a catalyst of peace among nations;
- c) Transboundary Water Cooperation is a unifying factor among nations; and
- d) Transboundary Water Cooperation should be today, not tomorrow.

With these remarks, I wish you fruitful deliberations. I am now glad to declare that, this National workshop on the United Nations Water Conventions is opened.

**God Bless United Nations
God Bless Africa
God Bless Tanzania**

I thank you all for kind attention