

Zambia's Brief on progress of accession to the UN Water Convention-presented to the 18th meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) under the Water Convention (Geneva, 19-21 June 2023)

Zambia's Territory is entirely in Internationally Shared River Basins. It has two transboundary basins namely Zambezi and Congo River Basins which constitute around 75% and 25% of Zambia's Geographical territorial area respectively. Considering the critical role that transboundary water resources play in fostering social economic transformation among riparian countries and communities as well as boosting regional economic integration, Government has placed a high premium on the management of transboundary water resource by incorporating transboundary water cooperation and benefit sharing as an integral part of the 8th National Development plan, spanning from 2022-2026. Government has also over the years taken steps to foster cooperation with neighboring states in the management and development of its shared waters in accordance with international law. Currently, Zambia is a signatory to the basin accord which include:

- The SADC Revised Protocol on Shared Watercourses of 2000. This is a River Basin water instrument which established Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) with 8 riparian states namely: Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- The Convention on the sustainable management of Lake Tanganyika. This is an international instrument which established the Lake Tanganyika Authority comprising of Zambia, Burundi, Tanzania and DR Congo.
- The Zambezi River Authority agreement is a bilateral instrument which established the Zambezi River Authority which is a jointly owned River Basin Organization by the Republic of Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Zambia is currently an observer member of the International Commission of Congo-Oubangui-Sangha (CICOS) Basin and is in the process of becoming a party to CICOS which UN Water Convention Secretariat has supported so far through facilitation of engagement meetings.

The milestones achieved in line with the roadmap so far include: holding of Two (2) subnational technical consultative meetings both in the Zambezi and the Congo basin with the participation of UN Water Convention Secretariat, CICOS Secretariat and government line ministries such as Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Justice, Energy, Green Economy and Environment as well local traditional leadership.

In line with Zambia's legislative provision and the roadmap on the accession to the water UN Water Convention, Cabinet memorandum was developed and submitted to Ministry of Justice for clearance and we are awaiting clearance.

The remaining milestones in line with the road map for the accession to UN Water Convention include:

- Consideration of proposal for ratification by Cabinet
- Approval of Proposal for ratification by National Assembly
- Depository of instruments of ratification
- Domestication of International Agreement

Depending on the approval processes, the accession process is expected to be concluded within the course of next year. May I take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), UN Water Convention for their unwavering Financial and technical support to Zambia's Accession process. Zambia wishes to participate in the Convention's twining initiative in furtherance accession process and supporting implementation once a party to the convention. My I also take this opportunity to earnestly appeal to United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, UN Water Convention, UN Systems and other partners not to relent but to continue supporting our accession process and implementation once a party to the convention.

I thank you