

AFRICAN UNION

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BY THE

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

AT THE

**PIDA-PAP 2 SECTORAL WEBINAR ON TRANSBOUNDARY WATER
INFRASTRUCTURE**

DELIVERED BY

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ON BEHALF OF

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ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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PROTOCOL

- **Representatives of Regional Economic Communities and Member States**
- **Taskforce Members and National Focal Points of the PIDA-PAP 2 process**
- **Representatives of the regional organizations**
- **Members of staff of AUC; AUDA-NEPAD; AfDB; UNECA; AMCOW; GWP; GIZ and the Civil Society Group.**
- **Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is my delight to welcome you all on behalf of the African Union Commission to the 2nd part of the Sectoral Webinar on Transboundary Water Infrastructure taking place today.

Distinguished Delegates, Water is very vital for survival of life and it has a great impact on human existence that almost all sectors of the economy depend on it; hence it is pertinent for socio-economic development of our African continent. As we are all aware, water is one of the most precious resources on Earth and is of great importance to different competing users thereby it requires joint collaboration of a multi-stakeholders to meet the current and future demand. In 2017, the World Bank Groupⁱ indicated that globally, 70% of the freshwater is used for agriculture. It further stressed that by 2050, feeding a planet of 9 billion people will require an estimated 50 percent increase in agricultural production and a 15 percent increase in water withdrawals.

Distinguished Delegates, Africa is blessed with abundant water resources and it is home to the world's second-largest freshwater lake; Lake Victoria, while Lake Tanganyika is the second-deepest lake in the world. The Congo basin and Fouta Djallon Highlands are precious water towers while Lake Chad basin is the largest endoergic basin, that is, an area with terminal lakes and an interior drainage basin in the world.

Groundwater represents only 15 per cent of Africa's total renewable water resources, but about 75 per cent of its population relies on groundwater as the major drinking water source. However, Africa experiences remarkable variability in rainfall and adverse impacts of Climate Change.

Distinguished Delegates, Infrastructure plays a key role in economic growth and poverty reduction. The lack of infrastructure would affect productivity and raises production and transaction costs, which hinders growth and the ability of governments to pursue economic and social development policies. In recognition of the importance of water and sanitation for social, economic and environmental development of the continent, the African leaders reaffirmed commitment to promote cooperation and integration among Member States with a view to raising the living standards of the population and the wellbeing of the future generations.

Similarly, the African leaders therefore adopted the Sharm El-Sheikh Commitment on Water and Sanitation at the July 2008 African Union Summit and the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) also adopted the eThekweni Declaration on Sanitation and the N'gor Commitments on Sanitation and Hygiene. These Commitments are facilitating regional integration on the African continent and would enhance Africa

in the prevention of Covid 19 and coronavirus disease. To realize these desired goals, it is therefore essential to develop water infrastructure in the implementation of the Africa Water Vision 2025: "An Africa where there is an equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, regional cooperation and the environment."

In addition, the 18th Ordinary session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 29 – 30 January 2012 the AU Summit adopted PIDA and the Institutional Architecture for Infrastructure Development in Africa (IAIDA) to boost infrastructure development on the continent. The development of our water infrastructure would no doubt lead to increase in economic growth with more job creation; improvement of livelihood of the rural populace; and in particular, the women and youth. The development of the nexus of Water – Energy - Food (Agriculture) and Transport is therefore crucial for Africa to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in realization of Agenda 2063.

Distinguished Delegates, I am glad at the participation of these representative of these sector at this Sectoral Webinar today and would like to urge you all to work together to ensure

that Transboundary Water projects are included in your regional project submission.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the commitment of the African Union Commission to continue to engage with multi stakeholders to advance Water Infrastructure development in the African continent.

I wish you success as I look forward to the fruitful outcomes of this Webinar that would influence increased Water project submission in the PIDA-PAD 2 process.

I thank you all for your kind attention.

Asante sana ! Obrigada !! Shukran !!! Merci beaucoup!!!!

ⁱ <https://olc.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/sco/E7B1C4DE-C187-5EDB-3EF2-897802DEA3BF/Nasa/chapter1.html>