

Carrying forward the Sharm el Sheikh Commitments on Water and Sanitation adopted by the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government: “a sprint to the finish line”

JOHANNESBURG MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

I. Introduction

1. We the African Ministers of Water, and Heads of delegation assembled in Johannesburg, South Africa on 9-13 November 2009, in the capacity of the African Union's Specialized Technical Committee on Water and Sanitation, on the occasion of the 2nd Africa Water Week, 2nd Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference and the 7th Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water are determined to carry forward the Sharm el Sheikh Commitments on Water and Sanitation adopted in July 2009.

2. We assembled in Johannesburg at 7th Ordinary Session on 13 November 2009 together with senior officials of the African Union Commission, representatives of Pan-African Institutions, representatives of international communities, civil society women and youth of our region, express our profound gratitude to H.E. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, the people, the government and leadership of the Republic of South Africa, for the excellent arrangement and the conducive environment which facilitated our deliberations . We are deeply thankful to H.E. Ms Buyelwa Sonjica for the very warm welcome and hospitality.

3. We pay tribute to H.E. Minister Bruno Jean Richard Itoua, outgoing President of AMCOW for the commendable leadership demonstrated during his tenure (2007-2009). We highly appreciate the many remarkable and tangible achievements of AMCOW during his stewardship. We acknowledge and recognize that he hands over the presidency at greater heights in the growth of the African Ministers' Council on Water. AMCOW has come a long way during his tenure and there is now a firm basis for enhanced progress towards the future. Our appreciation also goes to the outgoing members of the AMCOW Executive Committee and the TAC. Their selfless efforts and contributions are highly valued. We welcome the new members of these two committees.

4. Our deliberation benefitted greatly from opening address of the Minister in the Presidency (National Planning Commission, Hon. Trevor Manuel, MP., who drew attention to some of the lingering challenges relating to water infrastructure, unplanned urbanisation, inadequate sanitation, lack of access to clean water, the need to strengthen the management of cross-boundary resources and to expand rain water harvesting and storage. The issues raised in the keynote address will be accorded particular attention by AMCOW.

5. Our Session was preceded by a number of segments, notably the 2nd Africa Water Week, the 2nd Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water and sanitation, meetings of the sub-regional organs of AMCOW, as well as meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Executive Committee. We express our appreciation to the delegation of the African Union Commission for the strategic direction and political guidance provided during our deliberations. There were also meetings of Civil Society and other stakeholders. We commend the African Ministers of Water representing the five sub-regions of Africa for significantly contributing to the deliberations at our 7th Session

6. We reaffirm our commitment to accelerate the translation into action, at the national, sub-regional and regional levels of the of the Africa Water Vision 2025 and the Sharm el Sheikh Commitments on Water and Sanitation including its components

relating to the Brazzaville Declaration (2007), the eThekweni Declaration on Sanitation (2008) and the Tunis Ministerial Declaration on accelerating Africa's water security. Our Session was preceded by a number of segments, notably the 2nd Africa Water Week, the 2nd Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water and sanitation, meetings of the sub-regional organs of AMCOW, as well as meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Executive Committee. We express our appreciation to the delegation of the African Union Commission for the strategic direction and political guidance provided during our deliberations. There were also meetings of Civil Society and other stakeholders. We commend the African Ministers of Water representing the five sub-regions of Africa for significantly contributing to the deliberations at our 7th Session

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7. We express our deep gratitude to Africa's Heads of State and Government for having significantly enhanced great political commitment and leadership in the water and sanitation sector.

8. The acceptance of H.E. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia to be our Goodwill Ambassador on Water and Sanitation in Africa, reconfirmed the firm resolve of African leaders to demonstrate high level political commitment. We, the African Ministers on Water express our profound gratitude to her for accepting to lend leadership to such a great cause.

II. Preamble

9. We recognize that the years between Brazzaville (6th Session of AMCOW, May 2007) and Johannesburg (7th Session of AMCOW, November 2009) have witnessed a number of significant events and a period during which a number of important declarations were adopted, including the Sharm el Sheikh Commitment on Water and Sanitation. These include the Ministerial Conference on Sanitation which adopted the eThekweni Declaration, the organization of the 1st Africa Water Week which adopted the Tunis Ministerial Declaration on accelerating Africa's water security, the Ministerial meeting on Water for Agriculture and Energy held in Sirte, Libya (December 2008), and the Africa Regional events at the 5th World Water Forum. These events and actions have increased awareness of water security and sanitation issues, notably water for growth and development, the achievement for water and sanitation targets in the Africa Water Vision 2025 and the Millennium Development Goals, Impact of Climate Change and Variability on Water Resources, Food Security, Financing, Africa Water Infrastructure as well as the need for improved regional cooperation on Water Resources Management.

10. Our session is being held 5 years prior to the 2015 target date set by the international community for achieving the millennium development goals. We fully

recognize that the Sharm el Sheikh Declaration, resulting from the July 2008 Summit of African Heads of State and Government, represents, at the highest political level, a crucial impetus for urgently addressing Africa's Water and Sanitation challenges. It also provides the mandate and direction to making a renewed and re-invigorated push to achieve the MDG water and sanitation target by the 2015.

11. During the period, since our last Council Session, we have seen important progress particularly in consolidating initiatives and strategies that have been agreed at our Ordinary Session in May 2007. We note, with satisfaction, that a large number of initiatives as well as other commitments, programmes and initiatives for helping achieve the 2015 MDG and 2025 Africa Water Vision target for water and sanitation have been launched, especially at the sub-regional and regional levels, culminating in the high level of political commitment for accelerating action. We applaud the significant actions taken by governments to reform the water and sanitation sector at the national level and the strengthening of relevant policies.

12. Africa has now reached the point where there needs to be greater convergence between the high level commitments and delivery through concrete and unambiguous actions, strengthening and scaling up of existing initiatives and refinement of strategies to close gaps. With this challenge in mind, we have taken a number of critical decisions at our meetings in Johannesburg, which we hereby present to the Africa Union and its relevant constituent parts, African countries and their governments, our people and institutions. Whilst continuing to rely on our resources and strategies, we shall continue counting on international solidarity and partnership to address the implementation challenges confronting us in our pursuit of the achievement of the Sharm el Sheikh Commitments on Water and Sanitation.

13. In light of the above, we express gratitude to the many participants of the 2nd Africa Water Week, the 2nd Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water and Sanitation, the 7th Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water and endorse the outcomes of our events held here in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa, on 9-13 November 2009. We also place on record, the key outcomes, recommendations and decisions of this event.

III Decisions and Follow-up Actions

14. *AMCOW makes the following decisions as follow-up to the implementation of the Sharm el Sheikh Commitments on Water and Sanitation made by our Heads of State in July 2008:*

(a) Reporting of country actions in respect of water security

- i. The document "Delivering on Africa's Water Security Commitments: A Framework for Reporting Actions to the African Union" is adopted as the **Roadmap for the Implementation of the Sharm-el Sheikh Commitment**
- ii. Countries should internalise the actions in their national plans and provide annual reports on their water security status;
- iii. Regional Bodies - RECs, RLBOs - should adopt the reporting mechanism and provide input to AMCOW's annual report on progress on water security;

- iv. The modalities for a peer review mechanism on country water and sanitation progress shall be developed by the secretariat in consultation with partners;
- v. The AMCOW Secretariat shall be strengthened to monitor and report actions;
- vi. The Executive Committee (EXCO) should give directives on themes of future Africa Water Week.

(b) Convening of Meeting of Water and Sanitation Ministers

- i. The meeting of African Ministers of Water and Finance requested by the AU and to be convened by the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) will be held in the first quarter of 2010. The meeting will be dedicated to reviewing achievements and to mobilising resources for the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI) 2nd and 3rd phase implementation; that meeting will also discuss broader water security issues of AMCOW initiatives.

15. In **order to carry forward the outcomes of our meetings** in Johannesburg, we shall direct our attention and actions to the following:

- i. Convening of meetings of African Water Ministers and Finance Ministers, together with development partners; establishing a short-term African Water Finance Task Force to bring together the finance story, and to monitor impacts of the current financial crisis on investments in African water;
- ii. Accelerating progress on implementing the 2008 eThekweni Declaration and AfricaSan Action Plan, notably the development of national sanitation and hygiene policies;
- iii. Increasing commitment to the African Water Facility to scale up its support for major infrastructure programmes and projects;
- iv. Promoting scale-up support to Country Sector Reviews, National MDG Investment Plans and National Finance Strategies;
- v. Reviewing achievements and to mobilising resources for the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI) 2nd and 3rd phase implementation;
- vi. Developing a road-map to accelerating progress in drinking water and sanitation in Africa, in particular fragile states, where the coverage gaps are greatest, under the aegis of AMCOW;
- vii. Encouraging urgent disbursement of implementation funds in small-scale water management in response to the Africa Food Price Crisis;
- viii. Launching and adoption of the pan-African Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework as the monitoring tool in Africa for water and sanitation;
- ix. Planning for the Third African Water Week as a forum for high-level policy dialogue and knowledge dissemination;

- x. Strengthening engagement with the G8 over implementation of the Evian Action Plan and Joint Statement of the G8 Africa Water Partnership;
- xi. Strengthening AMCOW's presence at sub-regional and national levels, including especially regular convening of sub-regional meetings of AMCOW EXCO and institutionalizing partnerships with regional economic communities;
- xii. Adopting special measures to ensure gender mainstreaming, particularly recognising the role and interests of youth and women are incorporated in all water and sanitation policies and programmes;
- xiii. Assessing the threat of climate change to the viability of water resources and capacity to meet the 2015 MDG water and sanitation targets and put in place adaptation measures;
- xiv. Developing and/or strengthening and implementing among riparian countries the water management policies, laws and action plans for the equitable and sustainable use of shared water resources.

IV. Outcomes

- A. Outcomes of the 2nd African Water Week (Annex 1)
- B. 2nd Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference (annex II)
- C. 7th Ordinary Session of AMCOW (Annex III)