



NILE BASIN INITIATIVE

*To achieve sustainable socio-economic development
through the equitable utilization of and benefit from Nile Basin water resources*

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PRESS RELEASE

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Kenya's Deputy President lauds NBI for joint investments in the Nile Basin

VIHIGA COUNTY, Kenya –Kenya's Deputy President H.E. William Ruto has noted the remarkable progress made in the pursuit of cooperation on the Nile under the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). "Already we can see great harmony across borders as nations initiate and implement joint investments that will lead to enhanced livelihoods, market integration and trade, movement of labour and preservation and protection of ecosystems," he said.

This was during celebrations to mark the 10th Regional Nile Day celebrations held recently at Vihiga Friends High School in Kenya under the theme "**Nile Cooperation: Gateway to Regional Integration.**"

In a speech read for him by Judi Wakhungu, Kenyan Cabinet Secretary of Environment, and Natural Resources, H.E. Ruto said addressing the multiple challenges such as climate change in the Nile Basin requires concerted efforts through dialogue, negotiation, trust and confidence building to achieve the fruits of cooperation.

He noted that with almost half of its water resources within the Lake Victoria Basin, Kenya considers the Nile Basin as a region of strategic importance in terms of meeting its water demands and improving livelihoods through regional integration. He called for a reflection on the vulnerability of the River Nile and its people.

Speaking at the event, the NBI Executive Director, John RaoNyaoro, HSC said NBI has over the years promoted dialogue, negotiation, trust and confidence and entrenched these values in the organisation's efforts to promote Nile cooperation.

Nile Day is commemorated annually at regional and national levels across the 10 NBI Member States to celebrate the establishment of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) on 22nd February, 1999. This day marked a major milestone in the history of Nile Cooperation as prior efforts such as the Hydromet of the 1960s and the TECCONILE of the 1970s, were not inclusive of all Nile Basin countries, and lacked a development agenda as well as an institutional framework. Since 2007, Nile Day is celebrated to increase awareness of the importance of Nile Cooperation and to celebrate major milestones.

The event was jointly organized with Kenya's Ministry of Water and Irrigation in collaboration with Vihiga County Government and the Nile Basin Discourse. Activities for the day included tree planting, cleaning of Iguhu River, brass band-led procession from Vihiga County Assembly Offices to Vihiga Friends High School, an exhibition as well as cultural entertainment by school children and cultural troupes.

The celebrations were attended by Ministers in charge of Water Affairs in the Nile Basin countries (Nile Council of Ministers); officials from Ministries whose activities touch on the management and development of the shared water resources, namely Water, Environment, Energy, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Finance. Others are Members of Parliament, Development Partners, Researchers, Academia, Civil society, Youth, Media, school children and the general public.

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ABOUT THE NILE BASIN INITIATIVE

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) is a regional intergovernmental partnership launched by the Nile Basin countries on 22nd February, 1999 to manage and develop the shared Nile Basin water resources in a cooperative manner, share substantial socio-economic benefits and promote regional peace and security. NBI Member States are 10 namely Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Eritrea participates as an observer.

The partnership is guided by a **Shared Vision Objective**: *'To achieve sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin Water resources'*.

The setup of NBI is informed by the principle of subsidiarity, hence the three NBI Centres: **A Regional Secretariat** (Nile-SEC) based in Entebbe, Uganda is the executive arm responsible for the overall corporate direction. Two subsidiary Action Programs namely the **Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office** (ENTRO) based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and the **Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program Coordination Unit** (NELSAP-CU) based in Kigali, Rwanda are responsible for preparing trans-boundary investment projects in three areas namely Energy, Agriculture and River Basin Management.