



Contacts: P.O Box 192, Entebbe - Uganda

Tel:+256 417 705 000/+256 417 705 120

Email: nbisec@nilebasin.org

Website: www.nilebasin.org

PRESS RELEASE

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Kenyan Deputy President Ruto announces 2nd Nile Basin Heads of State Summit, launches Regional HydroMet Project

NAIROBI, Kenya – Kenyan Deputy President, H.E. William Samoei Ruto, today launched a USD 5.5 million Nile Basin Regional HydroMet Project which will enable Member States of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) to share reliable data for better monitoring of the Nile’s water resources. The first of its kind, the Nile Basin Regional HydroMet System will inform national planning and evidence-based decision making.

H.E Ruto was speaking during the opening ceremony of the Annual Nile Council of Ministers meetings (Nile-COM), at which Kenya took over chairmanship of the NBI from Burundi. H.E. Ruto used the opportunity to announce that his country intended to convene a second Nile Basin Heads of State Summit. The inaugural Heads of State Summit was held in June 2017 hosted by Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni in Entebbe.

The occasion of the announcement was the Launch of Nile Basin Regional HydroMet Project, which will be implemented in nine NBI Member States; Burundi, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

“The HydroMet System is designed to provide more reliable data and information for water resources management including flood disaster preparedness, coordinated management of water storage dams, navigation and improved adaptation to climate change,” Ruto said.

Addressing the gathering as outgoing Chairperson of the Nile-COM, Dr. Deo-Guide Rurema, who is also Burundi’s Minister of Environment, Agriculture and

Livestock, encouraged Member States to continue working towards finding lasting solutions to the various challenges in the Nile Basin.

“The delay in agreeing and adopting a legal and institutional framework has resulted in delays in the establishment of the permanent Nile River Basin Commission. It is my sincere hope that Member States will take bold steps towards adopting a common framework that will raise our level of engagement and facilitate harnessing benefits of the cooperation,” he said.

The NBI Secretariat Executive Director, Prof. Seifeldin Hamad Abdalla, said: “In order to allow countries to meet their growing water demands more efficiently and sustainably, NBI is assisting Member States to jointly explore options for meeting rising water demands in the Nile Basin.”

Speaking on behalf of NBI’s Development Partners, H.E Amb. Simon Mordue, Head of Delegation of the European Union in Kenya, noted that the monitoring network will become a key tool to manage the nexus between water security and the needs for irrigation and hydropower.

“Ultimately, it will inform the political negotiations over water use and benefit sharing with reliable, non-biased technical data... The hydrological monitoring system has a potential of becoming the backbone of transboundary water cooperation in the Nile River Basin,” he said.

The Nile Basin Regional HydroMet Project will be implemented over a three-year period (July 2018 – July 2021). The project is implemented with technical and financial support from the European Union and the German federal government, through GIZ.

The ministers also approved the work plan and budget for both the Secretariat based in Entebbe, Uganda and NELSAP-CU, based in Kigali, Rwanda responsible for preparation of investment projects for the Nile Equatorial Lakes countries.

Find out more about the Nile Basin Regional HydroMet project:
https://www.nilebasin.org/images/docs/Hydromet_Success_Story.pdf

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About Nile Basin Initiative

The Nile Basin Initiative is a regional intergovernmental partnership of ten Nile Basin countries, namely; Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. It was established on February 22, 1999 by Ministers in charge of Water Affairs in the Nile Basin countries. NBI is the only basin-wide institution mandated to facilitate the

cooperative development and management of the shared Nile Basin water resources on behalf of the 10-Member States, for win-win benefits and to promote regional peace and security.

The setup of NBI is comprised of the headquarters – NBI Secretariat (Nile-SEC) based in Entebbe, Uganda and two Subsidiary Action Programmes Offices leveraging unique sub-basin potentials and mitigating unique sub-basin risks. These are the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the Eastern Nile sub-basin and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit (NELSAP-CU) based in Kigali, Rwanda for the Nile Equatorial Lakes sub-basin.

NBI's programmes and projects are guided by its 10-Year Strategy (2017 – 2027), which outlines six goals, namely, water security, energy security, food security, environmental sustainability, climate change adaptation, and strengthening transboundary water governance.