



4th Nile Basin Development Forum:

Theme: Building Sustainable Trans-boundary Cooperation in a Complex River Basin: Challenges | Lessons | Prospects

Declaration

We, over 450 participants from within and outside the Nile Basin, including 7 members of the Nile Council of Water Ministers, 21 Permanent Secretaries, 18 Nile TAC members, 14 parliamentarians, members of the community of Development Partners, civil society, regional organizations and the Diplomatic Community in Nairobi.

Having participated in and collectively deliberated over a vast range of urgent Nile Basin management and development issues in the 4th Nile Basin Development Forum in Nairobi, Kenya during 6-7 October 2014,

Appreciating the achievements so far made under the NBI, built from unfavorable baseline, in sustaining an all inclusive institution with national and basin-wide capabilities of water resources management and development and demonstration of the benefits of cooperation on the ground through investments;

Recognizing the immense demand pressures the basin is facing and will face against - a fragile, complex and not fully understood science of the river; against equally complex hydro-political and historical legacies; against limited water resource base in the midst of uncertain Climate Change impact consequences; against the ongoing proliferation of unilaterally planned water resources infrastructure across the basin; against raising corporate and project finance for cooperative water infrastructure implementation

Acknowledging the efforts being made and the need for renewed efforts to bring back the sisterly country of Egypt, the most downstream and the most Nile dependant country, to the

NBI family so that it will have improved opportunity to influence the emergence of win-win outcomes through engagement;

Noting that despite the achievements, a lot remains to be done in that - poverty is still endemic in the basin; youth unemployment is a development challenge; poverty-driven continuing degradation of resources and loss of ecosystems is worrisome; the basin is still least economically integrated; there is still the need to further build water resources management-development capacities; there is still need to understand better Climate Change impacts better; there is need to further expand NBI's stakeholder bases to reach out further to national, international and regional bodies;

Affirming that the NBI is the only cooperation mechanism through which basin challenges and threats can be addressed collectively; affirming that it is only NBI, by its very nature and mandate, that can be the custodian of Nile, able to look beyond political confines of national priorities to mitigate the risks associated with fragmented and nationally focused resource use and thus safeguard the interests of future generations.

Understanding the sense of urgency needed to exploit the window of opportunity, the narrow time slot, we still have to address the impending challenges also emphasizing that basin problems have their own dynamics, and might not tolerate any laid-back decision making before the opportunity is lost!

Considering the foregoing, therefore, we Forum participants

I. CALL UPON NILE BASIN GOVERNMENTS TO:

Commit more finance and resources to the NBI so that NBI covers all the operating and program costs on its own. We call on Member Countries to own NBI. NBI, despite the growing country contributions, by and large is still a donor-funded organization, after 15 solid years.

Make regular application of the jointly built Nile Basin Knowledge Resources and capabilities (data and information base and analytic tools) especially at national level and to start exploring - both nationally and jointly - pathways to basin development that accommodate both national priorities and system wide optimization.

Create enabling environments through inter-country investment agreements to promote implementation of jointly prepared inter-country infrastructure projects.

Expediently make NBI a permanent institution by resolving differences and putting in place the agreed legal and institutional framework. Toward this end we urge member countries to work together to bring back the sisterly country of Egypt to the NBI family.

II. CALL UPON DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS (UN System agencies; Multilateral and bilateral funding/financial and cooperation agencies):

To further champion NBI and sustain their assistance to see the full blossoming and take off of the institution they have so long nurtured thru finance, advice, political and technical support.

III. WE CALL ON NATIONAL NILE BASIN MEDIA:

To focus dialogue on the Nile focus on the transboundary issues and to help the gradual shift of perspective toward viewing Nile issues more as a resource management agenda to be addressed through collective enterprise like the Nile Basin Initiative - and not a battle of lose-lose consequences! We urge owners of national media houses, reporters, journalists and other media professionals to help create a new norm that brings Nile Cooperation to the fore of communication agenda setting.

IV. WE CALL ON THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA TO:

To embark on more responsible reporting and to cover positive developments surrounding Nile Basin cooperation and to refrain from sensationalizing the issue by making frequent references to Nile Water Wars.

V. WE CALL UPON THE FAITH COMMUNITY, EDUCATORS AND CULTURAL INSTITUTION LEADERS:

To Leverage the best of their norms that encourage mutuality, concern for the other and the neighbor and the environment and support NBI's efforts foster cooperation and regional peace. We call upon educators across the NB countries to make Nile Basin part of their curricula and civic education to build support among the youth of today who will own the Nile tomorrow.

VI. WE CALL UPON THE PRIVATE SECTOR:

Within the basin and beyond to partner with NBI to responsibly develop the Nile resources by investing their finance, expertise and technology.

VII. WE CALL UPON REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

That work on water to synergize and partner with NBI. NBI, cutting through overlapping mandates of regional organizations that have to do with water - e.g. drought; lakes, hydropower/power, food security), is the organization to which all Nile Basin States belong to collectively address Nile Water Resources issues,

VIII. W E CALL UPON ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

To collaborate with the NBI to make their water resource related work relevant by informing their teaching and research agenda with priorities of communities, countries and the Nile itself and disseminating their results and findings

We express our sincere thanks to the people and Government of Kenya for their generous hospitality and hosting of the 4th Nile Basin Development Forum.

Nairobi, Kenya, October 7, 2014