The NBD Network Statement on Nile Day 2023 Celebrations

Nairobi – Kenya

Verdiane NYIRAMANA
Chairperson, Regional NBD Board

February 22nd 2023
• Honourable NILE COM Chairperson;
• Honourable Members of the Nile Council of Ministers;
• Honourable Ministers of the Republic of Kenya;
• Nile-TAC Chair and Members;
• Members of the Diplomatic Corps present;
• Representatives of Development Partners;
• NBI Executive Director, Centres and the NBI Staff;
• NBD Network Members;
• All Nile Basin Stakeholders;
• Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

Greetings and Happy Nile Day 2023,

On behalf of the Nile Basin Discourse Network, I congratulate you all upon celebrating this memorable day when the Nile Basin Initiative was established. A special thanks goes to the NBI and the Republic of Kenya for organising and hosting this prestigious event.

As NBD, we consider this commemoration as an opportunity for all stakeholders, governments and communities to reflect on the role of the river Nile, a shared River, requiring our collective protection and action.

When the NBI was established in 1999, the NBD vision bearers thought: this Initiative (NBI) is going to be prioritising projects and programs that support people who count on the Nile for their health, community sustainability, and livelihoods; but where are these people and how shall they contribute to NBI development process? This led to the establishment of the NBD as a grassroots CSO network within the Nile Basin region, to ensure that civil society and local communities play a key role in influencing and enhancing NBI’s programming effectiveness and impact on grassroot communities. Therefore, to us, celebrating the Nile day alongside the NBI is not just a tradition but also a commemoration of our own establishment as the NBD ‘grassroots’ network.
Distinguished guests, the theme for this year, “Deepening Nile Cooperation: Sustainable Development in a Changing Climate”, is fundamental to all stakeholders and it comes at a time when the Nile Basin region - just like the rest of the world, is facing the highest rate of climate change disasters in history and this must be a cause of concern to all of us here.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to inform you that the NBD network activities over the years are well aligned with this year’s theme. NBD has been and continues to be deliberate at:

i) **Communicating and Deepening** the message of Nile cooperation to all its membership through organising National Nile day celebrations, which popularises the Nile day messages within grassroots communities across the ten countries; and through its dialogue platforms and transboundary community meetings that focuses on NBI projects and programs.

ii) **Capacity building on climate change and resilience** under climate uncertainty, and sustainable living (Green jobs) to stakeholders, member organisations, women, and youths within the basin.

The NBD witnesses and welcomes concerted effort of both state and nonstate actors, to collectively sustain and create climate resilience as we share in the opportunities the Nile River provides.

Distinguished guests, since its establishment, the NBD Network has supported inclusive and participatory stakeholder engagement processes in multiple development investments and Nile cooperation; it is currently partnering with the three NBI Centres (NBI Sec, NELSAP CU, ENTRO) and the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) to implement the CIWA/World Bank funded **Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR)** project.

NBD is implementing the fifth component of the project, focusing on **Enhancing stakeholder engagement in the Nile Basin** to improve cooperation and shared understanding of water-related issues in the Nile Basin.
Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to reiterate that the NBD Network is committed to continuing its grand partnership with the NBI Centres and Governments of the Nile Basin to foster Nile cooperation and support initiatives that lead to sustainable development and collective sharing of the resources of the Nile.

Subsequently the NBD Network is soon rolling out a five-year Strategy 2023 – 2027 titled “Share and Shared: Empowered and Inclusive Action Across the Nile Basin River” whose strategic actions complement the Nile Cooperation and most importantly on the Nile day 2023 theme of Deepening the Nile Cooperation for Sustainable Development in a Changing Climate. We invite you all to join us and support grassroots action as we implement this important strategy towards the positive development of the Nile.

Distinguished Guests, as we celebrate this historic day reflecting on deepening the Nile Cooperation and development in a changing climate, as civil society, we assure you that our focus is in fostering and advocating for two emerging issues that deeply touch the grassroots communities, thus:

- that Governments continuously make effort in providing a peaceful environment to further trans-boundary development to reach communities; and
- that development partners and agendas prioritise and avail the much-needed funding for grassroots networks for an inclusive action on climate change and a sustained development.

Finally, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have hope for the future - our hope is for a prosperous, peaceful and sustainable future for all the peoples of the Nile Basin.

Wishing you a joyful Nile Day 2023 Celebration!!

One Nile, One Family