



COMMUNIQUE OF AFRICAN LEADERS AT THE THIRD AFRICAN PARTNERSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION CONFERENCE ON WATER ON ASSURING INCLUSIVE AND CLIMATE-RESILIENT WATER SECURITY AND SANITATION FOR THE AFRICA WE WANT

PREAMBLE

We, the Ministers in charge of Foreign Affairs, Environment, and Water and Sanitation in Africa, gathered for the third African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON-3) held on 27 – 29 May 2025 in Lusaka, Zambia; in the presence of other global leaders, Intergovernmental Organisations, Regional Economic Communities, United Nations Agencies, private sector, civil society organisations, indigenous peoples, local communities, farmer organisations, children, youth, women and academia:

1. **Recall** Assembly Decisions (Assembly/AU/Draft/Dec.31(XXXVIII)Rev.1) appreciating the Republic of Zambia's leadership to host PANAFCON-3 on 27 – 29 May 2025.
2. **Commend** H E Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, for guiding an inclusive multi-level dialogue during PANAFCON-3, to mobilise political ownership and public commitment to an Africa water vision and policy that:
 - 2.1 elevates water as a strategic economic and security asset;
 - 2.2 places emphasis on making a business case for the water and sanitation economy as an essential success factor of national fiscal policy; and,
 - 2.3 is aligned to and is adopted as an implementation framework of the African Union's Agenda 2063.
3. **Recognise** our shared responsibility under Aspiration 1 of Agenda 2063 of “*a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development*” – to motivate action to achieve goal 7 of “*environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities*” through assuring water security, among others.
4. **Reiterate** our commitment to accelerate the achievement of water and sanitation goals in Africa as encapsulated by, among others:
 - 4.1 the 2008 Sharm El-Sheikh Commitments for Accelerating the Achievement of Water and Sanitation Goals in Africa (Assembly/AU/Decl.1 (XI);
 - 4.2 the 2004 Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development on Agriculture and Water in Africa;
 - 4.3 the 2015 Ngor Declaration on sanitation and hygiene; and,

4.4 the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

5. **Additionally recognise:**

- 5.1 water as Africa's most strategic resource and foundation of our prosperity, resilience, dignity and unity and, therefore, **appreciate** that strengthening water security and sustainable sanitation is a prerequisite for economic growth and inclusive social transformation; and
- 5.2 that Africa's youth represent a significant demographic, making Africa the continent with the youngest population in the world.

6. **Acknowledge:**

- 6.1 the urgent need to raise the profile and value attached to water in national systems for economic planning and development, and to thus increase domestic allocations and investment into the water, sanitation and hygiene sub-sectors;
- 6.2 the significant water investment gap across the continent; and the critical need to develop investment-ready water projects that can attract private sector investment, development finance and other sources of finance including climate finance;
- 6.3 the upcoming AU-Africa Water Investment Summit scheduled for 13-15 August 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa as a critical follow-up platform to PANAFCON-3 towards concrete investment partnerships and financing arrangements for water projects.

7. **Commit** to strengthen existing continental monitoring and evaluation frameworks, including the African Water and Sanitation Sector Monitoring and Reporting System (WASSMO) and the PIDA¹ Water scorecard² for tracking progress made in the mobilisation of water investments for PIDA PAP 2.

8. **Motivated** to improve efficiency and efficacy of utilising available public financial resources, as well as expanding funding and investment opportunities by attracting the private sector; and,

9. **Underlining** the urgency of the need to act to expand economic opportunities and to create jobs, we **reaffirm** unwavering commitment to:

- 9.1 harness water's productive potential;
- 9.2 manage water-related disaster risks;

¹ Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA).

² Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.818(XXXV) of February 2022 APPROVES the framework for tracking progress in the mobilisation of PIDA water investments, and DIRECTS AUDA-NEPAD to continue mobilising and establishing partnerships for PIDA implementation and report back bi-annually on the gaps and progress made in the mobilisation of water investments for PIDA PAP 2 using the PIDA Water scorecard as a reference.

- 9.3 enhance the sustainability and resilience of the natural resources base; and, thus,
 - 9.4 catalyse national and regional development underpinned by solidarity and innovation for peace and opportunity.
10. **WE undertake** to assure sustainable water availability and safe sanitation systems to achieve the goals of Agenda 2063 through the pursuit of policy goals to actualise the vision of an Africa where:
- 10.1 there is universal access to safely managed water, sanitation and hygiene services, including in emergency situations;
 - 10.2 there is sustainable water availability for vibrant economies and growing, prosperous populations facing greater climate uncertainty;
 - 10.3 people, economies, and ecosystems are resilient and adequately protected from water-related disasters risks;
 - 10.4 good water governance systems, management institutions and transformative leadership are in place and grounded in international water law and the principles of subsidiarity, accountability and transparency;
 - 10.5 water basins are recognised as shared natural assets that drive peace, trade, regional integration, social inclusion and political stability;
 - 10.6 human capital development, technological empowerment and adaptive learning meet the requirements for effective management of Africa's natural resources base;
 - 10.7 there is investment into integrated water information systems supporting science-based decision making for climate resilience and raising the prioritisation of water management and sanitation in national systems for economic planning and financial allocation; and,
 - 10.8 a thriving blue economy sustainably leverages Africa's aquatic resources to drive prosperity, climate resilience, ecosystem health and well-being.
11. **AND, We affirm** our commitment to a Member States-led participatory process to:
- 11.1 finalise the draft Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy, and its action framework;
 - 11.2 submit it for consideration at the 14th Ordinary Session of the General Assembly of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW);
 - 11.3 seek its endorsement as a continental implementation framework of Agenda 2063 at the 39th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union in February 2026;

- 11.4 present it as Africa's Common Position at the United Nations Water Conference of 2026 to speed up the implementation of SDG 6; and,
- 11.5 launch implementation of the action frameworks of both the African Union Theme for 2026 and the UN 2026 Water Conference to put the Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy at the centre-stage of global discussions on what needs to be done to add new impetus to the pursuit of Africa's commitments on water and sanitation.

The Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy shall be our compass, our voice, and our commitment to future generations.

Done in Lusaka on 29 May 2025