



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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Improving Nile Basin citizens' access to water through Nile cooperation

KHARTOUM, The Sudan - At least 400 Nile Basin stakeholders are set to gather in The Sudan capital Khartoum for the 9th Regional Nile Day celebrations to commemorate the establishment of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) on 22nd February 1999.

Celebrations will take place on Sunday 22nd February, 2015 at the Blue Nile Beach and activities to mark the day will start with a brass band led procession from Mak Nimr Bridge. Other activities include a boat ride competition; public speeches; Key Note Address; exhibition; as well as entertainment.

Participants will include Ministers in charge of Water Affairs in the 11 Nile Basin countries, diplomats, development partners and government officials. Others are Members of Parliament, researchers, academia, civil society, youth, media, school children and the general public.

This year's annual event is dedicated to the theme: **Water and Improved Livelihoods – Opportunities in Nile Cooperation**. The links between water, livelihoods and economic development are quite visible in the Nile Basin countries. Besides agriculture and energy production, water is needed for domestic collection, health, urban development, environmental sustainability, municipal and industrial, recreation, ceremonial etc.

“In order to improve access to reliable, sufficient water supply for Nile Basin citizens and hence increase the range of possible livelihood activities, Nile Basin countries have got no choice but to cooperate around water, for water and through water”, said H.E. Dr. Tabita Butrus, State Minister of Water Resources and Electricity in The Sudan during a press briefing on 21st February, 2015.

She appreciated the role played by the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) in strengthening regional water resources planning and management and promoting efficient use of the Basin's water resources.

H.E. Dr. Butrus called for sustainable Nile Cooperation which she said requires increased political commitment from Member States; all-inclusivity as well as financial resources to finance the implementation of regional investment projects.

This year's regional celebration is jointly organised by NBI and Sudan's Ministry of Water Resources and Electricity, in collaboration with the Nile Basin Discourse.

Note to Editors:

Nile Day is special on the NBI calendar because it is on this day that for the first time ever, all Nile Basin countries came together within an ambit of a *Shared Vision* and established a *common organization*. The day marked a major milestone in the history of Nile Cooperation, as prior efforts were beset with lack of inclusivity and an institutional framework.

The Day provides an opportunity for Basin citizens to come together to exchange experiences, views and ideas on topical issues related to the cooperative management and development of the shared Nile Basin water. On a lighter note, the Day provides an opportunity to celebrate the rich and varied cultures which exist within the Basin.

For updates, like the NBI Facebook page: Nile Basin Initiative; or follow NBI on Twitter: @nbiweb

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) is a transitional, 10-Member intergovernmental partnership institution 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'*. **NBI Member States are: Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.** Eritrea participates as an observer. Launched on 22nd February, 1999 NBI provides the only all- inclusive regional platform for multi stakeholder dialogue, for sharing information, joint planning and management of water and related resources in the Nile Basin.

NBI is governed by a Council of 10 Ministers in charge of Water Affairs in the NBI Member States (Nile-COM), which is the highest decision and policy-making body. The Nile-COM is supported by a Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC), comprised of 20 senior government officials from the partner states.

Professional day to day management of NBI is from three centers –Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat (Nile-SEC) based in Entebbe, Uganda; 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.

NBI Core Programs: **Basin Cooperation** -To facilitate, support and nurture cooperation amongst the Nile Basin countries so as to promote timely and efficient joint actions required for securing benefit from the common Nile Basin water resources; **Water Resource Management** - To assess, manage and safeguard the water resource base that supports the peoples of the Nile Basin through applying the principles of knowledge-based integrated water resources management to water development planning and assessment; **Water Resource Development** - To identify, prepare and facilitate investment in Regional/trans-boundary water development projects and programs whilst avoiding negative impacts on the health of the Nile Basin's resources through applying the principles of integrated water resources management