



**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE ANNA SHIWEDA, MP AND DEPUTY
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND REFORM (MAWLR),
AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
WORKSHOP ON NAMIBIA'S ACCESSION PROCESS TO THE
CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF
TRANSBOUNDARY WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES
(WATER CONVENTION), 31 MAY 2022, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

Director of proceedings ;

**His excellency Mr Sen Pang, United Nations Resident Coordinator in
Namibia;**

**Mr Achim Schaffert, Head of Cooperation of the European Union to
Namibia;**

Ms Sonja Koepel, Secretary of the Water Convention and Team;

**Representatives from River Basin Organizations and various
international organizations;**

Government officials;

Distinguished participants;

Members of the media;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good Morning

I would like to first of all welcome all our guests to Namibia, but in particular to our capital City, Windhoek. Secondly, I wish to welcome all the participants to this National Workshop on Namibia's accession process to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

Let me at the outset thank the Water Convention Secretariat for the continuous support that it rendered to our Ministry for this process and I look forward to the conclusion and thus Namibia's accession to the Water Convention.

Furthermore, allow me to appreciate the Water Convention parties for opening up the Convention to accommodate the accession of other UN Member States outside Europe. Namibia sees a great opportunity to be part of this global legal framework because all our perennial rivers are transboundary and shared with neighbouring countries. In our view therefore being part of this Convention will add value to the implementation of the existing bilateral and multilateral Agreements, as well as protocols and conventions aimed at promoting joint management and sustainable development of the internationally shared waters. In addition, parties to the water convention stand to benefit from Namibia's long standing experience on transboundary water cooperation.

Director of Proceedings

Distinguished guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

In today's interconnected world, water availability is directly related to peace and security. World-wide, pressure on freshwater is rising with climate change, pollution and growing demand for water further contributing to water insecurity.

Transboundary water cooperation is one of the mechanisms aimed at ensuring that water is not a source of conflict, but a symbol of partnership, joint progress and economic development. It is precisely for this reason that Namibia expressed interest to be part of the Water Convention, during the 9th Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention held in September 2021, in Geneva, Switzerland. We have no doubt that by acceding to the Water Convention, Namibia will strengthen her capacity and add additional tools in catalysing change towards water and peace nexus. Furthermore, Namibia also envisions to gain new insights for enhanced transboundary cooperation, conflict prevention and regional stability. We, therefore, call on our national, regional and global stakeholders for their support in making Namibia's accession to the Water Convention a reality.

Namibia's undertaking to the Convention has become more and more important as Water Diplomacy is increasingly becoming a

corner stone for transboundary water management, not only to avoid harm to others but also to benefit each other. Through water diplomacy, riparian states can realize the benefits of cooperating on management of water resources through joint planning, development and policy harmonization. Water, when is equitably shared, can become a confidence and trust building measure between nations and people.

Director of Proceedings;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

As it was stated by the facilitator of this session, some of the objectives of the workshop are for us to engage as a nation and inform all participants present here today about the Water Convention; and identify its benefits for Namibia. I therefore hope that the proceedings of this workshop will be conducted in a transparent, frank and constructive manner in order to ensure that all stakeholders are at the same level of understanding.

In conclusion I, therefore, wish you good deliberations for the next day and a half towards this noble process and I now declare the National Stakeholders workshop on Namibia's accession process to the Water Convention officially open.

I thank you.