

79TH UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND 2024 SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

AFRICAN UNION HIGH-LEVEL PANEL EVENT ON MOBILISING COMMITMENTS TOWARDS THE AFRICA WATER INVESTMENT SUMMIT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE G20 PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

*Adopted on 23 September 2024 on the margins of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly
in New York, United States of America*

We, representatives of the African Union Commission, International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa, Republic of South Africa, Republic of Senegal, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Global Commission on the Economics of Water, Global Water Partnership-Africa, Water Research Commission (WRC) and stakeholders at the Science Summit “Water Day” on the margins of the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York, United States of America:

RECALLING the commitment of the African Union Heads of State and Government in July 2008, in terms of the Sharm el Sheik Declaration on Water and Sanitation (Assembly/AU/Decl.1(xii), which seeks to accelerate the achievement of water and sanitation goals in Africa;

ACKNOWLEDGING that inadequate investments in water have affected the gains made across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the

critical role that water plays in climate change adaptation and the goals of Agenda 2063;

RECOGNISING that water plays a crucial role in the socio-economic development of Africa including health, food security, jobs, and in sustaining natural ecosystems, and is critical in building climate resilience among communities on the continent, and that the prolonged periods of drought in many parts of Africa recorded in the past 50 years has resulted in loss of livelihoods, hunger, affecting more than 36 million people due to migration;

NOTING that the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP) adopted by the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government in February 2021 aims to bridge the water investment gap supported by the AU International High-Level Panel on water investments for Africa;

RECOGNISING that the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy (2022-2032) recognises the AIP as a flagship initiative to transform water systems and build resilience through water investments in Africa in response to the projected severe and more frequent impacts of climate change;

NOTING that on 6 September 2023, African Heads of State and Government committed to support implementation of the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP), which aims to close the Africa water investment gap by mobilising an additional US\$30 billion annually by 2030, [as part of the African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change](#);

NOTING that while significant progress has been made on the continent, financing and investments in water are lagging and it is estimated that at least \$30 billion additional finance needs to be mobilized annually by 2030

to meet SDG 6 targets on water and sanitation. Currently, only US\$10- US\$19 billion is invested each year;

ACKNOWLEDGING that in November 2022 during COP27, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, the African Union inaugurated the International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa comprising representatives of current and former Heads of State as well as other global leaders;

NOTING that in [December 2023 during COP 28 in Dubai, UAE, the African Union Commission and AIP International High-Level Panel launched the Africa Water Investment Action Plan](#) outlining how countries can mobilise the additional US\$30 billion per year required to ensure water security and sustainable sanitation on the continent;

COMMENDING the founding Co-Chairs of the Panel: Republic of Senegal, Republic of Namibia; Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the Alternate Co-Chair, H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania;

NOTING that during the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York, the African Union and International High-Level Panel released the High-Level Panel Report, Africa's Rising Investment Tide, with pathways for countries to mobilise at least US\$30 billion annually by 2030 to close the water investment gap in Africa;

NOTING that the [UN Secretary General's final communique](#) on the outcomes of the UN 2023 Water Conference observed the AU's AIP High-Level Panel and its initiatives, as one of the most significant commitments to drive transformation from a global water crisis to a water-secure world,

continues to be a feasible vehicle to support African countries to improve investments in water;

RECALLING that the [UN resolution 77/334 decided to convene the 2026 United Nations Water Conference](#) to Accelerate the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, co-hosted by the UAE and Senegal;

COMMENDING the United Nations Secretary's appointment of Her Excellency Retno L.P. Marsudi of the Republic of Indonesia as the first UN Special Envoy on Water;

COMMENDING the UAE for launching the [Mohammed bin Zayed Water Initiative](#) to confront the urgent challenge of water scarcity around the world aimed at enhancing awareness of the severity of the crisis of water scarcity and accelerate the pace of technological innovation to deal with the challenges it poses; and expand the scope of international cooperation to address the crisis and drive investment for the benefit of current and future generations;

RECALLING that, during the 78th UN General Assembly 2023, the Republic of South Africa committed to consider hosting the AU Africa Water Investment Summit in collaboration with the African Union and International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa to mobilise resources for implementing the AIP;

NOTING that in August 2023, during Stockholm World Water Week, the Republic of South Africa announced its commitment to advocate for water security investments and financing to be elevated to the G20 agenda in 2025, when South Africa assumes the Presidency of the G20;

NOTING that the G20 Presidency of South Africa is an opportunity to elevate Africa's water investments to the G20 agenda, addressing concerns shared around water security and climate change, the promotion of clean energy, and sustainable development in the social, economic and environmental spheres;

ACKNOWLEDGING that South Africa is grappling with major water supply challenges as well as increased incidences of droughts and floods, along with other G20 members;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Republic of South Africa could play a key role as champion of the AU Africa Water Investment Summit alongside the G20 meetings, supporting the International High-Level Panel to mobilise an additional US\$30 billion per year by 2030 for implementing the AIP and addressing the water security and sanitation challenge in Africa;

NOTING that the Africa Water Investment Summit is envisaged to be organised in partnership with the AU and High-Level Panel as part of the South African agenda for the G20 Presidency;

WE, THE PARTNERS:

1. **AGREE** that the AU Africa Water Investment Summit will advance the 2023 UN Water Action Agenda and contribute towards water related global development agendas and processes, such as the upcoming 2026 UN Water Conference;

2. **AGREE** that the Africa Water Investment Summit is an opportunity to mobilise the G20 leaders, African Heads of State and Government, developed countries, international finance and development institutions, multilateral development banks and the private sector on the urgent need to scale up investments for a water-secure and climate-resilient future;
3. **AGREE** to cooperate and support the African Union and Republic of South Africa to convene the AU Africa Water Investment Summit in the context of the 2025 South African Presidency of the G20, as committed during the AU International High-Level Panel event at UNGA 2023 and during the 2024 World Water Week in Stockholm, Sweden;
4. **RECOMMEND** that the AU Africa Water Investment Summit also be convened as a platform to consolidate the Africa position on water finance and investments towards water related global development agenda and processes;
5. **AGREE** to establish a working group to support the African Union and the Republic of South Africa in convening and hosting the AU Africa Water Investment Summit in the context of the upcoming G20 Presidency of the Republic of South Africa and towards water related global development agendas and processes;
6. **COMMEND** the Water Research Commission (WRC) of South Africa for collaborating with the AU, the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP) and the High-Level Panel in convening the Science Summit 'Water Day' at UNGA 2024, and request WRC to mobilise stakeholders across South Africa and coordinate national water sector

submissions to the working group and AU-AIP High-Level Panel Secretariat for further engagement with international partners;

7. **AGREE** that the working group is currently comprised of key actors including the following: representatives of the AU-AIP International High Level Panel Core Group that led preparations of the report for the 2023 High Level Panel Report, Africa's Rising Investment Tide; the African Union Commission; the Republics of Senegal and Namibia in their capacity as founding Co-Chairs of the AU-AIP International High Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa; the Republic of South Africa as Member of the High-Level Panel and prospective host of the 2025 Africa Water Investment Summit and upcoming Chair of the G20, the Global Commission on Economics of Water hosted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the AIP High-Level Panel Secretariat hosted by Global Water Partnership Southern Africa;
- i. Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director of Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy at the African Union Commission;
 - ii. Dr. Mohamed Diatta, Sherpa to the President of Senegal on the High-Level Panel; Sherpa of the HLPW;
 - iii. Ms. Nchedi Morige, Chief Director Executive Services and Strategic Partnerships, Office of the Director General of South Africa Department of Water Affairs; Sherpa of the HLPW; Deputy Chair of GEP Steering Committee Global; Board Member of GWPSA; and Sherpa to the AU-AIP High-Level Panel;
 - iv. Ms. Maria Amakali, Director of Water Resource Management in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, Republic of Namibia;

- v. Mr. Henk Ovink, Former Envoy on the Netherlands; Sherpa HLWP; Co-Coordinator of the UN 2023 Water Conference; Executive Director of the Global Commission on Economics of Water;
 - vi. Mr. Alex Simalabwi, CEO of the AIP High-Level Panel Secretariat; Technical Advisor for Africa on the HLPW and Executive Secretary, GWPSA-Africa;
 - vii. Dr. Jennifer Molwantwa, CEO, Water Research Commission (WRC) and Dr. Mamohloding Tlhagale, Head of Business Development and Partnership (WRC); representatives of the South African water sector for periodic inputs to Secretariat.
8. **DIRECT** the working group to support the AU to prepare a roadmap with key milestones towards the AU Africa Water Investment Summit and other water related global development agendas in the context of the upcoming G20 Presidency of the Republic of South Africa;
9. **DIRECT** the AIP High-Level Panel Secretariat to support the African Union Commission in coordinating logistics and planning meetings for the working group, and reporting on progress in close consultation with the Republic of South Africa;
10. **DIRECT** the working group to periodically report on progress to the following leaders who will serve as steering group towards the AU Africa Water Investment Summit and water related global development agendas and processes:
- i. H.E Jakaya Kikwete in his capacity as Alternate Co-Chair of the High-Level Panel who will lead the steering group in coordinating closely with

the Co-Chairs of High-Level Panel (Republic of Senegal and Republic of Namibia) and coordinate closely with leaders of water related global development agendas and processes and South Africa as Host of the AU Africa Water Investment Summit;

- ii. H.E. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Blue and Sustainable Environment at the African Union Commission;
- iii. Hon. Pemmy Majodina, Minister of Water and Sanitation, Republic of South Africa;
- iv. Hon. Cheikh Tidiane Dièye-Minister of Water and Sanitation, Republic of Senegal;
- v. Hon. Calle Schlettwein, Minister of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, Republic of Namibia.

11. **CALL** upon the core partners of the AIP and convenors of the High-Level Panel: the African Minister's Council on Water, African Union Development Agency-NEPAD, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Capital Development Fund, UNICEF, the World Bank, African Development Bank, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Global Center on Adaptation, and Global Water Partnership to coordinate and work closely in supporting the AU efforts towards the Africa Water Investment Summit;

12. **CALL** upon Heads of State and Government, the international community, UN agencies including the office of the first UN Special Envoy on Water, development finance institutions, international organisations, private sector, civil society, and other stakeholders in

Africa and globally to support the AU and Republic of South Africa in convening the Africa Water Investment Summit in 2025.

--END--