



**INTER-REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION FOR
UPSCALING INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (IWRM) AND
ECOHYDROLOGY AS TOOLS FOR ACHIEVING WATER SECURITY IN AFRICA;
24TH TO 26TH JANUARY 2017, ABUJA- NIGERIA**

***Welcome Remarks by Dr. Benoit Sossou, Director/Representative UNESCO
Regional Multisectoral Office Abuja.***

Protocol

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you all a very warm welcome on behalf of the UNESCO Regional Multisectoral Office Abuja and to say how grateful we are for your presence at this important workshop. I am also very happy to welcome my colleagues from the Regional Science Bureau for Asia & Pacific located in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Today's workshop is very important, especially for Africa and it aligns well with the global Agenda 2030. As we are well aware, water is a crucial resource, and lies at the basis of Africa's development. Reports have shown that Climate Change will increase water scarcity and increasing population will lead to an increase in water demand. For some Africa countries, water demand will outweigh the available water resources. As water availability constantly declines, partitioning of water for domestic consumption, agriculture and other forms of water use is becoming a subject of serious concern in Africa and this has, in turn, impinge on water security. As defined by the UN-Water report of 2013, water security is the capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability. African water experts, managers, scientist researchers, must therefore develop strategies to address this water security concern in Africa.

Distinguish experts,

Il est à noter que cet atelier est conçu comme une véritable plate-forme pour les pays africains présents ici pour discuter des outils efficaces pour atteindre la sécurité de l'eau. Deux de ces outils, soit la gestion inter- médiaisée des ressources en eau et l'écohydrologie, ont été identifiés pour discussion. Dans l'esprit de la coopération Sud-Sud, je suis convaincu que vous aborderez efficacement les enjeux, partagerons les connaissances et élaborerons des stratégies réalisables pour utiliser ces outils en vue d'assurer la sécurité de l'eau dans la sous-région.

Les ministres africains de l'eau sont très préoccupés par la question de la sécurité de l'eau en Afrique et, comme vous vous en souviendrez, ces honorables ministres et délégations de haut niveau ont adopté, le 27 juillet 2016, une feuille de route visant à assurer un accès durable et universel à l'eau potable et à l'assainissement en Afrique. Cette adoption était aussi au centre de la commémoration de la 6ème Semaine africaine de l'eau, intitulée « Atteindre les objectifs de développement durable en matière de sécurité et d'assainissement de l'eau ».

Distinguish ladies and gentlemen,

You may wish to note that during the 2016 African Water week, the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP) organized over 10 side events, to help prepare the implementation of the water-related goals as a driver for life in Africa. IHP also helped to formulate and address urgent needs on strengthening scientific knowledge and adopting appropriate approaches for monitoring emerging pollutants in water resources and wastewater while assessing their potential human health and environmental risks; and preventing and controlling pollution of water resources and the environment. Specifically for us at the Abuja Regional Office, which covers activities in eight West African countries, we were able to successfully host just 6 weeks ago, a regional expert meeting with a focus on "water quality in Agenda 2030". With these efforts including the present workshop and even future events, UNESCO is indeed supportive of actions towards ensuring that Africa achieves sanitation and is water secured; thus, achieving the water related goal of Agenda 2030.

Before closing, let me at this point appreciate very much the hard work and diligence of the Regional Center for Integrated River Basin management (RC-IRBM) which is also a UNESCO Category II Center. RC-IRBM is a great partner of UNESCO, even for the present workshop and we look forward to more collaboration with the Center. I also appreciate my colleagues at the Jakarta and Abuja offices for ensuring the organisation of this workshop.

Distinguish experts, ladies and gentlemen, welcome again to Abuja and I wish you fruitful deliberation at the workshop and enjoyable stay in Nigeria.