Today’s discussions have highlighted the opportunities that effective cooperation in Transboundary Water Resources Development and Management present for socio-economic growth, regional stability and for sustaining ecosystems. Climate change and demographic dynamics intensify the urgency to harness these opportunities. Examples of approaches and models to achieve effective collaboration towards addressing the challenges have been deliberated and the importance of political leadership by the riparian states, financing for infrastructure development that ensures the sharing of benefits, developing and sustaining impactful river/lake basin organizations, among others, have been highlighted.

As a multilateral institution working with African countries - and in collaboration with other development partners - to support effective development the African Development Bank is grateful for this opportunity to make a few remarks at this High Level Ministerial Panel.

We would all want to see water resources in Africa managed and developed for the benefit of upstream and current generations, without jeopardizing the interests and well-being of downstream and future generations and ecosystems. However, disparities in levels of economic development, dissimilar political priorities and interests amongst riparian countries, inadequate coordination and lack of political dialogue hinder collaboration and interest in joint developments.

But African governments and their partners have taken significant steps to harness the benefits of collaboration around water basins and through Regional Economic Commissions (RECs):

- At the political level, AMCOW was created in 2002 to promote cooperation, security, social and economic development among member states, through the management of water resources and provision of water supply services. At the AU Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh (2008), the Heads of State and Government committed to ensuring equitable and sustainable management and development of national and shared water resources in Africa.
- At the operational level, many countries have IWRM action plans; the AU’s Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) which includes transboundary water infrastructure was launched; a number of river basin organizations are in place; various Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) have coordination structures for the management of water resources; and, the various transboundary water protocols and agreements are ratified.
- Nonetheless, as we have heard today, more needs to be done.

Through its lending programs in agriculture, hydropower, multipurpose water infrastructure, river transport, and water supply; and through various funds, notably the African Water
Facility, the Bank has been making significant contributions to national and regional integration and development. We have supported the establishment and strengthening of River Basin Organizations, including the Volta Basin Authority and the African Network of Basin Organizations. This support has come in the form of IWRM capacity building, Shared Vision and Subsidiaries Action Programs for the Nile Basin Initiative, and NEPAD’s Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). We also provide considerable, non-lending assistance to African countries and to Regional Economic Communities to build IWRM capacity and to develop appropriate sector policies and strategies.

Cooperation in the management and development of trans-boundary water resources is one of the building blocks of regional integration. The construction of the multipurpose Manantali Dam, a joint project of the Governments of Mali, Mauritania and Senegal through the Senegal River Basin Development Organisation is a great example. Other examples include work in East Africa where the Bank has worked with other Development Partners to support the Nile Basin and Lake Victoria initiatives, the Inga hydropower project on the Congo River and addressing environmental challenges of Lake Chad.

The Bank’s interventions are aligned with our 2013 - 2022 Strategy whose five core objectives are infrastructure development, regional integration, private sector development, governance & accountability, and skills & technology.

We are carrying out an assessment of the key constraints to the management of water resources in trans-boundary basins in Africa and defining an actionable work programme on selected basins to support the Bank’s Strategy in general and, specifically, our regional integration agenda.

**Outlook/Some Concluding Remarks**

- Cooperation around shared water resources offers opportunities for sustainable socio-economic development and regional collaboration. In addition, cooperation amongst RECs provides avenues for increased joint development of water resources. Therefore, **regional integration and trade amongst riparian countries should be promoted to enhance TWRM.**

- **Multipurpose/regional water infrastructure** contributes to maximizing mutual benefits.

- The importance of **quality hydro-meteorological information** cannot be overstated. Riparian countries need to recognize that hydro-meteorological information is a public good to be shared at all levels, and managed and used for sound water resources management in the region.

- **Financial cooperation** for greater socio-economic outcomes is vital. Various instruments and avenues should be promoted. The proposed **Africa 50 vehicle** in which the Bank will play a lead role is a potential collective instrument for financing infrastructure leading to shared benefits. Preparation of bankable water infrastructure projects, as done by AWF and PIDA, is key.

- Finally, cooperation around shared water resources is a long-term venture and nurturing the relationship calls for **long-term engagement.** The Bank remains a committed long-term development partner for Africa.

Thank you.