

**KEY NOTE SPEECH BY HON. PROF. MARK J. MWANDOSYA (MP),
MINISTER OF WATER AND IRRIGATION AT THE OPENING OF THE
FOURTH JOINT WATER SECTOR REVIEW MEETING
UBUNGO PLAZA: 1ST OCTOBER, 2009**

Honorable Members of Parliament,

Representatives of Government Ministries and Regional Secretariats,

**Representatives of Basin Water Offices, Water Supply and Sanitation
Authorities and Local Government Authorities,**

**Representatives from Development Partners, Non Government Organizations
and Civil Society Organizations,**

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure today to have this opportunity to address this Joint Water Sector Review meeting. The continued development of the water sector remains a top priority for the Government and it is reassuring to be able to observe here the level of support that the Government enjoys from civil society organizations, the private sector and our Development Partners. Achieving Tanzania's Development Vision 2025, of universal access to safe water in urban areas and 90% coverage in rural areas, is a major challenge and not one that the Government could achieve without the committed support of people like you and the people you work with. This meeting is an opportunity to reflect on our efforts over the last year. To ask what worked well? What challenges did we face? And most importantly, how are we going to rise to challenges? It is also an opportunity to listen. I look forward

therefore to learning how the Ministry and all of us can do better and, of course, on hearing about what we have been able to achieve thus far.

I urge all participants to contribute their valuable experience and ideas within the framework of a constructive and frank dialogue. I am sure that everybody in this room desires that the water sector should perform better. For it to do so, we all need to work hand in hand and move in the same direction. This forum provides an opportunity for us to listen to each other, in order to reach a consensus on the way forward.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In order to move forward we need to know where we stand and the guidelines of the road ahead. With regard to the last point, Tanzania now has in place a Water Sector Policy, a National Water Sector Development Strategy, a Water Sector Development Programme and, since last August, the legislation framework to support the development of the water sector as envisaged. The guidelines are clear. We need to move forward together and with common purpose. Along the way we may discover some obstacles. However, let me assure the participants here today that the Ministry of Water and Irrigation will move quickly to introduce appropriate regulations as may be required. We need to go forward together at an ever increasing pace, to learn and to adjust continuously if we are to achieve our set goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen

You will have received today a copy of the Water Sector Status Report 2009. This report has been prepared by the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to establish our position with regard to our progress and our recent performance in achieving the targets set out in the Water Sector Development Programme. In spite of some delays

in some specific areas, I believe and I can assert here that we are making good progress. We are introducing novel concept of Integrated Water Resource Management, we have redefined the roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (from a provider of services to an enabler and facilitator of development), we have devolved decision making and management responsibilities, we have sought to empower local communities, we are putting in place a capacity development programme and we are backing-up these endeavors with the essential logistics, such as offices, vehicles and equipment.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me dwell a little further on capacity building. In this regard I admit we face capacity constraints at every level. The capacity development framework should in part address these constraints. The framework should ideally cover all sectors and all stakeholders with interest in or related to the water sector, Governmental and non-governmental.

Training is an essential component of capacity development. Yet training alone is unlikely to make a major difference. All of us should have a look at how the tasks we perform could be done better or differently. Self-assessment is not always easy, but knowing one's problem is a major step to solving it. Let us resolve here that in next year's Water Sector Status Report should, among other things, assess how working practices, routines and systems will have changed, hopefully, for the better. If all work more effectively and efficiently we can maximize the use of scarce resources and deliver better and more reliable water and sanitation services.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am informed that Tanzania's Water Sector Development Programme is perhaps the largest in Africa. Yet the resources available and committed are still only a fraction of the requirement. During the coming months the Government will be undertaking a strategic planning exercise to identify the volume of funding needed to deliver the targets that Tanzania is committed to achieve.

I expect that the cost of achieving our targets will exceed many times the financial capacity of the Government and of our Development Partners. We need therefore to begin to look at other innovative options to finance the water sector. The Government of course recognizes the social cost of water and the need to protect the poor and vulnerable. Yet the nation cannot afford to continue producing and distributing clean water only to lose most of it as non-revenue water or to provide it at a financial loss in quantities well above that which can be reasonably needed. The Government will therefore, be looking at improving overall performance, reducing waste and introducing progressive water tariffs in addition to identifying new financing mechanisms.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Energy and Water Utilities Regulator has a key role to play in encouraging improved performance and in identifying which investments provide the highest rate of return. I therefore look forward, as many of you must, to their "Annual Report on the Performance and Capacity of the Commercialized Urban Water Sector" to be published this coming January. This report should guide the development of the urban water supply sub-sector in the short and medium term towards full cost

recovery, in order to allow Government to focus its resources more in the rural areas and in water resources management.

Ladies and Gentlemen

With regard to the situation of water supply in rural areas, it is of considerable concern to the Government that recent figures, from the Household Budget Survey carried out in 2007 by the National Bureau of Statistics seem to suggest that coverage may be less than that indicated by the internationally accepted practice of calculating coverage on the basis of average users per water point constructed. The Household Budget Survey statistics indicate that service coverage in the rural areas is 42 percent while the Ministry's figure is 57.1 percent. I am informed that the difference between the two arises from the methodologies applied in data collection whereby, the Household Budget survey has used periodic surveys by sampling methodology while the Ministry uses routine data on the water supply services infrastructure development as collected annually from the Local Government Authorities. Also, high population growth rate coupled with unsustainability of many water supply projects in the country has contributed much to the variation of the service coverage levels.

It is for this reason that my Ministry has commissioned a national water point mapping exercise that links people to functioning water facilities. This exercise should provide the Local Government Authorities with an accurate assessment not of the approximate coverage, but the actual updated figures.

The targets and commitments set by the Government for the rural water sector remain unaltered and if the actual coverage is indeed lower than that previously believed when these commitments were made, then the Government is prepared to increase its effort over the coming years in order to achieve its Vision 2025.

Ladies and Gentlemen

This fiscal year (2009/2010) works to construct water supply schemes in 1,320 villages will start. This is an unprecedented effort in the rural water sector. Upon successful implementation, 4 million people – over 10% of the population of the entire country, should benefit from the endeavor.

Equity issues, in line with the TAWASANET recommendations, will be addressed within the district water and sanitation development plans currently under preparation. I am also requesting the Local Government Authorities to pay particular attention to the question of sustainability. If actual coverage rates today in the rural areas are lower than the figures used by the Ministry then scheme failure, rather than errors in the methodology, is the most likely cause for this discrepancy.

The Government will initiate a program for the rehabilitation of existing water schemes once the results from the water point mapping exercise are available. At the same time however, it is vital that lessons should be learned from the past and that earlier shortcomings in the management of rural water schemes should also be addressed. The issue of sustainability of great importance for the water schemes being implemented under Phase 1 of the Water Sector Development Programme.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I have talked at length about the water sector but we must also remember that water supply and sanitation are inexorably linked. Few of the benefits that are offered by a water scheme can be fully realized if that water is contaminated or if poor hygiene practice make it a vehicle for disease transmission.

For this reason, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation together with the Ministries of Health and Social Welfare and Education and Vocational Training and the PMO-

RALG are working together to define their respective roles and responsibilities as we finalise the National Sanitation Policy. We need to find more effective means to promote the safe disposal of excreta and we need to do it on a massive scale. Sanitation is more than just excreta disposal; it is about self-esteem, personal dignity and humanity. So many people in the country are unable to perform their daily routines in private and without posing an immediate danger to the wellbeing of their neighbors.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am particularly concerned with the status of sanitation in schools. Initial findings from the on-going school sanitation mapping exercise suggest that the situation may be very far off the universal targets set for this important area in the lives of our children. This situation is of course especially worse for young women who require more privacy. It seems to me that releasing these young women from the burden of water carrying only to then deny them access to an education simply because there is no toilet in their school is an antithesis to development. I look forward therefore to receiving the mapping report and the recommendations of the working group on school WASH to learn how we can turn this situation around. I am committed to working with the Minister of Education and Vocational Training and the Minister of Health and Social Welfare on this subject as a matter of urgency.

Ladies and Gentlemen

MKUKUTA is under review and the increased emphasis on growth can be expected to place an even greater demand on our water resources. The introduction of Integrated Water Resources Management is therefore both appropriate and timely. Climate change and pollution are both threats to our most precious natural resource and the Government is taking measures to both actively protect as well as to mitigate

the impact of climate change, so that the maximum benefit can be derived from the efficient and effective use of all national water resources. I urge you to form a working group on vulnerability and adaptation of the water sector in Tanzania to climate change. Only then can we seem to be aware or even mindful of the process towards Copenhagen and beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I have covered many areas in my speech to you today, however within each area there is still a great deal of detail that needs to be worked out. The Ministry of Water and Irrigation recognizes that it also has to improve its performance. Priority areas for change will be outlined in our undertakings for the current fiscal year. I trust that with your support we will be able to exceed expectations. I also strongly believe that together we can realize the full potential of our country's water resources and its people.

Since February, 2008 when I was appointed as the Minister responsible for Water, I have been able to visit forty nine (49) Districts in seventeen (17) Regions in Tanzania Mainland. The purpose of the visits has been to make closer monitoring of the Water Sector Development Programme (WSDP) implementation. I am pleased and honored to have had the opportunity to address the Joint Water Sector Review for two years in succession.

Thank you for your attention and in anticipation of your support over the coming days and year.

Water is Life, Sanitation is Humanity