

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY HON. PROF. MARK J.  
MWANDOSYA (MP), MINISTER FOR WATER AND  
IRRIGATION, AT THE OPENING OF THE MEETING OF  
ZAMBEZI MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR WATER  
AFFAIRS, AT NSSF COMMERCIAL COMPLEX, MWANZA,  
ON 5<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2008**

**Honourable Ministers,  
Representatives of SADC,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I am very much delighted to welcome you all to the first meeting of the Zambezi Ministers for Water Affairs, being held in the City of Mwanza, Tanzania. This is a historic event for the country. Let me on behalf of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania welcome all the delegates, whom we share not only the Zambezi River, but also a long history of close friendship amongst our countries. Let me also convey my profound appreciation to the SADC Secretariat for organizing this very important meeting.

Their untiring efforts have enabled us to gather here in Mwanza today to deliberate on issues revolving around the Zambezi River Basin water resources.

It is my sincere belief that due to the hospitality of its residents and its location on the shores of Lake Victoria, our choice of the City of Mwanza was a good one.

**Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

The close and brotherly relations amongst our countries have been maintained at both the political and the economic levels for a long time. This relationship has grown steadily in scope and strength over the years. Recent developments that demonstrate our friendship are the ZAMCOM Agreement, establishment of the National Steering Committees for Project ZACPRO 6 – Phase 2, development of the Integrated Water Resources Development and Management Strategy for the Zambezi Basin,

The establishment of an Interim ZAMCOM Secretariat is a clear determination of the riparian countries to consolidate their

cooperation in the development of the basin's water resources which are critical to the social and economic development of our nations. We all have high expectations regarding what this cooperation and joint development of the Zambezi River Basin's resources will bring to the communities in the Basin.

**Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

This meeting will discuss various issues in the Zambezi Basin including the status of Ratification of ZAMCOM, progress on the establishment of a ZAMCOM Interim Secretariat, the status of ZAMCOM and ZACPRO 6.2 beyond April 2009 and report on initiatives in the Zambezi Basin. Deliberations on these will contribute to the water resources development and management in the Zambezi riparian states.

**Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

No doubt the Zambezi Basin has considerable potential of water resources that can make great difference to our economic growth and development.

However, this great potential is being threatened by natural phenomena and human factors including: exceptionally variable and unpredictable rainfall which impacts on river flows, freshwater ecosystems and groundwater levels, inadequate human and institutional capacity for developing and managing the available water resources, failure to invest adequately in water resources monitoring networks and water infrastructures and acute shortage of financial resources.

**Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

This has serious implications on any attempt to make meaningful plans for sustainable development of the resources and thus contribute to socio-economic development of our countries. In this connection, therefore, one of the problems to be dealt with in addressing these challenges include capacity building, rehabilitation

of monitoring networks to generate data needed for assessment and apportionment of water to control competing uses. There is also, the need to generate necessary information in support of policy development and implementation. Regional cooperation on water issues should be an integral part of national and regional water policies and related technical programmes and projects. Zambezi riparian states need to commit themselves to the exchange of hydrological forecasts and timely warnings on disasters and for agricultural.

**Honourable Ministers,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Since the Zambezi is a transboundary river shared by our riparian countries, we have a shared responsibility to ensure the sustainability of its resources so that we may continue to enjoy the benefits of its use. Integrated water resources management should be the guiding principle for achieving not only the sustainability of the Zambezi's resources, but also regional integration, economic growth and social development in the Basin.

Key objectives of developing and using the Basin's resources should be poverty reduction, and increased food security.

The Zambezi River is still virtually in its pristine state with immense development potential which has yet to be utilised. Any uncoordinated or uncontrolled human activity could jeopardize this potential. The establishment of ZAMCOM is thus very timely and is within the framework of the SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses to which the Zambezi riparian states are parties to.

**Honourable Ministers,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

In conclusion, let me reiterate the commitment of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to the continuation and further strengthening of the brotherly relations amongst our countries. This meeting and the issues and projects that will be discussed are an important part of the process of pursuing that commitment.

**Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Let me end by thanking you, for your attendance, as well as SADC and the local organizing committee for the hard work they put into organizing this event. It is now my pleasure and honour to declare that this meeting is open.

**Thank you for your kind attention.**