

OPENING REMARKS BY THE HON. MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AT THE YOUNG WATER PROFESSIONALS WORKSHOP

12th December 2011

The Hon. Deputy Minister, South African Ministry of Water

The IWA Director for Africa

The AfWA president,

Representatives of Donor Partners

The Chairperson Young Water Professionals

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with honor and gratitude that I welcome you all to the **Young Water Professionals Conference**.

I wish to thank the organisers of the conference for bringing the young professionals who are the future leaders. The youth hold the mantle for sustainable development and economic emancipation

As you may be aware, statistics shows that the biggest percentage of the population is the youth. Therefore the Uganda Government policy as enshrined in the National Development Plan is geared towards youth empowerment and development.

This has been done through the Universal Primary Education and Universal Secondary Education programmes, and the enactment of a youth employment policy.

This background is to underscore the importance Government attaches to the young generation.

Coming back to conference, we find that the sustainable provision of water and sanitation services is key to the development of our countries, and this is why the young professionals will indeed have to play a crucial role in this endeavour.

As you may be aware, the water and sanitation challenges are anchored around the following generic issues that include.

- Climatic change
- Poor access to water
- Low provision of sanitation services
- Insufficient funding
- Inequitable services to the poor

This calls for concerted efforts towards addressing these challenges. We therefore look forward for innovative ideas from you the youth on how these challenges can be overcome.

On this note, I wish to thank all the coordinators of the Young Water Professionals across the Continent for championing this noble cause. I call upon all delegates present to ensure that the Young Water Professionals movements are replicated in all countries across the continent. Only then shall we ensure that collective responsibility towards sustainable water delivery is achieved. The message is to empower the young professionals take a pivotal role in ensuring sustainable service delivery not only in the water sector but in all developmental initiatives.

Let me now take this opportunity to thank the organisers of this conference for the work that has been done. In particular, I wish to thank the African Water Association (AfWA) and International Water

Association for supporting this conference. Indeed you have set the ball rolling in empowering the youth to take effective charge of ensuring sustainable water service delivery. I strongly believe the African Water Academy will go a long way in designing appropriate programmes that empower the young water professionals and ensuring water for tomorrow is a collective responsibility.

I wish also to thank the host of this Conference, the National Water and Sewerage Corporation for organising this conference which I am confident will be a success.

To our foreign participants, we in Uganda are proud that the NWSC is one of our flag bearers and beacon of hope for the national utilities by virtue of their exemplary performance and innovative spirit. Now that we have this academy in place, I invite you all to benchmark your activities with the Corporation and make effective use of this academy. Enriched capacity building programmes have been designed to empower all water practitioners in ensuring effective service delivery.

With these few remarks, I now take the honour and privilege to wish all of you fruitful deliberations during the Young Water Professionals conference.

Thank you

For God and My Country