



**water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**OPENING ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF WATER AND  
SANITATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA (RSA) MRS N P  
MOKONYANE TO THE 4<sup>TH</sup> FORUM OF THE PARTIES AT THE OCCASION OF THE  
ORANGE SENQU RIVER COMMISSION MINISTERIAL MEETING**

**16 NOVEMBER 2017**

**KASANE, REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

Honourable Prince Maele, Minister of Land Management, Water and  
Sanitation Services of the Republic of Botswana our host;

Honourable Samonyane Ntsekele, Minister of Water of the Kingdom of Lesotho;

Honourable John Mutorwa, Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry of the  
Republic of Namibia;

ORASECOM Executive Secretary, Mr Lenka Thamae

Representative of the SADC Executive Secretary, Mr Phera Ramoeli

Senior Officials Present;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

All Protocols Observed.

It is with humility and honour that I greet you all at this occasion where we are continuing to drive, shape and contribute to ORASECOM's programme of Cooperation and Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM).

Let me also express my profound appreciation for the gracious hospitality afforded to me and my delegation since our arrival in the panoramic town of Kasane. This demonstrates how we share borders and a very glorious history as the four nations.

**“ONE RIVER, FOUR NATIONS”, is our slogan.** Therefore, our cooperation is driven by our common vision of contributing to water security in our countries and to further position water as a driver for industrialisation and regional economic integration in Southern Africa. We are gathered here to move forward as a collective of four governments, to ensure that the people of our respective countries access basic services as a legitimate right, duly and correctly enshrined in our respective Constitutions.

Therefore, we should continue to dedicate our work in ensuring that our people benefit from our shared vision of water security as the four nations. To mention few examples:

1. The work that we do as a collective on the Joint Study Management Committee on planning and implementation for the provision of water to Botswana from the Lesotho Highlands, whilst also taking care of the needs of Lesotho and South Africa en-route, demonstrates our vision of benefiting our ordinary communities.
2. Cooperation and partnership with Lesotho on the Phase 2 of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, and
3. The Joint Study between South Africa and Namibia on the Feasibility Study of a dam at Vioolsdrift/ Noordoewer will leave an indelible mark and footprint of ORASECOM's spirit of cooperation and togetherness.

Our solid ORASECOM relationship was founded on very strong foundations in the year 2000, which is now 17 (seventeen) years. Judging from the previous progress reports, it indeed continues to bear fruits since its existence. In the process, ORASECOM has also been rated among the best river basin organisation in the world.

We noted with satisfaction progress made by ORASECOM and we are also delighted that the Commission's work is translating into tangible results. We further urge the team to continue to develop and implement the necessary interventions and actions which will uplift our people out of poverty, as well as contributing towards regional economic development. We also request the team to strengthen the rules of engagement in managing the shared resources. In this regard, we continue to urge the legal task team to resolve outstanding issues in finalising the ORASECOM agreement.

Financial resources are a key to our cooperation. We appreciate the commitment demonstrated by all in ensuring that the ORASECOM is sustained through regular country contributions. The Secretariat should continue to work on finding a suitable funding model which will ensure that ORASECOM is sustained.

The strategic cooperation amongst our four countries continues to give our respective people hope. **Our cooperation must rope in industry partners that benefit from the Orange/Senqu River including the ordinary communities.** Therefore, the Secretariat must continue to work to mobilise industry partners to be part of our vision in the development and protection of this very critical River System's water resources and to forge partnerships in investing in our ORASECOM linked infrastructure development programmes.

Programme Director, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am looking forward to fruitful deliberations during this session and many more like these in the future.

I Thank You  
Baie Dankie  
Ngiyabonga  
Ke a Leboga  
Pula! Pula! Pula!!!