

REMARKS BY Hon. DAVID MAHLOBO MP,

Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Republic of South Africa

G20 Deputy Ministers of Water Virtual G20 TASK FORCE ON WATER” Meeting

Host: Saudi Arabia, 2020

DATE: 13 MAY 2020

**HE Deputy Minister of Water, Environment and Agriculture - the
Chairperson and Host of the G20 Deputy Ministers Meeting,
Dr Abdulaziz Al-Shaibani**

Your Excellences, Deputy Ministers of Water of G20 countries

Representatives of UN Water, OECD, EU

Delegates, Comrades and Friends in the Water Family

1. Let me first take this opportunity to convey the warm greetings from, His Excellency President, Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa and the people of South Africa, and extend the same sentiments on behalf our continent, Africa in his capacity as the President of the African Union.
2. We are meeting at the time the World is facing the biggest challenge of our time, The Global Pandemic, Covid-19, which threatens the Global Population, and we all know that many lives are already lost.

3. Our leaders are coordinating resources and responses to curb the scourge of the pandemic. His Excellency President Ramaphosa, as the Chair of the African union has been working with other leaders and partners in Africa and the World on interventions that could reduce the impact of Covid-19 in the continent.
4. Due to population growth, urbanization, climate change, migration and economic growth, over the last three decades, we have witnessed, significant decline in the available quantity and quality of water resources with the untold negative impacts on health, environment and economic prospects, of many nations.
5. Many countries have serious challenges of water scarcity, especially in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, in particular SADC , where the rainfall patterns are nearly 50% lower than the World average.
6. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal(SDG) 6 on Water and Sanitation will not be met by many countries, especially in Africa, unless we collaborate at a global level as directed by SDG-17 imperatives on partnerships.
7. The wellbeing of the Human Society through ages has been dependent on secure sources of water; conversely, its absence has seen the demise of often well-established societies.
8. Similarly, where different societies, depend on water from a common source, this will result in competition as especially in times of scarcity and this results in untold conflicts, however in SADC, and other parts of Africa, we have demonstrated the power of cooperation, with little evidence of armed conflict.

9. This covid-19 that requires hygienic standards has exposed that more than the 25% of the world population has a water crisis, subjected to extreme poverty and inequality.

10. The G20 Task Force is welcomed as part of the High Level Cooperation and has the leverage to place the matter of Water at the Apex of UNGA. This will give us the aligned global action.

11. Our Founding President of our Democracy, Former President, Nelson Mandela said: “Overcoming Poverty is not a task of charity it is an act of justice .Like Slavery and Apartheid, poverty is not natural, it is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by actions of Human beings like us gathered here today Sometimes it falls on the generations to be great. We can be that great Generation”.

12. Finally I will say. “Let the Greatness of this Task Force Blossom”

13. I thank you