

Remarks by the Vice Chair, Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA) on behalf of the GWPSA Board Chair

Eng. Munashe Mvura

**Honourable Ministers,
Your Excellencies,
Honourable Chair of the Global Water Partnership, the GWPO
Executive Secretary and CEO,
Distinguished representatives of Government, Development
Partners, and the Global Water Partnership Network,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is an honour to address you this morning on behalf of Global Water Partnership Southern Africa, and on behalf of our esteemed Chair, His Excellency Dr Jakaya Kikwete, the former President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

His Excellency conveyed his deep regret on being unable to attend this important occasion in person due to other pressing commitments. However, he expressly requested the GWPSA Board Secretariat and our partners here in Namibia to be present and fully engaged, recognising the strategic importance of today's event not only for Namibia, but for the future direction of the Global Water Partnership as a whole.

We are grateful to the Government and people of Namibia for hosting this occasion, and for the confidence demonstrated in positioning Namibia as the home of the Global Water Partnership Organisation. This is a decision that speaks to leadership, trust, and long-term vision.

Today marks more than the signing of a headquarters agreement. It marks a strategic repositioning.

Important to note, in 1996, the first global meeting of the Global Water Partnership was convened here in Namibia. That meeting laid the foundation for a global movement which is built on cooperation, integration, and the recognition that water is central to development outcomes across sectors.

Nearly three decades later, we return not simply to honour history, but to re-anchor global water leadership at a time when water challenges are intensifying, financing gaps are widening, and delivery must accelerate. For Southern Africa, this moment is deeply historic and significant.

GWPSA has worked consistently to translate global principles into regional and national action supporting countries to strengthen governance, manage shared waters, respond to climate risk, and increasingly, to drive investment. Within the Southern African Development Community region, we work with regional institutions and Member States to strengthen transboundary water governance and align water priorities with regional development and investment frameworks.

Our focus is clear: moving from policy to delivery supporting bankable programmes, coordinated financing, and practical implementation pathways that enable water to underpin resilience, economic growth, and regional integration.

Here in Namibia, this approach is evident through our engagement in the Kunene and Cuvelai basins, under the CUVKUN programme, implemented with the support of the United Nations Development Programme and the Global Environment Facility. This work strengthens transboundary cooperation, builds institutional resilience, and supports climate-responsive water management in one of the region's most sensitive and strategic shared systems.

This is the kind of work that goes to the heart of what the GWP Network must increasingly deliver: practical transboundary cooperation; strong, capable institutions; and investment-ready pathways that respond to real risks faced by communities and economies.

Anchoring the Global Water Partnership Organisation in Namibia strengthens the link between global strategy and regional delivery. It reinforces the principle that solutions must be shaped close to where water insecurity is most acute, while remaining globally connected and coordinated.

It also sends a clear signal: that the Global South is not peripheral to global water leadership; that it is central to shaping priorities, mobilising investment, and delivering results aligned with SDG 6 and Africa's Water Vision.

Namibia's hosting of the GWPO creates a platform for deeper cooperation, stronger partnerships, and a renewed focus on implementation bridging ambition with action.

As GWPSA, we see this moment as an opportunity to strengthen alignment across the Network, elevate regional experience into global strategy, and accelerate progress where it matters most.

In closing, we acknowledge and commend the leadership being provided by GWPO during this transformative period. As a region, we stand firmly supportive and engaged, and we welcome the continued evolution and strengthening of our organisation. Let this occasion be remembered not only for where it took place, but for what it set in motion: a more connected, more grounded, and more delivery-focused Global Water Partnership. I thank you.