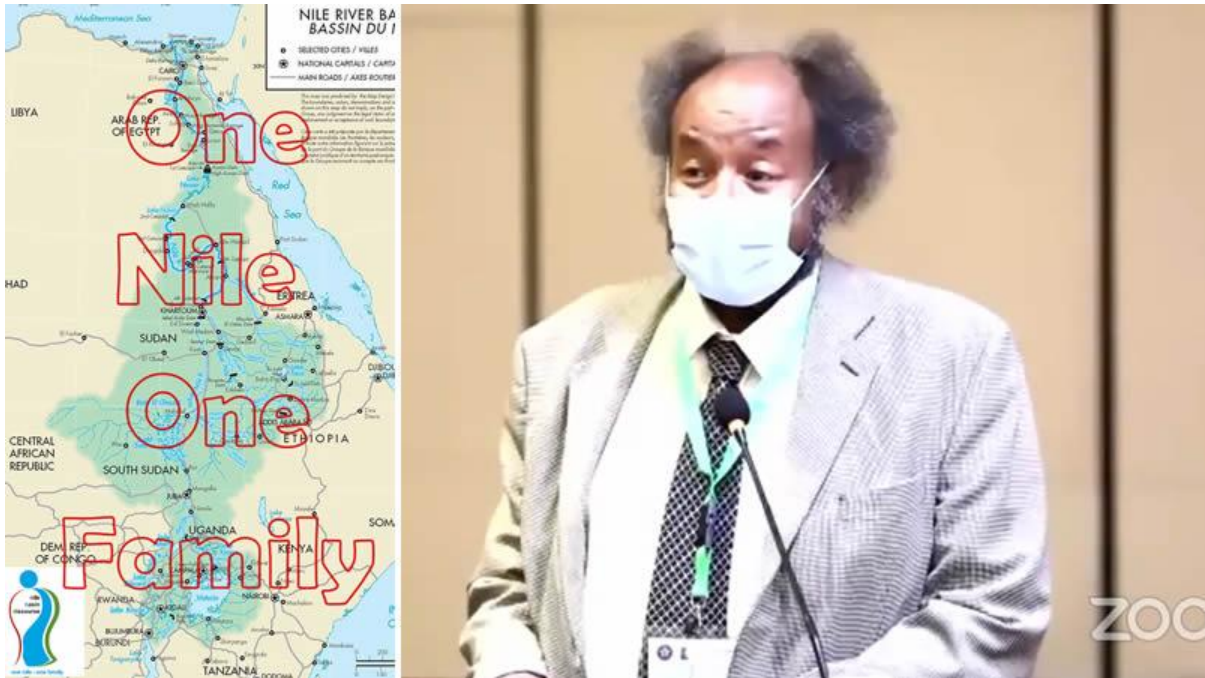




**REMARKS BY NBD BOARD CHAIR, PROF MUAWIA HAMID SHADDAD AT NBDF 2021, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**



*Good afternoon. Allow me to present a statement from NBD; a twin sister of the NBI. We have more than 620 member organizations in the ten countries of the Nile Basin and we have been there from the very beginning. We were there when NBI went to the first donor conference in which NBI got promises of 500 million dollars. So please allow me to deliver the statement.*

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***Distinguished ministers,  
Executive director,  
Ambassadors,  
TACS and Participants at NBDF 2021,***

On behalf of Nile Basin Discourse and on my own behalf, allow me to express my deep pleasure of being part of the closing days of Nile Basin Development forum of 2021. I say Thank you to NBI and to the Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for hosting the historical NBDF 2021.

Discussions at this NBDF which has its theme: ***Rethinking Regional Investments in The Nile Basin***", have been informative and have brought up pertinent issues for cooperative development. This theme is supported by 6 subthemes of:

- Water security
- Energy security
- Food security
- Environmental sustainability
- Climate change adaptation
- And trans-boundary water governance

The subthemes are important to the stakeholders of the Nile, therefore important to NBD. A number of messages have come out of the virtual webinars that ran for a number of weeks in addition to physical meetings of yesterday and today.

NBD sees many aspects of working together in all key messages that have been virtually produced. However, I would like to highlight a few of these messages that hopefully will be on the priority list for a follow up action of our two organizations of NBD and NBI.

The first priority that I would like to appoint is:

1. **Destruction of environment and effect to the Nile Riparian communities across the basin.** The general destruction of the environment and ecosystem, watershed and pollution of services and ground water is occurring at an increasing rate. This is threatening the sustainability of ecosystems; and many goods and services derived from the natural resources base that the Nile Riparian communities are depending upon for their sustenance and economic development.

2. **Water resources Data and information:**

NBD is complementing NBI with Citizen Data. The demand for timely and accurate water resources data and information to support strategic and operation in decision making and support the identification and design of national and regional water infrastructure is on the increase. The increase in demand is driven by multiple factors including socioeconomic development, and the impact of global climate change which are manifesting strongly in the region

3. **Benefit sharing amongst Nile Riparian Communities:**

The Nile River is an international water course that traverses the territories of eleven countries. This great river needs to be cooperatively managed to ensure that its water and

related Natural resources are protected and sustainably utilized, and that socioeconomic benefits arising from the river are equitably shared amongst Nile Riparian Communities

**4. Stakeholder Participation and engendering the Nile:**

Stakeholder participation notable achievements have been made by NBI and NBI Discourse in stakeholder involvement but further work is needed to bridge the gap between theory and practice; and even stakeholder participation and gender mainstreaming in NBI investments activities. Participants further observed that community engagement and people to people exchange contribute to confidence and trust building and need to further be supported and nurtured in the basin.

**5. Building Trust:** The role of non-state actors is to fight against backdrop of low level of trust among high level state actors. Nile countries need support of a multi-track of water diplomacy; that they include the role of non-state actors to reduce obstacles to collective actions and positively influence ongoing negotiations.

**6. Dialogue platforms and giving voice to ordinary people of the basin:**

Dialogue, through various platforms and fora, is a key ingredient in trust building and reaching consensus on solutions to ongoing challenges in the Nile region. Dialogue therefore, needs to be supported by NBI and development partners. Dialogue must not be restricted to exchange between Government officials and experts, but must broadly encompass and give a voice to ordinary people of the basin as well as media and technical practitioners.

**7. Scientists, researchers and technology sector**

Nile benefits sharing; regional institutional arrangements inclusive of state and non-state actors to move from theory to practice in Regional Nile benefits sharing. There is a need for regional institutional arrangements that is inclusive of state and non-state actors and stakeholders at all levels and based on pool/ basket of benefits of multi- purpose joint development with evidence-based decision-making that considers the related course and possible trade offer.

In conclusion, I again, congratulate Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and NBI for a successful NBDF 2021 and I would like to affirm that NBD stands with NBI. I would like us to continue our collaborative efforts to the engagement of the livelihoods of the Nile communities.

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***I would like for one minute to add my own reflections from yesterday and today and I hope you will bear with me for these reflections:***

***My reflections:***

***As I said earlier, I have been engaged in the Nile Basin Initiative from start and also civil society and NBD; and earlier I said we were part of the first donor meeting of the Nile Basin Initiative where we were going from donor to donor telling them this Shared Vision is also shared by all NBD civil society organizations. We will be working together for the Nile basin. You must support NBI. I still remember some of people who were there.***

***Unfortunately, I am a bit sad and disappointed.***

***So much efforts, so much energy, so much Nile basin brains, all over the last some 20 years ago and we still way back. Some say we are not even on track / road to achieve visions of both NBI and NBD.***

***We are not even near the dream of achieving sustainable development and massive investments that were supposed to address poverty, water and food security, peace, health and education, climate change, addressing other water resources in the basin, governance, shared benefits... the list is long.***

***We need billions. We need billions and we are getting survival and little amounts. Look even the projects that are coming from World Bank; it's 30 million. This reminds me of NEPAD Syndrome. You know, when NEPAD started, they were talking over 64 billion a year. It got nowhere.***

***Many reasons we were given yesterday and today: Some say it's up somewhere. All these projects, all these ideas are up there in the sky and need to be on the ground to the people of the Nile. Some say no political will; some say: no trust, no cooperation among the riparian countries; some say we will need all of the people of the Nile not just the governments to address the issue. It is clear; we have not been able to convince the world to come with investment of billions. Not the 20 million here and 30 million or 10 million there we are getting.***

***Maybe we need to think more out of the box.***

***Thank you very much.***