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PRESS RELEASE

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“Together, we will win!”

Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat welcomes Eng. Sylvester Anthony Matemu as Executive Director

ENTEBBE, Uganda – Eng. Sylvester Anthony Matemu officially began his two-year term of office as the Executive Director of the NBI Secretariat. The handover ceremony was held today at the NBI Secretariat office in Entebbe.

From the United Republic of Tanzania, Eng. Matemu brings to the NBI Secretariat an extensive record in the public sector, which covers a period of 38 years. He served in different capacities including chairpersonship of various Technical Advisory Committees at national, regional, and international levels; board member of various water-related institutions; and advisory roles to ministers responsible for water, higher education, communication, science, and technology. He has vast experience in international and national transboundary water management including water law. Eng. Matemu replaces Professor Seifeldin Hamad Abdalla, from The Sudan.

In his inaugural remarks as Executive Director, Eng. Matemu expressed his appreciation for the warm welcome he has received upon his arrival in Uganda. He highlighted, “Together, we will win”, emphasising that the Secretariat, together with its Development Partners and friends, “need to work hard and diligently in order to meet the expectations of the people of the eleven countries.” He also thanked the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for the trust that was placed in him and pledged to work hard to further strengthen the cooperation among NBI Member States.

The handover event was witnessed by Dr. Florence Adongo, the Director of the Directorate of Water Resources Management at the Ministry of Water and Environment (Uganda) in her capacity as the Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) member for Uganda, which is the host country of the NBI Secretariat. Dr. Adongo highlighted that the term of office for the Executive Director of the NBI Secretariat is for two years and is on a rotational basis upon nomination by Nile Basin Member States. She expressed her gratitude to Professor Seifeldin Hamad Abdalla noting his significant contribution to the growth of the institution, “despite the challenges of COVID-19 that plagued his term.”

Professor Seifeldin Hamad Abdalla, on his part, expressed gratitude to the member states of NBI and their continued commitment to the cooperation. He also thanked the staff of NBI for their teamwork and dedication to the delivery of NBI goals. He also appreciated friends of the Nile and the Development Partners, for their continued support to the cooperation.

Dr. Malte Grossmann, the Head of Projects at GIZ, which provides support to transboundary cooperation in the Nile Basin and representing NBI Development Partners, thanked Professor Seif for his leadership at NBI and congratulated Eng. Matemu upon his new role. He pledged continued support for NBI’s program work in enhancing cooperation on the Nile.

The handover ceremony was marked by Eng. Matemu and Professor Abdalla signing a handover report.

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About Nile Basin Initiative

The Nile Basin Initiative is a regional inter-governmental partnership launched by the Nile Basin countries on February 22, 1999, to manage and develop the shared Nile Basin water and related resources in a cooperative manner, share substantial socio-economic benefits, and promote regional peace and security. There are 10 NBI Member States: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. Eritrea participates as an observer.

The setup of NBI is informed by the principle of subsidiarity that matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralised competent authority; hence, the three NBI Centres: A Regional Secretariat (Nile-SEC) based in Entebbe, Uganda is the executive arm responsible for the overall corporate direction. Two subsidiary Action Programs – the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program (ENSAP) and Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP) – are responsible for preparing trans-boundary investment projects aimed at contributing to energy, food and water security in the Nile Basin.