



Talking Points

H.E. Mahmoud Ali YOUSOUF

Chairperson of the African Union Commission

For the HIGH-LEVEL LEADERS SESSION ON WATER INVESTMENTS

“ Water for people and prosperity, through cooperation and Investment in Water and Sanitation”

15 February 2026, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
07:30am – 09:00am (AUC Multipurpose Hall)

(Protocol To Be Confirmed)

- ✓ Excellency **Cyril Ramaphosa**, President of the Republic of **South Africa**,
- ✓ Excellency **Hakainde Hichilema**, President of the Republic of **Zambia**,
- ✓ Excellency **Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah**, President of the Republic of **Namibia**,
- ✓ Excellency **Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete**, Former President of the United Republic of **Tanzania** and Alternate Co-Chair of the AU-AIP High-Level Panel,
- ✓ Excellencies, Representatives of Heads of State and Government,
- ✓ Excellencies, Ministers responsible for Water and Sanitation,
- ✓ Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
- ✓ Distinguished Representatives of Development Partners,
- ✓ Representatives of International and Continental Organizations,
- ✓ Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It gives me a great honour to make this Keynote Statement on accelerating readiness for climate resilient water investments in Africa.
2. Water investment is a catalyst for transformation. It strengthens food security; drives industrial growth; reduces healthcare costs; and it creates jobs for the growing population.
3. However, to meet the SDG 6 Targets , we have to close an estimated investment gap of about US\$ 30 Billion annually.
4. Now, allow me to share with you what the African Union Commission, AUC is doing in terms of accelerating readiness for climate resilient water investments in Africa.
5. The AUC is facilitating investment in water and sanitation through working with the Member States. Some of the areas of support that AUC has been providing are:

First, **providing a continental policy framework and approach.** For example, today we are launching the Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy which is aligned with our Agenda 2063, linking water investment with national development plans.

The Continental Africa Water Investment Program (AIP) is also providing a framework on how to mobilise US\$ 30 billion per year for investment in the water and sanitation sector to meet SDG 6 targets.

The Africa Guideline for Developing National Climate Resilient Water Investment Program is providing a common approach and guidance to Member States in developing their national water investment programs, project pipelines and financing strategies. I am happy to report to you, Excellencies, that we are also launching the Guideline in this High-Level Event.

Second, we are strengthening national capacity to prepare investment programs and project pipelines to access finance, including climate finance. Regarding climate finance, the AUC has a program currently covering 15 Member States, in strengthening capacities to access climate finance for water projects with financial support from the Green Climate Fund (GCF). We organise Africa regional trainings on developing water investment program and preparing investment project with focus on climate finance. What we are doing is not just one or two regional trainings, we are aiming at a long-term capacity development through a series of trainings

both at national and regional level, and also providing technical support for project preparation.

Third, **Continental Knowledge Platform**. We have developed an African Continental Knowledge Platform to facilitate sharing of knowledge and lessons, facilitate dialogues, and facilitate investment through providing platforms to promote investment projects such as the one that was organised during the Africa Water Investment Summit in South Africa last year.

Fourth, **Continental tracking and reporting system**. The AIP-PIDA Water Investment Scorecard is a continental tool for tracking investment in water and sanitation towards bridging the huge water investment gap in Africa. I am happy to report to you, Excellencies, that we are also launching the First Africa Water Investment Outlook Report in this High-Level Event.

Fifth, **Mobilize political will and partnership**. Excellencies let me express my appreciation to our African Leaders for elevating the water and sanitation agenda at the highest political level. This is demonstrated by dedicating the 2026 African Union Theme of the Year on water and sanitation ***“Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and Safe Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063.”***

6. In summary we see our main role on the side of generating demand for investment working with the project owners, Member States. We also work with the actors on the supply side of investment, mainly our global and continental financiers and investors.
7. We value partnership and collaboration between all stakeholders towards achieving one shared goal of mobilizing US\$ 30 billion per year for 2030 SDG Targets on water and sanitation.
8. The African Union Commission is committed to strengthening governance frameworks for water security. We will align investments with continental strategies, including the new Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy, and with the AU Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. The time to act is now. By investing in water, we invest in Africa's future. Let us seize this moment to scale up commitments, forge partnerships, and unlock the potential of Africa's water resources for generations to come.

Thank you.