

INAUGURATION OF GOVERNING BOARD OF THE WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION

12 OCTOBER 2021

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

BY

HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR SANITATION AND WATER RESOURCES

HON. CECILIA ABENA DAPAAH

Chairman and Members of the Commission

Invited Guests

Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentleman

I wish to express my deep satisfaction that the appointment and inauguration of the Governing Board of the Water Resources Commission has come off.

Indeed, the reconstitution of the Commission pursuant to the Water Resources Commission Act 522 of 1996 has come at an opportune time when the issues confronting the water sector, particularly with regards to the deterioration of the quality of our water resources, have become critical and of immense national concern. As a result, the Commission's mandate to regulate and manage the country's water resources is of paramount importance to the government and informs why we have chosen these distinguished citizens to run the affairs of the Water Resources Commission as Chairman and Members.

Ladies and Gentleman, I wish to take this opportunity to share a few thoughts on some pertinent issues that need attention as you assume your positions as the Governing Board of the Water Resources Commission.

Government is seeking to ensure that all citizens have the water they need to lead healthy, productive and happy lives. Therefore, the attention is to undertake a 'Water for All Programme' through sustainable policies and actions that take account of ecological

systems to reduce pollution; promote water use efficiency; strengthen decentralised management organisations; improve information and knowledge base; and intensify education and awareness, and monitoring.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am under no illusion that these actions can and should be fulfilled. Most importantly, I entreat you to guide approaches towards building consensus through effective participation among all users and managers of our water resources. The participation should prompt significant changes in attitudes by raising awareness of people through interactions among the stakeholders, particularly NGOs and traditional authorities whose activities should be positively recognised and encouraged.

Distinguished Chairman and Members, I am aware that the Water Resources Commission operates through decentralised management and coordinating bodies in the form of River Basin offices with their respective management boards, which are making significant impacts. However, the operations of these management boards should earnestly be rekindled and broadened to tackle the myriad problems facing our major river basins. I am also hopeful that you would effectively guide the development of Legislative Instruments on Buffer Zones and Pollution Control as well as the implementation of existing regulations and policies such as the Buffer Zone policy to assist in restoring, and maintaining the ecological integrity of our water bodies and to provide socio-economic benefits to local communities.

Your duties also call for promoting international cooperation to improve relationship with our riparian neighbours. In this regard, your invaluable advice would be of essence for ensuring the sustained management and equitable sharing of the benefits of our transboundary surface and ground water resources.

Ladies and Gentlemen, these actions cannot be effectively carried out without a well running organisation. Issues related to the work environment and welfare that will boost commitment and job satisfaction as well as enhance the existing good working relations with all stakeholders in the water sector should not be ignored. However, you should be mindful of and avoid unhealthy interventions in the day-to-day administration of the Commission.

Your eventual goal at the end of your term of office should be to leave a legacy of a satisfactory and worthwhile organization that is well positioned to effectively and efficiently guide the process of realising the mandate of the Commission as well as the vision and mission of the government.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to remind the Board that these tasks are by no means easy. Your work cannot be over until the entire water crisis that affects the population has been averted and water security is achieved. It is a surmountable task which I am confident that you will accomplish. Fortunately, you have a concerned government, a well-meaning ministry, and other enthusiastic water practitioners to assist and encourage you along the way to success.

I wish to congratulate you all on your appointment and wish you success.

Thank you.