Special Session on Mobilizing Africa
World Water Day Celebration 22 March 2021
"On the road to the 9th World Water Forum
Webinar organized by the Republic of Senegal, the 9th World Water Forum Secretariat and the World Water Council

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Mr. Minister, dear Mr. Serigne Mbaye Thiam, estimated friend of water,

Ladies and Gentlemen Commissioners of the African Union, Official representatives of Afwa, and dear colleagues of the many prestigious African organizations present today, Mr. Executive Secretary of the 9th World Water Forum.

On behalf of the World Water Council, I am pleased to be here with you on this World Water Day and one year before the next World Water Forum.

**Water is essential for Africa's future development.** And for many reasons in Africa, for its survival.

The nomads of the Sahara say "Aman Iman"- water is life. There is the water we need for drinking, but also water for hygiene. We have seen during this pandemic how water associated with soap is the first barrier. **Water is essential to fight against all waterborne diseases, water is essential for food, for education, for energy.** All this is the same fight. And that is why water must be at the center of all our attention, of our thoughts, but above all at the center of all our actions. And this justifies this celebration as
a momentum to say where we are on the road to the 9th world water forum.

All this is an opportunity for Africa, an exceptional chance to put water at the center of public, technical and political action. And to work so that hundreds of women, men and children on African soil have access to essential services, especially water and sanitation.

And where water has often been plundered, we want water to be shared. To share it between Man and Nature, to share it between today and tomorrow, to share it between rain and drought, to share it between domestic and economic uses. And for this, Africa must show all its capacities.

The King of Sardinia in the 19th century, one of the kings of Italy, said "L'Italia fara da sè" and we could say so today transposed to Africa, "Africa fara da sè". The water in Africa will be made on its own.

By sharing innovation first. Innovation that must be shared and not begged for. By creating specifically African financing that is adapted and not granted, which refers to the whole question of priorities and my wording “taps before guns”. It is a question of showing that African governance is accepted.

In short, no solutions from elsewhere should be imposed. And to apply that in the field of water, for example regarding the digital evolution, Africa speaks for itself and by itself.

As the international water community is well aware, the African water community has its own answers for changing the lives of the people in need.

This year and during all the year to come, Africa is the “water-continent” when tomorrow Dakar will be the “water-capital”. Together, with the government of Senegal, with the World Water Council, let us seize this opportunity. Let us break down the walls that today separate communities and sometimes ideas.
Let us create rivers of water that bring people together, that unite, that fertilize our future.

Let the water community in Africa determine its own future. Let it forge its destiny, show the way to water for peace.

Through my speech, the World water council, and with it the entire water community, wishes to send you, on this particular day, a message of respect and consideration that we want to convey to our African colleagues in order to move forward on the road to Dakar.

Thank you and good work to all.