

Remarks by President Kagame at Congo Basin Climate Commission Summit

I am pleased to join you at this first summit on the Congo Basin Climate Commission, and the Congo Basin Blue Fund.

Let me start by expressing my sincere gratitude to His Excellency President Sassou Nguesso, for convening this conference and for his leadership on climate action.

I would also like to acknowledge His Majesty King Mohamed for his personal commitment and efforts on this issue, as well as Their Excellencies, Heads of State here present for their engagement.

The signing two years ago, of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, was a remarkable demonstration of global commitment to building a more sustainable future for all of us.

While efforts continue to reach universal ratification and translate the Agreement into action, global warming continues to adversely and disproportionately affect many of our countries.

The prosperity we seek for our continent requires that we go the extra step to mitigate climate change and develop our economies more sustainably.

There is no better reason therefore to support, and actively participate in, the Congo Basin Climate Commission, and the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin.

Preserving the waters and forests of the Congo Basin is essential for sustainable development, not only in Africa but other parts of the world as well.

The water resources of the Congo Basin connect our countries and support the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people. This makes us interdependent on many levels.

We must, therefore, cooperate more in managing these shared resources, in order to safeguard food security, public health and economic opportunities.

These are critical factors in achieving both the Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063.

Given what is at stake, the benefits envisioned in the Congo Basin cooperation initiative far outweigh the costs of setting up the fund.

So let's not waste any more time in this important work to unlock Africa's full socio-economic potential.

Securing this investment will require close collaboration between the public and private sectors, including strong partnerships at the local, national and regional levels.

We will discuss this in more detail, but it will also require looking into better coordination and complementarity in the operationalization of the commission, as the other Heads of State have mentioned.

The Government of Rwanda is ready to play our part.

I would like, once again, to thank His Excellency, President Sassou Nguesso for bringing this important issue to the fore, and wish us all fruitful deliberations.

I thank you for your kind attention.