Session 3B2: Promoting peace by developing and implementing legal frameworks for transboundary water resources

Progress, gaps, and challenges in Africa

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Africa's transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers is a vital resource for many sectors: drinking water, biodiversity, energy, agriculture, industry, fishing, waterway transport…

- They cover 60% of the continent and 80% of the population's water needs
- Large infrastructure projects may provide shared benefits but may also significantly affect water availability downstream
- Upstream water conservation is important to protect the entire system
Transboundary waters: A key asset in Africa

- **Coordination between countries**: basin planning, enabling IWRM and water diplomacy
- **Transboundary monitoring and information exchange**: a prerequisite to alert population of riparian countries towards water-related disasters
- **Increased pressure**: climate change, increased water demand, greater insecurity
- Support long-term sustainable development and benefits for all, including economic integration and fostering peace and security
Transboundary waters: A key asset in Africa

- Transboundary agreements and arrangements: a framework that prevents unilateral use
- 1992 UNECE Water Convention and 1997 UN Convention can support riparian states in improving transboundary water management and use
- Efficient transboundary organisations (TBOs), institutions and networks: facilitate cooperation, the basis to ensure water security
- TBOs are the product of a long consultation process between riparian states
• Depending on the context, TBOs can also be mandated to plan, prepare or implement joint design of investments and large infrastructures
• Also irrigation areas, flood management infrastructures, protection ecosystems, biodiversity and nature-based solutions
• Regional economic communities (RECs) take an important role
• Continental umbrella: African Union Commission, AMCOW, ANBO, PIDA, NEPAD
• International: UNECE, INBO…
The transboundary water programme targets the development of multipurpose large dams (hydropower, irrigation, others) and builds the capacity of Africa’s lake and river basin organizations so that they can plan and develop hydraulic infrastructure.