

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY HONORABLE PATRICIA
HAJABAKIGA, MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF
LANDS AND ENVIRONMENT.**

**SIGNING CEREMONY TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF
POVERTY ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE (PEI) PROJECT
PHASE II**

Kigali (Serena Hotel), 1 August 2007

**Honourable Ministers,
Secretary Generals,
Excellency Ambassadors,
The Resident Representative,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I would like to express my appreciation to UNDP for acknowledging the current milestone of the Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI) project which has been characterized by significant achievements for the environment sector as well as for our nation. In particular, I want to extend my thanks to the Resident Representative, Mr Moustapha Soumare for the support to the environment sector in Rwanda.

Our presence here this afternoon to witness the collaborative support from UNDP-UNEP PEI and the Irish Aid support for environment mainstreaming in Rwanda, is just another milestone that marks the successful interagency collaboration. I would like to express my gratitude for this spirit.

**Honourable Ministers,
The Resident Representative,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

The UNEP and UNDP partnership under PEI programme has evidently facilitated participating countries including Rwanda to approach poverty

reduction strategies through integration of environment in national policy, planning and budgetary processes.

Rwanda's participation in PEI has particularly been regarded in various circles as exemplary. In February 2006 at the Governing Council held in Dubai, I had an opportunity to share with the distinguished delegates in attendance the experience of PEI in Rwanda. Again in February of 2007, the Rwandan case was the presentation of choice at the side event of the Governing council meeting in Nairobi. On both of these occasions, Rwanda's achievements through PEI were cited as models for other countries to follow.

It is worth noting that serious discussions with UNEP for support to Phase II were initiated in October 2006. The fact that we are signing today is an indication that the donor-GoR partnership has been overwhelmingly successful.

**Honourable Ministers,
The Resident Representative,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

The UNEP-UNDP PEI programme focuses on the approach of promoting enhanced collaboration between Ministry of Finance and Planning on the one hand, and the Environment on the other hand.

The focused involvement of MINECOFIN in the PEI, Rwanda programme presents a realistic opportunity to build knowledge and capacity in the appropriate national institution to support planning for sustainability in the post project period. This overall approach lends credibility to Rwanda's national strategy in utilizing donor support, in the near term to establish self supporting institutions.

**Honourable Ministers,
The Resident Representative,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Activities (studies, mainstreaming guidelines, media strategy, poverty environment indicators, ...) conducted during Phase I facilitated the successful integration of environment into EDPRS. This was a result of the commitment from the GoR. Special thanks go to MINECOFIN who made the whole process possible.

Phase II of the project will build on the achievements of Phase I. In its design, it will focus on capacity building for the implementation of EDPRS. More specifically, it will support monitoring and evaluation for the implementation of EDPRS and DDPs, and this will enable tracking progress against MDGs 1 and 7.

I would like to acknowledge REMA for the oversight, coordination and overall guidance of PEI through its management unit. They were instrumental in ensuring integration of environment in the EDPRS, the development of PEI Phase II as well as the inclusion of environment priorities in the UNDAF.

In concluding, I share my confidence that the current support to PEI Phase II will build on the successes of the work done in the Western Province by Decentralization Environment Management Project (DEMP) supported by UNDP and The Netherlands. Based on the experience of DEMP, PEI II will expand and extend activities in other Districts around the country. I assure you that the UNDP-UNEP-PEI support will promote the goals of effective environment mainstreaming into national development plans and programmes.

Thank you.