



Remarks for the Launching and Signing Ceremony of the Addendum Project  
*“Poverty and Environment Initiative Phase II”* between the Government of  
Rwanda and UNDP and UNEP

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**Honorable Minister of Finance and Economic Planning,  
Minister of State in charge of Lands and Environment,  
Excellencies Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps,  
Director General, Rwanda Environment Management Authority, (REMA)  
Heads of UN Agencies, and Colleagues from UN agencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen**

First of all, I want to thank the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Honorable James Musoni, and Honorable Mrs. Patricia Hajabakiga, Minister of State in charge of Lands and Environment, for taking time from their busy schedule to participate in this launching and signing ceremony of the second Phase of the Poverty and Environment Initiative.

The initial objective the Poverty Environment Initiative known by its' acronym PEI, was to integrate the environment concerns into Rwandan national policies and processes. We can say that the task has been successfully completed. Today environment is both a sector and a cross-cutting issue in the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS: 2008-2012). I would like to congratulate on this important achievement.

This afternoon, we are launching the second phase of the project. The main objective is to further enhance the contribution of the first phase into sound environmental management for poverty reduction, sustainable economic growth, and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Let me re-emphasize the main outputs of this second phase:

**First:** to improve capacity within key ministries and institutions to understand and analyze links between poverty and environment and to integrate environment into policymaking, planning and budgets;

**Second:** to improve capacity at district level to understand and analyze links between poverty and environment and to integrate environment into development planning;

**Third:** to increase awareness and more effective participation of stakeholders in environmental policy and planning processes at both district and national level;

**Fourth:** to improve national funding levels for investing in environmental sustainability;

**Fifth:** to improve capacity for monitoring poverty and environment linkages at both national and district level.

### ***Honorable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen***

The most important element of Phase II is capacity building on the poverty and environment linkages. The causes of all environmental issues are coming from our daily activities, thus, the best way to solve these issue is to enhance the capacity for all stakeholders to tackle poverty and environment issues. We need to collaborate and act now to achieve our goals and objectives of fighting poverty and environmental degradation. This is a time-consuming task but nothing can be improved without this effort. We in UNDP and UNEP, are honored to have such an opportunity to work with the Government of Rwanda on this critical and challenging task.

The PEI project is also very important as it has provided a unique opportunity for the two organizations, UNDP and UNEP to work together. Rwanda being one of eight pilot countries of One UN, delivering as ONE process, we will continue and expand this harmonized partnership and further improve our performance, efficiency, accountability and results within the UN system. As you might know, UNDP and UNEP are the co-chairs for the UNDAF results on Environment,

At this point, I would like to put emphasis on the important role that UNEP is playing. 80% of the project budgets of both Phases I and II are supported by UNEP. Hence, UNEP is contributing enthusiastically to the efficient project development and management. Without UNEP's participation, the PEI project won't be as successful as we see now. I would want also to appreciate and put on records the efforts made by UNEP so far. I would also want to reassure you that the current synergy effects between UNDP and UNEP will continue and together we will provide further support for the success of the project and in general to Rwanda's environmental agenda.

As I have already stated in many occasion, when considering the high population density and rapid growth rate, Rwanda is a very fragile country on the environment point of view. And environmental degradation is directly linked to impoverishment of the people, many of them relying on the natural resources. I hope this PEI project will contribute to prevent in more efficient and effective way to the environmental and economic risks we face and that it will contribute to the achievement of our long-term goals such as EDPRS and the MDGs, and the establishment of the healthy sustainable development and prosperity of this country.

Thank you very much for you kind attention, your support. All remain in our collective action.

***MURAKOZE CYANE***