

MALAWI COUNTRY STATEMENT DURING THE 9th MEETING OF THE RIMES COUNCIL AND 3rd RIMES MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE, 23 TO 25 AUGUST 2017, PORT MORESBY, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

By

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- **Your Excellences**
- **The WMO president**
- **Honourable Ministers**
- **Members of the press**
- **Ladies and gentlemen**

Malawi would like to take this opportunity to join all other members of RIMES in congratulating Papua New Guinea for establishing a RIMES sub regional hub to day 25 August 2017. This is one of the best ways to reach our communities with the required early warning information for early and timely action to any impending disaster.

Colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen,

Malawi would like to remind the audience the importance of weather and climate for early warning purposes in our daily lives. While weather does not know national borders, the audience is being reminded that weather and climate affect both animals and plants throughout their lives and that weather is vital for sustaining life on Earth including our lives as it has a profound effect on food security, security of life and property, water resources, leisure and sustainable development. In addition, the audience is being reminded that weather is known to affect, to a certain extent, the moods of people, influence their character and even their ways of thinking and their culture.

Colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen,

Previous studies have shown that the impacts of climate change on rural communities among RIMES membership and collaborating countries are harsh and are already being experienced. The problems being faced by these rural communities are complex and just as so are the causes and effects of climate change. In these countries unthinkable disasters are increasing due to weak national early warning systems because of: use of substandard weather and climate services, total lack of use of climate services, poor design of structures and climate services, lack of interest and poor access and use climate services, lack of engagement of producers and users to plan and produce the required palatable weather and climate services that will help to reduce disasters and loss of life.

It is therefore critical and important that we need to build capacity of the producers and users on the uptake and utilization of weather related early warning services through collaboration to develop user-centered early warning systems in our countries for disaster risk reduction as recommended by WMO. As we engage between producers and users, there is need for continuous feedback and continuous improvement on the weather and climate services for seamless delivery and use of weather related early warning services at all timescales from hourly to daily and throughout the year to improve our national early warning systems. This will ensure increase in resilience of people most vulnerable to the impacts of weather and climate-related hazards such as droughts and flooding and associated risks in our countries.

Colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen,

RIMES as an institution is therefore available to build national capacities of its members in generating, accessing and utilizing user relevant science based information for national early warning of risks from natural hazards, and if needed for guiding resource management decisions, programs and plans. RIMES as an institution has therefore available to encourage us all to achieve any goal in the delivery of the required national early warning systems that

we can imagine for early action by our communities and individuals. This is important in order to generate hunger and thirst for weather and climate information used in national early warning systems to be used for early action by our communities and individuals to save lives and properties and live the lives they want consequently enjoying the success and happiness they deserve and desire.

With right steps in establishing national early warning systems for early action in our countries RIMES will help national meteorological services of our member states to become more relevant to their national social economic development. The more national meteorological services become relevant to the national social economic development, the more the user community in our countries will be attracted to faithfully utilise our weather and climate services for early warning purposes.

Colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen,

We are all aware that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. However, strong a chain can be, if only one of the hundreds of the links is weak, the whole chain is useless. This implies that the weather and climate services that we deliver within RIMES membership should act like a strong chain. Together within RIMES membership, we can build up what we believe is a very strong chain with strong links using all the available resources, skills and knowledge within RIMES member states. We therefore need to build strong capacity to generate the required weather and climate services required in our national early warning systems using RIMES as our platform. We therefore need a well capacitated RIMES and related institutions to generate and provide the required early warning services to our nations.

As we build these strong national early warning systems, we should also not forget that we need to incorporate indigenous knowledge, also known as 'traditional wisdom or local knowledge', which has been passed on from generation to generation through storytelling, ceremony and apprenticeship which has been vital for indigenous communities to survive natural disasters.

Colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is therefore important that Malawi collaborates with RIMES in various programmes through twinning and attachment programmes, training users and media personnel, participating in RIMES workshop, historical climate data management, visitation by RIMES to Malawi to assist in user needs assessment and institutional strengthening plans and programmes, and also in addressing other challenges to address the required weather and climate services gaps needed for a strong national early warning system in the country.

Colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen,

Malawi will therefore continue to seek wisdom and guidance from RIMES and collaborating partners on how best to establish a vibrant and robust national early warning system in the country through provision of reliable, responsive and high quality weather and climate services to meet national, regional and international obligations through timely dissemination of accurate and up-to-date data and information for socio-economic development. Malawi is therefore thankful to RIMES for inviting Malawi to participate at this 9th Meeting of the RIMES Council and 3rd RIMES Ministerial Conference being held here in Papua New Guinea from 23 to 25 August 2017.

I thank you all for listening.