



**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

NEPAD 10th Anniversary Colloquium and Congress

A Goodwill Statement

by

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**UN Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Secretary of ECA**

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Your Excellency, Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia

Your Excellency, President Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria

Your Excellency, Thabo Mbeki, former President of South Africa

Your Excellency, Jerry Rawlings, former President of Ghana

Your Excellency, Erastus Muencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union
Commission

Honorable Ministers

Commissioners of the African Union

Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD Agency

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I stand before you today as one of the earliest believers in the NEPAD which you initiated a little more than ten years ago. The indicators are all around us that the NEPAD idea is working and that our leaders were correct in fashioning out this distinct development framework.

I congratulate you on your foresight and salute your leadership and determination to foster a new set of rules for our development, based on African ownership and leadership that is built on true partnership. Let me recognize those that worked hard to keep the NEPAD ship steady over the years...from Professor Wiseman Nkulu, to Prof Firmino Mucavele, Ambassador Olukorede Willoughby and the current CEO, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki. We are celebrating today because of your collective hardwork. I salute you all.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

We can look at the last ten years of UN support to NEPAD in two phases: the period of consultation , when UN agencies merely consulted on NEPAD while still flying their individual flags; and the period of coordination, cooperation and coherence which gained steam in 2006 when the UN system switched from being a consultation forum to a coordination mechanism of support to the AU and its NEPAD programme.

Our singular objective was to minimize fragmentation and the high transaction cost involved in this fragmented UN support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme. We knew we could be more effective if we coordinated our support and align it to the priorities of the African Union and NEPAD. Hence, what was a Regional Consultative Mechanism metamorphosed into the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) of UN Organizations and Agencies working in support of the AU and NEPAD. On the UN side, ECA is honoured to be the Secretariat of this coordination effort.

I am happy to inform you that through the RCM we have been able to promote peace and security, human rights, economic and social development in Africa. Without sounding immodest, let me just mention a few examples.

We accompanied the AU and NEPAD in developing and operationalizing many of its landmark policy frameworks including APRM, CAADP and the Land Policy Initiative. The RCM Secretariat, in its coordination role, assisted in developing a multi-year capacity building programme, on many priority areas of NEPAD Agency, including strategic planning, development strategy, macroeconomic analysis, food security, sustainable development, climate change, regional integration, knowledge management and communications.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

We also assisted in mobilizing support for various African common positions on HIV/AIDS, debt relief, social protection, climate change and development effectiveness in Busan where we backstopped the participation of the NEPAD Agency and the AUC at the high level forum on aid effectiveness. More recently, the UN system has been heavily involved in assisting the ongoing regional process in preparation for Rio +20. We have rendered assistance through technical support, sensitization workshops, advisory services and global awareness campaign to enhance understanding of technical issues and mobilize public support.

We rendered concrete support in conflict prevention, mediation and electoral assistance; helped put together the African Peace and Security Architecture and assisted in operationalizing AU's emergency preparedness and response mechanism. We also undertook a study on the regional norms for the trans-African highway and helped in preparing the intergovernmental agreement for the road network, towards the physical integration of Africa. Additionally, we also supported the AU efforts against hunger in the Horn of Africa.

Through the direct support of the UN system, a joint plan of action was developed for ECOWAS and SADC to operationalize the initiative against human trafficking. We also assisted in funding the Pan African Conference on Teacher Development in Africa and gave substantive support to the launch of the Pan-African University.

To develop the capacity of the African media, we hold an annual regional workshop for the media in support of the African Union and its NEPAD programme. In partnership with the NEPAD Agency, we are publishing a Media Handbook on NEPAD and a commemorative book, A Decade of NEPAD: Deepening African Private Sector and Civil Society Ownership and Partnership, which is being launched at this Colloquium. Additionally, we publish *NEPAD Today*, a weekly

electronic newsletter highlighting activities and events related to the implementation of NEPAD. The list is, indeed, long and I have only given you a snapshot.

Having succeeded at the regional level, we recently decided to replicate our support at the subregional level. In this regard, we have established a joint subregional mechanism (SRCM) for the Eastern and Southern Africa while a similar mechanism will be put in place for West and Central Africa in May this year.

Our efforts are yielding dividends which are bound to improve the livelihood of Africans. Because of our collaboration, many African countries are revisiting the idea of development planning; increased and dedicated budget allocations are going into HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment as well as agriculture while statistical capacities are being strengthened across Africa. Only yesterday, we were discussing how to unleash Africa's full potentials to become a global growth pole...a logical result of years of steady growth and improvement in governance and macroeconomic management.

Excellencies

These are remarkable because only 10 years ago, The Economist reported that Africa was a hopeless continent. Ten years later; *ten years after NEPAD*, the same journal is screaming "Africa rising". Permit me to surmise that NEPAD played a role in this reversal. We would not have been this successful but for the effective contributions of UN agencies within the clusters.

The UN coordinated support to the AU and NEPAD works through nine clusters which are jointly coordinated by a focal UN Agency and the African Union Commission. They were designed to address all AU and NEPAD priorities: The Infrastructure Development Cluster is led by ECA; the Governance Cluster is led by

UNDP, the Social and Human Development Cluster is coordinated by WHO; the Environment, Population and Urbanization Cluster is led by UNEP; the Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development Cluster is led by FAO; the Science and Technology Cluster is led by UNESCO, the Advocacy and Communication Cluster is coordinated by OSAA; the Peace and Security Cluster is led by the UNOAU while the Industry, Trade and Market Access is led by UNIDO.

Excellencies

While we have been true to the General Assembly Resolution 57/7 which mandates us to support NEPAD, we must not rest on our laurels. Infact, the UN system should consider the next decade as a *period of consolidation* and deepening of its support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme. This means that we must build on what we have done and continuously keep step with the AU and NEPAD Agency, aligning our interventions with their programmes and supporting their priorities. We also need to address many challenges that the RCM is confronted with. We need to work harder to replicate our regional successes in the subregions. We have to find a way to harmonize the different budget and programme cycles of UN agencies. And we have to work towards strengthening the RCM/Africa Secretariat. The main thrust of our current joint effort is how to build the capacity of various AU organs. We will embark on this journey in collaboration with other African institutions such as the Africa Capacity Building Foundation.

I congratulate Africa for the 10 years of NEPAD and pray that the framework fulfills the dreams of its founding fathers: a strong Africa which is in full control of its development agenda.