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**Statement by H.E. Erastus O. Mwencha
Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission
at the Colloquium on 10 Years of NEPAD**

**“Africa’s Decade of Change: Accelerating NEPAD
Implementation through Domestic Financing”**

Addis Ababa, 28 March 2012

Your Excellency Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin and Chairman of the African Union,

Your Excellency Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee,

Your Excellences, Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Thabo Mbeki and Jerry Rawlings,

Excellences Members of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee,

Distinguished Representatives of Regional and International Organizations,

The Special Guest of the NEPAD Colloquium,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It gives me honour to take the floor this morning at the opening of the NEPAD Colloquium on the theme “Africa’s Decade of Change: Accelerating NEPAD Implementation through Domestic Financing”.

2. May I, first of all, thank H.E. Meles Zenawi and the people of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the warm welcome afforded to all delegations.

3. I also want to thank the members of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee who spare no effort to support the integration of NEPAD into the structures and processes of the African Union.

4. I further thank Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Thabo Mbeki and Jerry Rawlings for attending and participating in the deliberations of this important session.

5. Lastly, I wish to thank the Commissioners of the AU Commission and representatives of regional and international organizations for attending this important meeting.

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. Since its design in 2001, and adoption in July 2001 by the 37th Summit of the OAU, as a response to the problems of poverty, underdevelopment and marginalization of Africa in a global context, NEPAD has matured as an integral programme of the African Union.

8. To give NEPAD a fresh impetus, the 14th AU Summit held in February 2010 here in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, decided to transform the NEPAD Secretariat into the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and integrate into the structures and processes of the African Union.

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. Today, the process of transforming and integrating the NEPAD Agency is almost complete. The Agency has a legal status that endows it with some autonomy. It applies AU rules, regulations and operating procedures in the areas of human resources, administration and finance.

10. In this regard, I extend a special motion to Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki for the quality of his work as head of the NEPAD Agency. I also extend my congratulations to Dr. Maxwell M. Mkwezalamba, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, who spared no effort in supporting the NEPAD integration process.

11. Henceforth, all decisions regarding the implementation of NEPAD programmes and projects follow the rules and procedures of AU policy organs. The AU Commission and its NEPAD Agency are working closely to implement continental programmes, particularly in the areas of infrastructure, energy, rural economy and agriculture. A Coordination Unit has been established within the Commission to strengthen synergy of action between departments of the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Agency.

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. As you know, the African Union plays a key role in efforts to mobilize local resources for the development of the continent. Based on the political will demonstrated by African leaders, the AU and its partners will support efforts made jointly with governments, Regional Economic Communities and leading private and public sector institutions to stimulate innovative actions in funding policy for NEPAD implementation.

13. In this regard, the African Union Commission is grateful to President Obasanjo for his leadership of the High Level Panel on

Alternative Sources of Financing. We also truly appreciate the high level support granted us at the 25th Session of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee on Innovative Financing for NEPAD Programmes and Projects held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in 2011.

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. Today one of the key development challenges facing Africa is the issue of project financing and the sustainability of such financing. In this context of crisis, these issues affect all development institutions. Indeed we have a sound vision and strategy as well as a set of viable programmes and projects, such as CAADP, PIDA, CARMMA, whose implementation would radically transform Africa. Regrettably their implementation is contingent upon goodwill outside our continent. This is no longer sustainable in the light of global developments.

15. Accordingly, the colloquium on *Accelerating NEPAD Implementation through Domestic Financing* is of particular importance.

16. Indeed, the involvement of local partners in the funding of our projects should help: (i) strengthen project ownership by Africans themselves, (ii) promote a culture of transparency and good governance (iii) reduce the degree of risk of dependence on non-regional donor agendas; and (iv) encourage the search for innovative financing.

17. I am convinced that the deliberations of this colloquium will pave the way to the critical paths we can explore for more effective and relevant mobilization of local funds to finance NEPAD projects.

18. Before concluding, I would like to express my gratitude to the Chairperson of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee, His Excellency Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and the African leaders, members of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee for their unflinching support and seasoned advice towards achieving Africa's development goals through the implementation of the NEPAD programme.

19. Thank you for your kind attention.