

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Press Release

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Building the Africa We Want: NEPAD Turns 20

“An impressive accomplishment of NEPAD has been the strengthening of partnerships with the rest of the world. NEPAD has engaged the G20, G8, OECD, FOCAC, TICAD and the UN system on new development cooperation and aid architecture for Africa. Over its 20 years, NEPAD has promoted programmes in areas such as agriculture, health, education and training, the environment, information and communication technology and infrastructure development,” H.E Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and Chairperson of the African Union stated at the NEPAD symposium.

President Ramaphosa opened the virtual event, organised by the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) on 28th January, to mark 20 years of NEPAD’s journey as a leading pan-African development actor.

H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda and Chairperson of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee lauded NEPAD by stating that, “NEPAD has remained true to its vision. Therefore, it is no accident that NEPAD became the African Union Development Agency in 2018. NEPAD’s track record makes it the ideal institution to help lead the implementation of Agenda 2063 on behalf of the African Union. I thank the partners who have helped NEPAD over the past two decades, both in Africa and beyond,” President Kagame said.

Acknowledging the leadership of Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, the CEO of AUDA-NEPAD, President Kagame said that “Dr Mayaki has led NEPAD with integrity and commitment for more than a decade.”

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat reiterated in his message that, “We are celebrating NEPAD today, an instrument that allows us to face our challenges through Agenda 2063 in regional and continental development

projects. Its transformation into AUDA-NEPAD is a reflection of its maturity, in responding to development needs on the Continent.”

The NEPAD journey so far has been memorable with institutional strides and programmatic landmarks reflecting the transformational history and performance of the NEPAD entity. The shared commitment and political will of the entire African Union membership for the realisation of the “Africa We Want” in Agenda 2063 as the development vision and long-term plan, validate the birth and rebirth of the NEPAD entity as an agent of renewal and transformation.

Expounding on the birth of NEPAD, Former President of Nigeria H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, said that, “Any river that forgets its source, won’t triumph. Let’s not forget the history of NEPAD as we head towards the Africa we want. By the year 2001, we had a programme we could put forward and launched it. In 2002 we met the G6 and for the first time, Africa had its political, social and economic programme, one that was all-encompassing and was accepted. What did we do next? To peer review the programme, the idea of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) was born. NEPAD and APRM are now the key drivers of Agenda 2063.”


Two decades since the birth of NEPAD, the symposium was a good platform to reflect on the successes, achievements and challenges in its implementation. It also provided an opportunity to examine the relevance and future of the first continental development agency and the capacities it needs to fast track development across the continent.

Dr Mayaki pointed out that “The political capital and uniqueness evident in the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee is the greatest asset of AUDA-NEPAD.”

The CEO of AUDA-NEPAD also reflected on the challenges of the organisation. “Our challenges at the moment will be resource mobilisation. Our resource mobilisation strategy will count strongly on our African partners. We also need to extend our capacity in terms of human resources at the agency. The third challenge is increasing interaction with the Regional Economic Communities that we need to keep together,” Dr Mayaki said.

Among the eminent attendees at the symposium were: H.E Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, Former President of the Republic of Liberia; Prof. Eddy Maloka, CEO, APRM; Dr Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank; Mrs Cristina Duarte, United Nations Special Adviser on Africa and Under-Secretary-General of OSAA; Dr Vera Songwe, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ECA; H.E. Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry, African Union Commission; H.E. Victor Harison, African Union Commissioner for Economic Affairs; Dr John Nkengasong, Director, Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention; Dr KY. Amoako, Founder and President of the African Center for Economic Transformation; Prof. Wim de Villiers, Vice-Chancellor and Rector, Stellenbosch University; Hon Gnounka Diouf, Minister in charge of Economic Affairs,

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Office of H.E. Macky Sall, President of Senegal; Prof. Thuli Madonsela, Law Trust Chair in Social Justice and Law Professor, Stellenbosch University.

The Regional Economic Communities were represented by Amb. Mohamed Ali Guyo, IGAD Special Envoy to the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Somalia and Mr Pathe Gueye, ECOWAS Commissioner for Infrastructure. Also present were the National Coordinator/CEO of NEPAD Nigeria Princess Gloria Akobundu and Dr Samori A. Okwiya, CEO, NEPAD Kenya.

The event closed with a musical performance by Yvonne Chaka Chaka, AUDA-NEPAD Goodwill Ambassador for TB & Nutrition, who remarked that “One of the greatest achievements of NEPAD is that it has put Africa on the global agenda and has also galvanised international support for the region, towards building the Africa We Want.”

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More information on the symposium is available at: <https://nepad.org/event/nepad20-symposium>

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