

Your Excellency Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the AUC

Your Excellences Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic missions

Your Excellency Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, *Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency*

Your Excellences Ambassadors and Heads of diplomatic Missions

Dr. Carlos Lopes, *Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa*

*Ms Deborah Mekonnen, Policy and Programme Specialist and UNDP Representation to the AU and Liaison Office with UNECA*

Senior Government Representatives

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am indeed delighted to be here today on the occasion of the launch of two important publications by the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency). The two publications that have just been launched by Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, the Chief Executive Officer of NEPAD Agency, touch on one common theme – Africa’s Development. The continent’s overarching priorities are still poverty eradication and wealth creation, provision of socio-economic infrastructure and services, food security, good governance and effective institutions. There is compelling evidence of sustained progress in the pursuit of economic growth, good governance and the emergence of strong, functional and effective institutions in Africa. These are vital for development.

## **I. AFRICA’S GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT**

With respect to the governance environment:

- The continent has progressed significantly from years of personalized power, unaccountable and authoritarian governments, violation of human

rights, rampant corruption, absence of the rule of law, massive state intervention in the economy and lack of decentralization of responsibilities and resources. Africa is today making strides in the building of democratic institutions and will continue to pursue efforts at good governance within the context of the activities of the African Union, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and interventions by the RECs, which have been instrumental in addressing issues of conflict and peace management.

- African countries are encouraging younger generations to participate actively in political processes in order for the voices of the youth to be given stronger expression in governance and institution building.
- Malfeasance still exists in the use of resources and is a reflection of weakness of public accountability mechanisms and transparency systems. There are however strategies and measures that are working. Africa will continue to strengthen the demand for public accountability by civil society and other stakeholders in order to establish collective and nationally-owned mechanisms for translating ideas into public policy reforms and change.

## **II. AFRICA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH PERFORMANCE**

Africa is growing at a rapid rate and moving from conventional to sustainable development. Growth is a pre-requisite as it creates the wealth from which development commitments and targets are met. Poverty levels and inequalities in incomes must fall progressively and socio-economic infrastructure, which encourages and supports investments as well as efficient social services, must be available to create the condition for sustainable development. We need these fundamentals for development. Present statistics puts no less than six African countries among the world's fastest growing ten economies over the decade, 2001 and 2011, which the NEPAD Agency 2011 Annual Report marks. It has been observed that over the past decade, the unweighted average growth rate was about the same for Africa and Asia. Given the current prospects, there is a strong likelihood that Africa will surpass Asia in growth in the next decade. To this growth, the AU-NEPAD programme will continue to make a vital contribution.

## **III. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**

A vigorous implementation of the African Union Social Policy Framework and protocols by RECs are producing desired results, which need reinforcement. Thus far, a number of successes have been achieved in social sector development, poverty eradication, and reduction in the level of inequality,

among others. Africa has recorded a number of success stories in the achievement of the MDGs and is on track. A number of countries have made good progress. The evidence is strong and encouraging that with the right policy mix, efficient use of resources, improved governance, enhanced and sustained international support, the continent will achieve many of the MDGs. However, a great deal still remains to be done. For instance:

- While there is respectable economic growth, this has come with an increase in inequality. The UNDP's new inequality-adjusted Human Development Index shows that the human development ratings of African countries are still substantially lower, if adjusted for inequality in wealth distribution.
- While efforts are being made to implement the AU Social Policy Framework, a number of countries still lack mechanisms for social protection, as basic social security is still outside the reach of many.

#### **IV. SOME EMERGING LESSONS IN DEVELOPMENT**

A few lessons have also come through on the continent's development efforts. Let me mention just a few:

- Given the results achieved in the MDGs, the post-MDG development framework must continue on a framework of broad interventions to enhance the enabling environment for inclusive growth. We need to maintain sound macroeconomic policies, promote job-rich growth and boost agricultural productivity while providing opportunities for vulnerable groups, including strengthening gender equality and women empowerment.
- We need to adopt development strategies that enhance the efficiency of service delivery at all levels of government and improve ability to monitor goals.
- We need to look inward as a continent to cultivate and strengthen partnerships with the private sector, civil society and other development stakeholders.
- There is a need to empower small scale farmers, revisit funding for sustainable agriculture, increase social protection programmes and adopt effective and responsive national food and nutrition policies.
- Other areas requiring attention are the need to pursue pro-poor growth, enhance stakeholder participation in growth and development process, diversify economic activities, raise equity in access to: employment opportunities; productive resources such as land and credit; and basic social services such as health, education, water and sanitation. Also

important is the need to enhance social protection in the management of national development, and pursue **robust domestic resource mobilization strategies**.

- Results being achieved through the AU-NEPAD programme need to be strengthened and sustained to effectively support economic growth with social and environmental protection.

## V. CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by re-emphasizing that the development of the continent rests on a number of factors, among which are:

- Effective governance and institutional and policy framework as well as programmes for sustainable development
- Enhanced leadership, strong political commitment and accountability for results
- Human and institutional capacity development, with emphasis on innovations and continuous improvement in systems, processes and procedures.
- Improved financial and technical resources based on domestic sources.
- Improved quality of partnerships and shared responsibilities among Africa's development stakeholders and partners.

To each of these factors, I am deeply convinced that the AU-NEPAD programme will continue to make significant contributions with measurable impact.

I thank you all.

H.E. Dr.NkosazanaDlamini-Zuma,  
*Chairperson, African Union Commission*