

New Body Replaces NEPAD Secretariat

By Brenda Zulu

African leaders meeting at the 14th African Union (AU) Summit in Addis Ababa have approved the establishment of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) as a technical body of the AU to replace the NEPAD Secretariat.

Speaking at a press conference, Dr Maxwell Mkwezalamba AU's Commissioner for Economic Affairs explained that the NPCA was now mandated to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of continental and regional priority programmes and projects and to mobilise resources and partners in support of their implementation.

Mkwezalamba said the African Heads of State and Government in attendance at the AU Assembly have directed the NPCA to conduct and coordinate research and knowledge management, monitor and evaluate the implementation of programmes and advocate on the AU and NEPAD vision, mission and core values.

He added that the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) exercises supervisory authority over the NPCA, whilst giving the new agency adequate and necessary flexibilities to carry out its mandate and thereby maintaining the corporate brand identity of the NEPAD Programme within the AU.

He said the leaders also directed that the NPCA activities be financed through an established budget from the statutory sources of the AUC, voluntary contributions from AU member states and additional budgetary support from development partners and the private sector.

Meanwhile, NEPAD Communications Manager Andrew Kanyegirire said the issue of integrating NEPAD into the African Union (AU) structures and processes has been on the table since 2003 - at the 2nd AU Summit.

He explained that although NEPAD has always been seen as a programme of the African Union - our leaders felt that it was necessary, relevant and appropriate to integrate its offices (NEPAD Secretariat which is now the NPCA) into the AU structures and processes.

“One of the reasons for this is because it became clear over the years that there was some duplication between the work of the NEPAD Secretariat and some entities of the AU. So - the integration will help us all to identify overlaps, foster a clear delineation of roles and to promote joint efforts,” he said

As a result, it is now clear that the NPCA will be responsible for facilitating and coordinating regional priority programmes. Another key element here is to do with conducting and coordinating research and knowledge management - this is now a recognized role of the NPCA.

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