

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM) IN GHANA

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Mr. Chairman,
Chairperson of the APRM Panel,
Delegates of the APRM Fraternity,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen

deem it a great honour to be part of this august gathering which has set itself to address a theme of such contemporary relevance ***“Governance for a Progressing Africa”***. While is of immense interest to look at theme of this forum from a broader perspective, it is important to acknowledge that the theme of this session (Plenary Session 3) ***“New International Standards for Governance: Applying the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)”*** is not only apt but strikes a deep chord about the current thinking as to how to put Africa on a path of sustainable development. Indeed, it will be much more instructive, exciting and rewarding if issues of Governance are debated, discussed and articulated in the context of the experience of an emerging democracy like Ghana, which has taken a lead role in the implementation of the APRM on the continent of Africa.

In the right sense of the world, Ghana’s approaches to, and organizational structures for, the implementation of NEPAD and APRM have widely been acknowledged as credible and remarkable blueprints worthy of emulation to

the rest on the continent. That is why this opportunity takes on even more significance to Ghana and myself as the Director of NEPAD Directorate at the Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD in Ghana. Let me at this juncture express my appreciation to the organizers of this forum for the warm reception they have accorded me and the excellent facilities they have placed at my disposal to participate in the forum.

Mr. Chairman

3. NEPAD is the collective vision of African leaders and their people to entrench democracy and good political governance as the vehicle to reduce poverty and deprivation on the continent as well as engender regional cooperation and integration, thereby place African countries on the path of sustainable growth and development. The APRM is the moral contract to ensure that Africa leaders and their people adhere to the tenets of NEPAD.

4. The APRM is an instrument that would be voluntarily acceded to as self-monitoring and control mechanism to ensure compliance with the principles of NEPAD. Accession entails undertaking to submit to periodic peer review as well as to facilitate such reviews, and be guided by agreed parameters for good political governance, good economic and corporate governance.

5. As part of measures to demonstrate that African leaders are committed to the implementation of NEPAD, the second meeting of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) of NEPAD in Abuja, Nigeria on March 26, 2002 endorsed the establishment of an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to facilitate and enhance good political, economic, social and corporate governance in Africa.

Mr. Chairman

6. Having made the above submission, it is worth mentioning that Ghana was the first country in Africa to accede to the APRM in October 2002 at the 35th Conference of African Ministers of Finance at Johannesburg, South Africa. This we did because, the good people of Ghana have chosen multi-party democracy and good governance as their "Manifest Destiny".

APRM was an added opportunity to consolidate the gains of Ghana to endeavour democracy and good governance. We have long realized that when the inalienable rights of the people are protected in a democratic dispensation that is when their passions for excellence can translate into high standards of living and sustained economic development.

7. As another milestone, Ghana signed the APRM Memorandum of Understanding on 9th March 2003 at the Sixth Summit of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) of the NEPAD held in Abuja, Nigeria.

8. In March 2003, the President created the Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD to oversee the implementation of NEPAD in Ghana. As the focal point of NEPAD, the Ministry has had interactions with various stakeholders in the country, including Parliament, Staff of Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) including the Electoral Commission, Serious Fraud Office, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, the Council of State, Office of the President, Traditional Rulers, the civil society and the private sector in order to share ideas on NEPAD and the APRM as a way of empowering stakeholders in understanding and taking ownership of NEPAD and APRM processes so as to ensure their successful implementation. Since the success of the APRM is premised on open participation by all and sundry, the Ministry embarked on a nation-wide sensitization by launching ownership-creation-programmes on NEPAD in all the ten Regions of Ghana.

9. The President, following a wide range of consultations with relevant stakeholders, appointed and inaugurated a seven-member National APRM Governing Council of good standing and integrity on the 18th of March, 2004 to oversee the implementation of the APRM in Ghana. To underscore the autonomy of the Governing Council all appointees were non-state actors and thus by definition were civil society actors. The distinguished members of the Governing Council include:

Rev. Prof. S.K. Adjepong – Chairman (Background) The former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast and currently the Principal of Methodist University College in Accra Ghana.

- II. Amb. Alex N. Abankwa - Member (Background) A retired career diplomat and ambassador to Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg and Canada
- III. Prof. S.K.B. Asante - Member (Background) Professor in International Relations and former Principal Regional Advisor to the United Nations
- IV. The Most Rev. Bishop Paul Bimile - Member (Background) Catholic Bishop of Wa and responsible for many development initiatives in the Upper West Region of Ghana.
- V. Prof. Miranda Greenstreet – Member (Background) Former Director of the Institute of African Studies and currently Executive Director of African Association for Health, Environment and Development
- VI. Mr. Nutifafa Kuenhyia - Member (Background) A distinguished lawyer, past President of the Ghana Bar Association and immediate past Chairman of the Media Commission
- VII. Ms. Gloria Ofori-Boadu - Member (Background) Former Executive Secretary of FIDA and founder and President of Women Assistance and Business Association

10. The criteria considered in the appointment of the Governing include:

- 1 Non-state actors (that is appointees are not state officials).
- 2 Professional Competence
3. Integrity, objectivity, impartiality and independence
4. Command of public rectitude
5. capacity to stand up for public scrutiny in respect of APRM findings
6. Capacity to engage Parliament, the Executive, Judiciary and society
7. Sentiments and symbolisms in respect of:
 - Ethnic and regional balance
 - Religious representation
 - Academic representation
 - Civil Society advocacy
 - Gender balance
 - Legal representation, and
 - International diplomatic experience.

Mr. Chairman,

11. It is worth mentioning that the National APRM Governing Council has been set up as an independent national structure to facilitate implementation of the APRM. To further the autonomy, integrity professionalism of the NAPRM Governing Council, its structure and mandate have been tailored to make it technically competent, credible, free political interference and an all-inclusive national exercise.

12. The National APRM Governing Council therefore has autonomy in carrying out its work. It has been tasked with the following functions:

To exercise oversight with respect to the National APRM Programme, with a view to ensuring the independence, professionalism and credibility of that process

To recommend and engage appropriate Ghanaian institutions, think tanks or individuals to conduct technical assessments in the four areas to be reviewed.

To review and make objective assessments of reports submitted to it by the engaged Ghanaian institutions, think tanks or individuals

To consider and approve recommendations in the form of a National APRM self-assessment report

- To prepare, administer and coordinate the visit of the Independent Panel of Eminent Persons (APR Panel) and to facilitate their work when the Panel team comes to the country to undertake an assessment of the governance of the country.
- To sensitize the executive, parliament, judiciary, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders and to enlist their full participation in the National APRM process.

13. The Council is expected to carry out its work with independence, impartiality, objectivity, professionalism and integrity. These will be the core values it will bring to bear on its mandate. Not only is the choice of this path clear and unambiguous to us, it is also the sure way to make the APRM review process a truly all-inclusive national exercise that involves Ghanaians in every aspect of life.

14. As the country has embarked on the implementation of the APRM, it was important to dispel any erroneous impression that the review will affect only the Executive arm of government. On the contrary, it was well communicated to the people that all the three arms of government namely

the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary will be subjected to the APRM. The review will also assess the work of the independent institutions like the Electoral Commission and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ). Civil society organizations including the media, trade unions, political parties and the private sector among others will also be subjected to assessment.

15. In effect, the review process covers both state and civil society activities in terms of how they impact on the effectiveness of governance. The review process is thus national in character and as such a country assessment of the state of governance in Ghana in its entirety.

16. To underscore the review as a broad-based national exercise, it is assessing governance in the four areas mapped out by the APRM for the exercise. These are in the areas of:

- a) One, democracy and good political governance.
- b) Two, economic governance and management.
- c) Three, corporate governance and
- d) Four, socio-economic development.

17. To assist in the technical work that the review will entail the Governing Council, engaged the services of four independent National Technical Review Teams to be the lead institutions in the technical assessment to be done.

These are:

1. Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) – Democracy and Good Political Governance

2. Center for Economic Policy Analysis (CEPA) – Economic Governance and Management
3. Private Enterprise Foundation (PEF) - Corporate Governance
4. Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER) – Socio-Economic Development

18. These organizations were chosen by the Governing Council on the basis of their track records, autonomy, integrity and professionalism. They shall assist the work of the Governing Council to administer, collate and analyze the country self-assessment questionnaire that will be the basis for the APRM report the Council will submit to the APR Panel in South Africa.

19. Already the Council has undertaken a number of activities to foster the implementation of the APRM process in the country. The Council has embarked on a sensitisation campaign throughout the country to educate and involve all national stakeholders in the self-assessment process.

campaign was undertaken in all ten regions of Ghana. The success of the APRM process is premised on the open participation by all in the process. These sensitization activities are meant to engender exactly that. The lots of our people can only participate in the process when they understand what the process is about and what their rights and obligations are.

20. Dr. Chris Stals, a former Governor of the Reserve Bank of South Africa and a member of the African Peer Review Panel led a Support Mission of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to Ghana from May 24-29, The team of eight that included the Lead Consultant for the APRM, Dr. Kerfalla Yansane, was composed of the APR Secretariat and representatives of Strategic Partner Institutions such as the African Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Support Mission

comprising officials of the APR Secretariat and Partner institutions provided technical support to the review process.

21. As per the guidelines developed by the Independent Panel of Eminent Persons (APR Panel), the process of country review starts with a country self-assessment process. To facilitate this, a stakeholder's forum was held on Thursday, May 27, 2004 at the Accra International Conference Centre at 9.00am prompt. At the stakeholders forum a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Government of Ghana and Support Mission.

22. The Memorandum of Understanding on the Technical Assessment Missions and the Country Review Visit of the APRM was signed by Minister of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Ghana and by Dr. Chris Stals, APR Panel Member, on behalf of the Chairperson of the Committee of Participating Heads of State and Government in the APRM (APR Forum).

23. To ensure the active participation of stakeholders in the country self-assessment programme, a workshop was held in Akosombo from 27-30 May 2004. This brought together the Support Mission, stakeholders and the National Technical Review Teams. The main objective of the stakeholder workshop was to create national ownership and leadership of the APRM as an open, participatory and transparent process that fosters national dialogue and build trust in the pursuit of national development goals. The forum provided a platform for national understanding, participation, knowledge sharing and a convergence of the appropriate methodology to approach the APRM process.

24. In undertaking the APRM, Ghana recognizes the need for technical capacity to undertake the review in a more scientific and professional

manner in order to make the process and outcomes credible. The Technical Review Teams have employed highly scientific methods of doing the self assessment such as Desk research, to obtain information available credible existing data sources and household survey, to capture broad and representative opinion on issues and Individual interviews for individuals with highly specialized perspective.

Mr. Chairman

25 I am happy to announce that Technical Review Teams are working assiduously to present the draft report by the end of October 2004. the submission of the Draft Report, the Governing Council will hold validation workshops in all ten regions of Ghana to ensure that the Report reflects the true views of the population. Consulting issue-based stakeholder focus groups and the people of the respective regions to broaden opportunity for participation and ensure credibility of all findings is a key aspect of the APRM process in Ghana.

26. In conclusion, the APRM is the surest way to ensure development, promote peace, security and stability for the continent. The lofty ideals of the APRM will surely not come on a silver platter, but will require all hands on deck, to be committed and to be determined including efforts of Regional Bodies such as the ECA in creating platforms for us to share our experiences.

thank you for your kind attention.