

REMARKS BY DR. IBRAHIM ASSANE MAYAKI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
NEPAD SECRETARIAT, TO THE 10TH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS
REGIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISM (RCM)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2009, ADDIS ABABA

*Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations,
Ms Asha Rose-Migiro;*

*Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission,
His Excellency, Mr. Erastus Mwencha;*

*Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for
Africa and our host, Mr. Abdoulie Janneh;*

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

*Heads of UN Agencies and Organizations working in Africa and Regional
Economic Communities;*

Distinguished Delegates;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

In support of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and our host, Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, I also extend warm welcome to you all to this opening of the 10th Meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism.

On a personal note - this is my first direct engagement with the RCM, following my appointment as NEPAD Chief Executive in April 2009. I, therefore, seize this opportunity to affirm the NEPAD Secretariat's readiness and firm commitment to working with the UN Clusters in the RCM for our mutual benefit.

For us, this Mechanism is an essential instrument to promote policy dialogue and monitor UN System-wide support to advance the vision and mission of the African Union and the NEPAD Program.

In the seven months at the helm of affairs in the NEPAD Secretariat, I have come to recognize the potential of the RCM as a catalyzing platform to foster Africa's development agenda that is African-defined, led and owned. It is a complementary vehicle to support the African Union and the NEPAD agenda, particularly NEPAD Program implementation.

For this reason, the NEPAD Secretariat, most importantly, is featuring a strong team to this RCM. For the first time, the NEPAD delegation comprises Sector Heads and Advisers with responsibility for the key priority program work which the UN Clusters support. This sector-specific focus at this RCM demonstrates the importance NEPAD attaches to the direct interaction and dialogue with the UN System, in moving forward this African partnership with the United Nations family.

I would, therefore, like to generously thank the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, for making it possible for NEPAD to be fully represented at this 10th RCM Meeting. The RCM Secretariat, based at the ECA, has been very supportive and understanding of NEPAD needs and interests within this Mechanism. That is why we are very proud of NEPAD's overall strategic partnership with the ECA, which is a model for partnership development and consolidation.

On another level, let me briefly share my vision and strategic outlook for NEPAD while contextualizing stakeholders' observations on the state of health of the NEPAD Program.

Decision and Policy makers, Stakeholders, Development Partners from all parts of the world, including UN Agencies, have repeatedly asked;

- *What is the status of the Integration of NEPAD into the structures and processes of the African Union?*
- *Where is NEPAD heading?*
- *What is NEPAD doing?*

- *Is NEPAD still alive to its original vision of poverty eradication and halting Africa's marginalization?*

Let me state clearly that the Integration of NEPAD into the structures and processes of the African Union is fully on course. Under the leadership of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, His Excellency, Dr. Jean Ping, the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat have taken bold steps in implementing the decisions of African Leaders on Integration.

Since the last 9th RCM, a number of major measures have been taken towards the realization of the goals of the 2003 Maputo Decision of the African Union Summit on Integration. In particular, key recommendations of Consultancy Study were thoroughly considered at the highest levels including at the 21st NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) which convened in Sirte, Libya in June 2009.

The Sirte NEPAD Summit recommended the establishment of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) as a technical body of the African Union. The mandate of the NEPAD Agency is the facilitation and coordination of programme development and implementation with partnership and resource mobilization as central enablers to achieve Africa's development aspirations.

Given this emerging mandate, the NEPAD Secretariat initiated a Strategic Planning process in August 2009, premised on a change management approach for the transition and transformation to the NEPAD Agency. We have designed a New Strategic Business Approach from now till 2010, based on the four (4) Pillars of the AU Commission's Strategic Plan for 2009 to 2012.

In this respect, we have elaborated the emerging mandate to six core functions relating to the centrality of implementation of priority programmes and projects to accelerate regional and continental integration in Africa. We envisage that the new NEPAD institution would give top priority to Knowledge Management and serve as the Knowledge Hub for the continent, with Monitoring and Evaluation as a key function. To this effect,

a new Organizational Design and Structure is being constructed for the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency.

A most recent positive development from the integration process is that the African Union Commission and NEPAD Secretariat now work more closely together than ever before. Just two days ago here in Addis Ababa, senior staff of the two institutions held a Work Programme Harmonization Session. This is a major milestone which relates to coming up with harmonized sectoral work programme for enhanced interaction and support of partners including UN Agencies.

Deputy Secretary General of the UN, Distinguished Delegates

You will agree with me that the structural and institutional changes we envisage will re-position and strengthen NEPAD as a lead player in giving the much-needed impetus to Africa's attaining its self-declared development goals especially the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We will be back-stopping the African Union Commission in the drive to ensure that, at this mid-point stage towards the MDGs, Africa is re-energized to turn our continent around for the better.

With this scenario, the NEPAD Secretariat has continued to work steadily towards the implementation of the NEPAD Programme in all the priority sector programmes defined in the NEPAD framework.

It is therefore my position that NEPAD is alive and working relentlessly to achieving the core objectives set out in 2001. While we have used the formative years to develop sectoral policy frameworks for the continent in various fields, the time is ripe for implementation. This is our present focus and with the support of all Stakeholders and Partners, including the UN Agencies and Regional Economic Countries, we are assured that we will succeed.

The foundation for success of the new NEPAD entity rests on broad-based inclusiveness of all stakeholders, including the

participation of non-state actors in the NEPAD process. I am delighted with the ECA is organizing an Open Forum on NEPAD which will take place immediately after the RCM, here in Addis Ababa. The Forum, I understand, is aimed at enhancing the ownership and partnership for implementing the NEPAD agenda. Indeed, the role of the Private sector and the Civil Society in NEPAD program implementation should not be under-estimated.

In conclusion, as we look ahead towards a successful conclusion of the integration process, we must all join hands and concentrate on addressing the development challenges that face our continent, including the impact of the global financial and economic crisis.

Our collective effort within the work of this Mechanism is critical to the strengthening coherence and coordination of UN system-wide support to the African Union and NEPAD Program. We welcome the move by the RCM to concretize the concept of sub-regional coordination in support of the Regional Economic Communities. These issues speak directly to advancing Regional Integration in Africa.

As we take stock of the work of the RCM, let us be reminded of that we must build on our synergies and complementarities. NEPAD is ready to contribute its quota to making this Mechanism work effectively and efficiently. This is doable.

We must muster the will to promote the required coordination, cooperation and collaboration for effective delivery on Africa's development. This is what the RCM is all about.

I thank you.