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Leadership changes at NEPAD Secretariat

At the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 31 January - 2 February 2008 a number of decisions were made regarding NEPAD.

The HSGIC accepted the recall of the outgoing CEO of the NEPAD Secretariat, Prof. Firmino Mucavele, by the Government of the Republic of Mozambique. The two Deputy Executive Officers, Ambassador Olukorede Willoughby and Dr. Hespina Rukato, will take charge of the Secretariat in the meantime and Ambassador Willoughby will also be acting Chief Executive Officer until the position is filled.

The HSGIC also agreed that a panel to be composed of the Chair of the African Union, the Chairperson of the HSGIC, the Chairperson of the AU Commission and members of the five NEPAD initiating countries be formed to look speedily at appointing the new Chief Executive of the NEPAD Secretariat.

The Summit of the NEPAD HSGIC also agreed to make a presentation to the AU Summit to place the membership of the HSGIC on a rotational basis. The Summit proposed that consultation among members of the AU be followed up by the AU Commission to have the new members ready by the next meeting of the HSGIC. The five founding members of NEPAD would continue being members of the HSGIC.

In addition, the Summit of the NEPAD HSGIC agreed that the long-planned NEPAD review summit should be held. The HSGIC agreed to consult on the most convenient date and to hold the summit in Dakar, Senegal.

Source: NEPAD, 1 February 2008

Panel recommends hastened integration of NEPAD into AU structure

The high panel of eminent African persons in charge of auditing the African Union (AU) has highly recommended that African countries respect their financial pledges to the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), according to a report released in Addis Ababa where the 10th ordinary summit of the African Union (AU) just ended.

The panel's report dedicated a whole chapter to NEPAD, explaining the making of the project and examining its operation mechanism to discover ultimately overlapping activities with the AU. According to the panel, NEPAD is an "initiative commissioned" by the African Union, so a greater co-operation between the two authorities of African integration is expected. However, the panel says the lack of rationalization of their activities paralyses both bodies' operations, which lead to an organisational recasting following the decision taken at the Maputo summit (Mozambique) in July 2003 to identify NEPAD as an AU programme.

This reorganization, formulated in a declaration, calls for specific action in order « to integrate NEPAD in the structures and process of the African Union, "particularly the Permanent Representatives Committee (COREP) and the Executive Council for formalization of "relevant relations". For an accelerated implementation of the Maputo Declaration, the AU and NEPAD had prepared a joint proposal submitted in March 2007 in Algiers to the 15- member Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC).

One of the HSGIC proposals recommended a transitional period of one year, necessary to rationalize « carefully » NEPAD activities and processes with those of the AU Commission. It ensued from a meeting where a roadmap was initiated by the presidents of Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa which houses the secretariat and

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supports its operational budget. The roadmap outlined the integration of NEPAD and the creation of NEPAD coordination and planning authority, the panel's report said.

The HSIGC decision could not be ratified by the heads of state following many deferments, the report pointed out, believing it is time for the Addis summit to approve the decision, put on the back burner since the Algiers meeting. Moreover, the panel speaks of the urgency to set up the NEPAD coordination and planning mechanism as an authority or an agency.

The African Union Commission prefers an agency rather than an authority to replace the NEPAD secretariat in its integration process in the structures of the Pan-African body. This high panel urged the hastening of the NEPAD integration process in order to speed up many development projects of the continent.

Source : Journal Chrétien, 29 January 2008

APRM reports Nigeria needs \$20bn for development

The self-assessment report of the African Peer Review Mechanism has resolved that Nigeria needs at least \$20 billion to enable it kick-start development from 2009-2015. The vice chairman, National Steering Committee of the National Working group of NEPAD, Professor Lawal Alhassan Bichi, announced this at a sensitization workshop on Country Self-Assessment report organized, in Katsina State.

Professor Bichi noted that the figure of \$20 billion was arrived at after careful brain-storming and analyses of various sectors of the country's socio-economic and political problems. However, the NEPAD vice chairman clarified that the proposed amount was expected to come from government budget, donor agencies, corporate bodies and the goodwill of private individuals. Professor Bichi disclosed that the NEPAD assessment team would soon visit Nigerian to verify some of the issues raised in the self-assessment report before approving its implementation in Nigeria.

Similarly, Professor Bichi lamented that of the 3,000 agreements entered between various government and agencies in Nigeria with development agencies none was fully implemented.

Speaking at the occasion, the secretary to the government of Katsina State, Alhaji Ahmed Aminu Yar'Adua, expressed delight with the self-assessment report for capturing the feelings of Nigerians. He hoped that the proposals made in the documents would be fully implemented to redirect the country's development initiative for a better society.

Source: Leadership (Abuja), 31 January 2008

Ghana lends support to AGRA

The government of Ghana has ratified the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) to demonstrate its support to help lift millions out of poverty through dramatic increases in productivity by small-scale farmers.

Thirteen African countries are expected to join AGRA, which has a 10 to 20-year goal of assisting farmers to double or triple their yields. AGRA has established partnerships with African institutions such as the African Union and NEPAD. The Alliance's approach is to increase food production in Africa by improving agriculture on small-scale farms rather than by supplanting them with industrial farming.

Source: Africa News Network, 29 January 2008

UPCOMING EVENTS IN FEBRUARY:

3-23 February APRM Country Review Mission for Uganda.
10 February: Africa Nations Cup 2008 Finals
12 February: Peacekeeping Africa Summit 2008 (Johannesburg)
13 February: NOVATECH, the ICT Africa Marketplace (Addis Ababa)
27 February: 1st U.S.-Africa Tourism and Sports Seminar (New York)

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DID YOU KNOW? France's Secretary of State launched a blog, "**generationafrique**," to serve as a platform for informal dialogue with African Youth. This is in keeping with a directive issued by the French president seeking feedback from members of Africa's civil society, especially the youth, regarding their expectations. For more information: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200801291016.html>