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2008 U.S.-Africa Agribusiness Forum

Leaders to discuss the business case for investing in agriculture & food production in Africa

In response to Africa's increasing economic growth potential, The Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) will convene agribusiness leaders at the 2008 U.S.-Africa Agribusiness Forum to discuss and exchange ideas around investing in agricultural production, processing and marketing of food, fuel and climate change commodities, it was announced today.

The 2008 Agribusiness Forum, Investing in Agriculture Links in Africa, is being hosted by CCA's Agribusiness Initiatives Program and will be held in Chicago, Illinois, June 25-27. The Forum is expected to attract more than 300 leaders from the private and public sectors in the U.S. and Africa.

"Africa's future success in large part depends upon the ability of its entrepreneurs and business leaders to create and retain wealth through private enterprise," said CCA President Stephen Hayes. "Agribusiness partnerships between the U.S. and Africa are on the rise and this forum will offer a platform for industry leaders to exchange ideas and learn of rewarding agribusiness opportunities on the horizon in Africa."

The two-day Forum will include industry-specific sessions, networking opportunities, and panels to address cross-cutting issues such as financing, commodity trading markets and food security, infrastructure investment to connect African markets, market information systems improvement, product innovation, cash crop and livestock production and investment, pharmaceutical and bio-fuel industry growth, carbon trading, and production technology.

The CCA Agribusiness Initiatives Program focuses on catalyzing the contribution that agriculture, agribusiness, and related activities make to economic growth in Africa. The organization is dedicated to bringing together potential business partners and to showcase business opportunities on the continent. Initially funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to foster development of public-private partnerships and support the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program, (CAADP).

Source: AllAfrica.com, 3 March 2008

ECOSOC adopts G77 resolution on the social dimension of NEPAD

The United Nations Economic and Social Council recently adopted a resolution sponsored by Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, calling on the UN Secretary-General to submit a report on the social dimensions of NEPAD, to be tabled during the 47th session of the Commission for Social Development in collaboration with the Office of Special Adviser on Africa.

In the resolution, G77 and China welcomed recent increase in official development assistance pledged by many of the development partners, including commitment of the Group of Eight and the European Union which will lead to \$25 billion increase of ODA per year to Africa by 2010.

It says while social development is the primary responsibility of Governments, "international cooperation and assistance are essential for the full achievement of that goal."

Full text: ECOSOC E/CN.5/2008/L.3



NEPAD tasks governments on rural development

NEPAD has challenged the leadership of respective African countries to invest more resources in the provision of quality education, healthcare delivery facilities and power generation in order to improve the standard of the rural dwellers.

Professor Shadrack Gutto of NEPAD who made the declaration during a world press conference held at the Concord Hotel, Owerri, during the visit of its leaders to Nigeria and led by the former Sierra Leonean President, Alhaji Ahmad Tijan Kabah, regretted the height of poverty threatening the advancement of most African countries. The South-African donor and leader of Team-1, APRM/CRM in charge of South-Eastern Nigeria maintained that these facilities when put in place would avail the people a sense of belonging to stand as protectors of their environment, infrastructure, roads and communication, whereas its absence aggravates dissatisfaction and incidence of crime wave in exchange. While calling for the collective effort of both the leaders and the people,

Prof. Gutto observed Africa to be rich continent that suddenly became poor through slavery, colonisation and misgoverning of the continent since its independence. He harped on the imperative of entire citizenry to enhance own process of renewal and regeneration in Africa and ensure the institution of good governance of which none can do so, if we continue to deviate from focus. Speaking further, Prof. Gutto said the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was therefore, replaced by African Union (AU) which has a more broad spectrum of significant departure from the past, leading to the recognition of respect to sovereignty of nation state in Africa for the first time alongside commitment to intervene in certain situation, especially regarding crime against humanity, war, genocide and suspension of any government that clinches to power unconstitutionally.

Source: The Tide (Nigeria), 3 March 2008

Forum agrees on steps to tackle health worker crisis

The first-ever global meeting to address the shortages of health workers has endorsed a plan of action to resolve a crisis which affects nearly 60 countries and threatens to undermine critical advances in improving the health and well-being of millions.

The UN World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that the world needs over four million additional health workers, one million of which are required for sub-Saharan Africa alone.

The Global Forum on Human Resources for Health, which began in Kampala, Uganda, on 2 March, brought together nearly 1,500 participants, including donors, experts and more than 30 ministers of health, education and finance to tackle this vital issue. The meeting, organized by the WHO-backed Global Health Workforce Alliance, today endorsed the Kampala Declaration and Agenda for Global Action, which sets out a series of steps to be taken over the next 10 years to resolve the crisis. The Agenda calls on all countries to give top priority to training and recruiting sufficient health personnel from within their own country, and to provide adequate incentives and better working conditions to ensure the retention of health workers.

"This is about much more than a health issue. It is about political choice. It is about quality of life and the dignity of individuals. Therefore, providing health workers for all is the responsibility of all societies and their governments," said Dr. Francis Omaswa, Executive Director of the Alliance. The Agenda also urges international and regional financial institutions to relax constraints such as public health recruitment ceilings, and calls on WHO to accelerate negotiations for a code of practice on the international recruitment of health workers.

Source: UN News Service, 6 March 2008

UPCOMING EVENTS IN MARCH:

- 10 March:** Intl Conf. on Integrated Water Resources Mgmt (Cape Town)
- 10 March:** 2nd Global Summit on HIV/AIDS, Traditional Medicine & Indigenous Knowledge (Accra); Africa Regional Seminar on Participatory Budgeting (Durban)

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DID YOU KNOW? The African Development Bank is preparing a regional integration programme on the conservation of biodiversity and the improvement of ecotourism in the Great Lakes region worth US \$ 65 million. Expected to be part of the programme is a component on institutional support to the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat and partner organs. According to reports from the Pan African News Agency, there are plans to inject US \$ 814 million in 13 operations, including 5 multilateral projects on natural resources management in Central Africa. **For more information: www.africanews.com/2220**