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## Taking a local look at NEPAD - in Cameroon

**A three-day brainstorming seminar to help the media understand NEPAD, its origins, its objectives, its mechanisms, its projects – and the implications for Cameroon -- was held during May in Douala.**

Organised under the patronage of the Minister of Communication, the seminar

**"The role of the African private sector."**

was the brainchild of the Youth Press Association in partnership with the Canadian Agency for International Development and attracted more than 40 leading members from the print media, radio and TV.

Writing in the Cameroon Tribune on 18 May, correspondent Eldickson Agbortogo says that to facilitate understanding, the various topics were sub divided into four panels.

The first panel which focused on, "the understanding of NEPAD", cross examined its fundamentals, priorities, programmes, differences, innovations, the dynamics of integration and the construction of African Unity within the framework of NEPAD.

The second panel on "financing" took a critical look at the role that the African private sector can play in the financing of NEPAD, while the third on "NEPAD and the Media", looked at ways through which African media can be of assistance in the development of the continent and the way NEPAD activities are being covered by journalists.

The last panel on "NEPAD and governance" examined the organisation of the civil society in relation to NEPAD.

**"Minister will assist in future seminars."**

"After three days of brainstorming and the presentation of a summary report by the seminar coordinator, Professor Boyomo Assala, participants left visibly satisfied with the knowledge gained," says Agbortogo.

The Minister of Communication through his personal representative, Albert Mbida, promised that he was ready to assist in future seminars.

*In the same vein, the NEPAD Secretariat will be hosting its first NEPAD Media Workshop in Dakar, Senegal, from 19-21 July, 2004, as the start of a series of planned regional forums. The West African workshop is viewed as an important step in engaging media to popularise, mobilise, monitor and evaluate NEPAD. These are important factors intended to step down the NEPAD process to the African people to enable them to fully embrace the process and ensure its successful implementation. The emphasis will be on communicating NEPAD in African languages in order to promote African ownership of the process and, at the same time, ensure that there is an increased positive projection of messages broadcast to the public. These messages should at all times be accurate and consistent, and play an important role in advocating support from stakeholders such as governments, private sector, unions, gender associations, and Africa's traditional development partners.*

*In addition, the Secretariat will pursue the programme of encouraging and facilitating the setting up of national NEPAD structures that will involve the participation of different stakeholders in the planning, implementation and overall ownership of NEPAD programmes and projects at the national level. Ten African countries were invited to such a workshop in Bamako, Mali, from 23-25 March, 2004.*

- **NEPAD Dialogue would be pleased to hear reports of similar local activities anywhere across the continent.**

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## Peace and Security Council launch

**The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union will be formally launched on 25 May at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.**

All 15 members of the PSC will be present:

- Central Africa: Gabon, Cameroon, Congo
- East Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan
- North Africa: Algeria, Libya
- Southern Africa: South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique
- West Africa: Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Togo

More than 400 guests are expected to attend the morning ceremony, including Heads of State, Government Ministers and representatives, as well as distinguished visitors.

After the launch ceremony - which the NEPAD Secretariat has arranged to be broadcast live on satellite TV to 20 African countries - the Council will meet in open session and consider its Draft Statement of Commitment. A closed session will then be held, followed by a Press briefing.

President Obasanjo of Nigeria is the Chairperson of the Council.

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## Senior NEPAD staff move to new posts

The NEPAD Secretariat has bid farewell to three members: Mr. Sunday Dogonyaro – Principal Programmes Coordinator who was seconded to NEPAD by Nigeria; Mr. Smunda Mokoena - a former member of the NEPAD Steering Committee and coordinator of key areas of NEPAD; and Mr. Dave Malcolmson – manager responsible for international affairs, both men seconded by South Africa. All have been reassigned by their governments.

In a farewell message, Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu, chairman of the Steering Committee, said that while NEPAD bemoans the loss of staff who were instrumental in the Secretariat's formative stage, "more importantly they will continue to play the critical role of championing NEPAD in their new positions."

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## Calendar of Events

- **25 May**, formal launch of the AU Peace and Security Council, AU Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- **31 May - 4 June**, Experts Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction, Johannesburg, South Africa
- **2 - 4 June**, World Economic Forum, Maputo, Mozambique
- **8 - 10 June**, G8 Summit, Sea Island, USA
- **25 - 26 June**, NEPAD Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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