

Summit stresses the importance of NEPAD

Other than the African Union (AU) there is nothing more important than NEPAD in the history of Africa, it was said at the 10th Summit of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) of NEPAD in Maputo, Mozambique, on 23 May 2004, during a discussion on effective participation in meetings of the HSGIC.

The HSGIC decided that if Heads of State or Government are not present, their representatives will be treated as observers at such meetings.

It was also agreed to explore effective mechanisms for engaging with the Arab World for the benefit of NEPAD and Africa.

The Summit, which was opened by the Chairman of the

implementation, particularly with resource mobilisation and project preparation. It also called for the fast tracking of the implementation of the Great Inga project and hydro- electricity generation on the Inga in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

E-Schools

It was noted that a workshop involving the countries that are taking part in the pilot phase of the e-schools programme took place on 13-16 May 2004 in Johannesburg. Implementation of the first phase of the pilot project, in which 100 schools will be participating from countries that have acceded to the APRM, is due to start in July 2004.

President Wade of Senegal briefed the Summit on a Ministerial Conference on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) that took place in

African Union, President Chissano of Mozambique, was attended by the Heads of State and Government from Algeria, Botswana, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sao Tome and Principe and South Africa.

The Chairman of the HSGIC, President Obasanjo of Nigeria, said that the key development challenges facing Africa and NEPAD were: changing the negative perceptions of Africa, and ensuring Africa remains the focus of the international community; the need for Africans to take charge of their destiny; meeting the Millennium Development Goals; and eradicating poverty. He stressed the need for Africa to remain united in addressing these challenges.

Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairman of the NEPAD Steering Committee, presented his progress report which concentrated on follow up actions on programme implementation and advocacy.

The meeting noted that there has been a delay in the start of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) reviews, with the APR Panel beginning the first review -- of Ghana -- on 25th May.

The HSGIC mandated the Steering Committee to work with the APR Panel to speed up the reviews, and report back to the next HSGIC meeting on how to fast-track the implementation of the APRM.

The meeting noted the importance of ensuring that the APRM is implemented to demonstrate Africa's commitment to its own ideals.

Agriculture

The Summit was briefed on the PAN-Africa Cassava Programme, which is being developed by the NEPAD Secretariat in consultation with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA).

The meeting noted that the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has made funding available to 49 countries for medium-term investment programmes to fast-track the implementation of NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

Infrastructure

In noting progress with regional infrastructure projects, the Summit called for increased focus on implementation and urged countries to make full and effective use of the NEPAD Project Preparation Facility and save money for implementation of planned

Dakar, Senegal on 19-21 April 2004. The conference was aimed at coordinating African positions on major issues for discussion with the international community, including the setting up of a Ministerial body on ICTs, and the building of consensus on a document to be presented to the next AU Summit.

Trade and Market Access

It was noted that since the Cancun meeting, there have been many meetings on reviving multilateral trade negotiations, including that of 3 May 2004 in Dakar. It was agreed there is a need for African countries to maintain cohesion in order to achieve progress in the multilateral negotiations with the industrialised world. The major challenge is the lack of concrete proposals to overcome constraints to reaching consensus for the benefit of African countries seeking long-term development opportunities.

The next meeting of the HSGIC will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, immediately before the second ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union on 6 July 2004.

In the next NEPAD Dialogue:

NEPAD Dialogue No. 51 will feature an interview with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Chairperson, Ms Marie-Angelique Savané of Senegal, on the current status of the African self-monitoring mechanism.

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projects.

The HSGIC was informed that the African Development Bank (ADB) had funded projects totalling US\$372.5m, and that the World Bank had funded projects totalling US\$570m. It was reported that the total budget required to fund all NEPAD infrastructure projects is US\$ 8.1 billion.

The important role of the ADB and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in the implementation of NEPAD infrastructure projects, was emphasised and the NEPAD Steering Committee was mandated to take leadership in the implementation of infrastructure projects.

The HSGIC requested the ADB to work with the Steering Committee to address obstacles to

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