



NEPAD Dialogue

Focus on Africa



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NEPAD awareness needs “passion”, Zambia’s President tells workshop

And his country joins APRM

ZAMBIA has notified the African Peer Review (APR) Secretariat of its decision to accede to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and is ready to be reviewed. This was announced by President Manawasa (right) in his statement -- read on his behalf by Foreign Minister Dr. K Mwansa -- officially opening the NEPAD National Sensitisation Workshop held in Livingstone, on the banks of the Zambezi River, on 10-12 September 2004.

The objective of the workshop was to increase awareness of NEPAD, its operations and programmes, and

the potential benefits, so as to enhance stakeholder participation in NEPAD activities.

President Mwanawasa told the workshop that awareness was critical to the success of NEPAD and was something that should be approached with “passion”.

The workshop was organised by Zambia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and jointly funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

About 60 participants from various sectors of Zambian society attended the workshop, including Government Ministers, MPs and senior officials, academia, NGOs, private sector, UN and intergovernmental institutions and other stakeholders.

The NEPAD Secretariat representatives were led by Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairman of the NEPAD Steering Committee and Head of the NEPAD Secretariat in South Africa.

NEPAD Country Coordinators from Kenya and Nigeria also attended the workshop to share their experiences, as well as representatives from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

Embassies and high commissions represented at the workshop included those of Angola, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Botswana, DR Congo, South Africa, India, the Netherlands, Nigeria, and Canada.

APRM Trust Fund

In his introductory address, Mr. Aeneas C. Chuma, the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Representative, described NEPAD as a truly historic initiative, and cited the support that UNDP had given to NEPAD since its establishment.

Saying that the APRM was a bold and novel initiative in NEPAD’s vision of Africa, determining its political and development agenda, he revealed that UNDP had established an APRM Implementation Trust Fund to finance the operational activities of the APR Panel and Secretariat, including support for country level activities. He noted that the APR Panel and Secretariat had agreed to hold the next ‘African Governance Forum’ in Kigali, Rwanda, in March, 2005.

A critical element

In his statement officially opening the workshop President Mwanawasa, described NEPAD as a “forward-looking and ambitious plan” developed by African leaders themselves to address the key challenges that Africa faces -- poverty, growth promotion, underdevelopment and marginalisation.

Echoing the remarks by the UN Resident Representative, the President said the APRM was one of the most critical elements of NEPAD. It would be used both to assess the level of governance and to foster the adoption of policies, standards, and practices that lead to political stability, high growth and sustainable development. It would enhance transparency and accountability in the leadership.

The President urged all stakeholders to participate to ensure that the ideals and aspirations of NEPAD succeed. He noted that NEPAD was not a programme for government alone but the involvement of all concerned. This was why awareness was critical to the success of NEPAD – something which should be approached with “passion”.

NEPAD Focal Point

Ambassador Simataa Akapelwa, Permanent Secretary in Zambia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said NEPAD signified a new partnership for the development of Africa. The old partnership was based on

the concept of donor-recipient relationship, while the new partnership under NEPAD was based on the pursuit of African common interest and mutual obligations – with programmes and projects set by Africans.

He revealed that President Mwanawasa had appointed an Inter-Ministerial Committee on NEPAD headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs serving as the focal point, and that a NEPAD Secretariat had now been established in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He further revealed that the Inter-Ministerial Committee had been holding meetings to speed up the implementation process for a National NEPAD Action Plan, which had led to the Sensitisation Workshop. The workshop would be followed by a series of programmes and activities to operationalise NEPAD in Zambia and various strategies would be developed to localise the NEPAD programmes.

Major challenges

Prof. Wiseman Nkhulu gave a very detailed presentation of NEPAD in terms of programme development, implementation and mobilisation of broad stakeholder support.

He said the major challenges facing NEPAD were: increasing the tempo of implementation with special attention to African Union (AU)/NEPAD flagship projects; increasing ownership and strengthening leadership at national and Regional Economic Community (REC) levels; and strengthening capacity to plan and promote implementation of cross-country projects both at the Secretariat and REC levels.

As Zambia moves ahead in launching NEPAD, Professor Nkuhlu saw the following challenges facing the country:

- Promoting the internalisation of NEPAD principles, values and priorities;
- Integration of NEPAD framework, projects and programmes in the national development plan;
- Identifying NEPAD infrastructure projects and promoting them in partnership with the SADC Secretariat and the NEPAD Secretariat.

Experiences in Kenya

In describing his country's experiences, Mr. Pete Odeng, NEPAD Chief Executive Officer in Kenya, said that, in adopting the NEPAD process, Kenya started by establishing a national NEPAD Steering Committee and a semi-autonomous national NEPAD secretariat. He emphasised that NEPAD was included as a special item in the national budget.

He identified the key lessons emerging from the Kenya NEPAD experience:

- Must be championed by the Head of State
- Should be integrated in each government ministry
- Should not be projected as a separate institution or project
- Should be visible and discussed in the media, in schools, in the buses, and so on
- Should be identified with some tangible development

Noting that NEPAD is predicated on regional integration and cooperation, he cited a number of challenges in organising NEPAD and stressed that this required a coordinating mechanism.

Experiences in Nigeria

Chief (Mrs) Chinyere Asika, the Head of NEPAD in Nigeria discussed the evolution of the NEPAD process in her country, especially the establishment of the NEPAD office – a country office mandated to promote and domesticate NEPAD programmes in Nigeria.

She stressed that NEPAD Nigeria is mandated to identify and work with partners in the public and private

sectors to develop, implement, and promote NEPAD programmes at country level.

Pointing workshop participants to the UN resolution (57/7) which recognises the need to establish NEPAD national offices, Mrs. Asika said that the Federal Government in Nigeria established an institutional arrangement in the Office of the President to operationalise NEPAD programmes at the country level.

She said the organisational structure of NEPAD was being developed in line with the five clusters of NEPAD programmes: 1) infrastructure development; 2) economic, corporate and political governance; 3) agriculture, trade and market access; 4) environment, population and urbanisation; and science, technology and human resource development.

Mrs. Asika said NEPAD Nigeria had been involved in various programmes and cited the Cassava Initiative as their flagship programme.

In concluding, she stressed that the success of NEPAD would depend largely on how the programmes were implemented at country level.

Opportunity for youth

As a representative of civil society, the Executive Director of True Christian Youth Outreach in Zambia, James Mwenda, noted that the global political and economic landscapes had been shifting rapidly following the globalisation process. He said this process was causing inequality and other problems in the world with serious implications for youth.

He said that Zambia, being a part of NEPAD, needed to create a suitable environment to make society, especially the youth, aware of the operations of NEPAD.

He said he was happy that NEPAD was giving young people the opportunity to participate in shaping their destiny.

Caution against bureaucracy

In his concluding remarks, Prof. Nkuhlu congratulated President Mwanawasa for championing the NEPAD cause in Zambia.

He urged the current generation of Africans to work hard so that Africa could move out of poverty and as an object of pity in the eyes of the world despite the continent's abundant resources.

Cautioning against creating another layer of bureaucracy, the Professor urged Zambia to proceed with speed in setting up the national NEPAD Steering Committee. He pledged that the NEPAD Secretariat would help Zambia in developing the national NEPAD structure, including the APRM.

Outlining the benefits of NEPAD, the Professor said there were unique opportunities for Zambia in agriculture and health.

He expressed great optimism that Africa would leapfrog into the future. Citing the examples of China and India, he felt that there was nothing that could stop Africa from making progress.

A shared vision

In closing the workshop, Zambia's Minister of Finance, Ng'andu Magande, said it had provided a strong foundation for identifying strategies and programmes for the NEPAD agenda at the national level as well as translating these programmes into national policies.

Reiterating the President's sentiments, the Minister proposed that preparations of the National Action Plan

for NEPAD should take a wide spectrum of consultations, involving seminars, meetings and workshops.

On NEPAD programmes, the Minister said the Government would narrow down specific areas of priority such as the implementation of short-term regional infrastructure programmes -- transport, energy, ICT, water and sanitation -- and implementation of the food security and agricultural development programmes.

The implementation of the NEPAD agenda would require a shared vision, he said, especially with other countries going through the same challenges and he pledged to work closely with these countries.

Calendar of Events

- **1 - 2 October**, APR Panel meeting, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 - **3 - 4 October**, Global Tillage Network Meeting, Nairobi, Kenya.
 - **4 - 5 October**, African Partnership Forum (Meeting between the NEPAD Steering Committee and G8 Leaders' Personal Representatives, other development partners, and OECD Member States), Washington DC, USA.
 - **7 - 12 October**, UN-Inter Agency Task Force: prepCom for the Second World Conference on Disaster Management in Geneva, Switzerland.
 - **11 - 14 October**, World Food Programme Executive Board Regular Session, Rome, Italy.
 - **14 - 15 October**, World Food Prize International Symposium Award Ceremony, Des Moines, Iowa, USA.
 - **14 - 15 October**, NEPAD / Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS) Seminar, Libreville, Gabon.
 - **22 - 23 October**, NEPAD Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 - **25 October**, NEPAD advisory panel meeting, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 - **1 - 2 November**, Water Centres of Excellence Workshop, Botswana. **(postponed to early 2005)**
 - **22 - 23 November**, NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSIGC) Meeting, Algiers, Algeria.
 - **22 - 25 November**, Conference on Successes in African Agriculture, Nairobi, Kenya.
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Contact

General Manager - Communications and Outreach

Ms. Thaninga Shope-Linney

Tel: +27(0)11 313 3331

Fax: +27(0)11 313 3778

Manager – Publications and Editorial

Ms. Mundia Kunyanda

Tel: +27(0)11 313 3161

Fax: +27(0)11 313 3778

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MMi Concord

Tel: +27 (0)21 421 0646/48/70

Fax: +27 (0)21 425 8249

Email: info@mmiconcord.com

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