



NEPAD Dialogue

Focus on Africa



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Top-level Dialogue and three-year review of NEPAD progress



Nigeria's President Obasanjo

A high-level NEPAD Stakeholder Dialogue – marking the third anniversary of the founding of NEPAD – will be held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Gauteng, South Africa, on 22-23 October 2004. The theme of the Dialogue is “Building a Greater Africa for a Greater Humanity”.

NEPAD Heads of State and Government from Algeria, Egypt, Mozambique, Nigeria and Senegal have been invited to the Dialogue by President Thabo Mbeki, as well as the Chairperson of the African Union, Alpha Konare, African Ministers involved with NEPAD, and other international dignitaries.

Stakeholders will include the NEPAD Steering Committee, Regional Economic Communities, development partners, multilateral and bilateral institutions, civil society and the private sector.

Guests will be welcomed to the Dialogue by President Mbeki, followed by the official opening by President Obasanjo of Nigeria.

One of the highlights will be the presentation of the NEPAD three-year review by Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu, head of the NEPAD Steering Committee.

The Dialogue is intended to provide a platform for an objective assessment of what has been achieved in the three-year life-span of NEPAD. The assessment will be done through the presentation of papers on the core themes of NEPAD, followed by sectoral presentations on selected priority areas of NEPAD.

Key strategic interventions

The Dialogue will be structured into two sessions. The first will focus on presentations and discussions of papers in key thematic topics under the overall theme “Conditions for Sustainable Development”. The second will focus on sectoral presentations and discussions of papers in selected sectoral priority areas.

Each thematic presentation will make recommendations on key strategic interventions in the next 3-5 years in order to accelerate the implementation of NEPAD, and deepen its ownership and leadership by Africans.

Thematic presentations will be made in the following areas:

- Resolution of conflicts and progress towards Peace and Security
- Progress towards Democracy, Political and Economic and Corporate Governance, including APRM

Sectoral presentations will be made in:

- Infrastructure
- Agriculture
- Health, including HIV/AIDS
- Education
- Science and Technology
- Environment
- ICT

In addition presentations are expected around the role of the African Union in forging stronger links of cooperation between African nations; the contribution of the African Development Bank (AfDB) to NEPAD; the role of civil society in rallying African nations in implementing NEPAD; and the role of the private sector in implementing NEPAD with a view to increasing investment on the African continent.

Focus on progress

The presentations will focus on progress achieved to date in selected priority sectors, highlighting success factors for each sectors, as well as the challenges for accelerated implementation.

The sectoral presentations will conclude by proposing the required strategic interventions for each sector that will bring about accelerated implementation.

The NEPAD Annual Report 2003-2004 will be launched at the Dialogue, and there will also be an exhibition, showcasing progress achieved in the implementation of NEPAD in the past three years.

Where it all began

It was in July 2001 at the 37th and last Summit of the Organisation of African Unity [OAU] that the New Partnership for Africa's Development was adopted as the socio-economic development programme of the African Union.

The founding document of NEPAD highlights the fact that NEPAD is the new agenda for the renewal of the African continent, based on African ownership and leadership.

Paramount to this agenda is the active engagement and participation of the people, who have given the mandate to their leaders to articulate and implement the development agenda on their behalf.

NEPAD is for a fundamental socio-economic transformation of the African continent, a transformation that will end the scourge of underdevelopment by increasing the role of Africa in the world economy from that of a supplier of cheap labour and raw materials to that of producing and providing goods and services with high knowledge and technology content.

Since the adoption of NEPAD three years ago, a number of developments have taken place both internationally, and continentally, as well as sub-regionally. Some have been as a result of NEPAD, while others have occurred independently of NEPAD, but with far-reaching ramifications for NEPAD.

AU - a landmark event

On the African front, the launch of the African Union in 2002 was a landmark event, further demonstrating the resolve of African leaders to build a strong institutional base to implement Africa's development agenda, which includes peace and security, democracy and human rights, continental integration and development.

On the international scene, increasing global insecurity has caused concern among African leaders that the attention and resources of the international community would be diverted from Africa to the war on terrorism and the war in Iraq and related activities.

In the trade arena, the failure of the international community to make a breakthrough during the multilateral trade negotiations in Cancun, Mexico in September 2003 resulted in a stronger resolve by African countries to remain united in their cause for a fair trade system.

The NEPAD founding document further elaborates on the need for a new partnership between Africa and its partners, a partnership that is based on mutual respect and accountability as well as responsibility.

Challenging the mindset

The conditions that necessitated the development of NEPAD are still challenging, despite the strides that are being made in changing the mindset both in Africa and the international community on the

need for more concerted efforts in addressing Africa's development needs.

Africa still faces huge institutional capacity gaps, including those related to Regional Economic Communities (RECs), which are the building blocks of the African Union, and have been designated to take the lead coordinating role in the implementation of NEPAD programmes.

One of the key challenges facing NEPAD is the translation of continental sectoral programme frameworks, adopted and endorsed by Ministers and Heads of State and Government, into national policies and programmes, as well as country financial contributions.
Ownership by Africans

The main thrust for NEPAD in this area in the next few years will be to ensure that the continental frameworks are integrated into sub-regional and national development frameworks.

This will include further popularisation of NEPAD, and the deepening of its ownership by Africans at all levels.

On the partners' side, the resource commitments made in the past few years, such as those arising out of the Conference for Financing for Development held in Monterrey in 2002, and in the G8 Africa Action Plan of the same year, still need to be translated into a reality.

In the same vein, the need to transform the previous donor focus on short-term project funding into long-term development support remains a top priority.

NEPAD appoints top advisor on gender and CSO affairs

AN Office of Gender and Civil Society Organisations has been created by the NEPAD Secretariat as a direct response to recommendations by different stakeholders and experts.

The creation of this office is a culmination of a series of consultations and engagements between the NEPAD Secretariat and the stakeholders, which started in 2002 and climaxed at the African Union Summit in Maputo, in July 2003.

It reinforces the commitment by the Secretariat to gender issues and is a demonstration of the Secretariat's desire to actively involve CSOs as NEPAD projects move to the implementation stage.

Ms Litha Musyimi-Ogana, a gender and civil society leader, has been appointed to head the office.

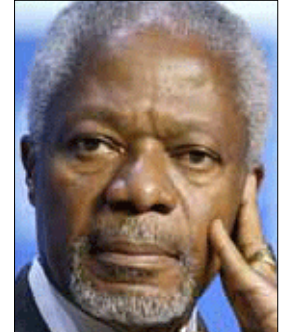
She brings to the NEPAD Secretariat over 20 years of knowledge and expertise in development work as well as cross-sector experience, having worked in the public service, private and civil society sectors.

Ms Musyimi-Ogana has been in the forefront in advocating for economically and socially just engendered government policies and has played a key advocacy role in influencing government policy nationally, regionally and internationally, including the United Nations.

Before joining NEPAD, she was the Regional Director of the African Centre for Empowerment, Gender and Advocacy and also served as a Senior Advisor Gender and Governance with the Women's Environment and Development Organisation based in New York. She previously worked for the Ministry of Finance in

Kenya and headed a national NGO among others.

NEPAD needs more donor support, says Kofi Annan



ALTHOUGH African countries are making considerable progress in carrying out NEPAD's programme and projects, they still need "firmer and more coherent support" from the international community to meet the serious challenges they continue to face, according to UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan (right), in his second annual report on NEPAD's implementation.

This international support, he says, should entail more aid, debt relief, foreign investment and trade opportunities. It also should involve greater consistency in external policies, so that advances on one front are not undercut by lags on another.

The Secretary-General's report cites progress in strengthening Africa's own peacekeeping capacities, as well as in advancing the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the voluntary process by which African leaders agree to subject their standards of democracy, human rights, governance and economic management to review by other Africans.

So far 23 countries, nearly half of Africa's total, have joined the APRM, and several more are considering joining. Between May and July 2004, the mechanism's first support missions travelled to Ghana, Rwanda, Mauritius and Kenya to prepare for their reviews.

To develop Africa's physical infrastructure, the Secretary-General says, NEPAD's Heads of State Implementation Committee has approved a list of 20 "top priority" projects, in energy, transport, water and sanitation and information and communications technologies.

Private sector finance

Although the World Bank and African Development Bank have already earmarked some financing, about half of the estimated total cost of US \$8.1 billion is expected to come from the private sector.

While the international community is now beginning to provide more support to Africa, the report emphasises, this assistance is sometimes not well coordinated, limiting its effectiveness. Moreover, international policies and practices on aid, debt, trade and investment often are inconsistent, with shortcomings in one area undermining progress in another.

The Secretary-General's report, for example, notes that the overall level of aid to Africa has increased during the past couple years. According to donor country figures, total official development assistance to the

region reached US \$22.2 billion in 2002 (up from just \$16.4 billion in 2000). Preliminary UN estimates project that it may have reached \$23.1 billion in 2003.

Yet this is still below the \$26.6 billion in aid Africa received in 1990. And most of the financing won through aid inflows continues to be lost through high debt-servicing payments. In 2002 alone, Africa paid \$21.9 billion in external debt-servicing costs, almost the same amount it received in aid that year.

So far, 23 African countries have received some debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. However, even for the 11 African countries that have reached the HIPC stage at which they are eligible for extensive debt cancellation, observes the Secretary-General, there is not much hope for "debt sustainability."

As a result, "there is now an increasing call for a new framework for debt sustainability" that goes beyond HIPC.

Agriculture problems

Donor aid policies and international trade practices are also contradictory, the UN report emphasises.

Africa's share of the world market has declined dramatically since 1970, reports the Secretary-General, bringing estimated losses of income of about \$70 billion a year, almost five times what Africa receives in aid annually.

The continent especially needs reforms in agricultural trade, he says, including elimination of agricultural subsidies in developed countries, which place Africa's agricultural exports at a competitive disadvantage.

The Secretary-General urges Africa's partners to better align their policies in these different areas.

"Improved policy coherence," he says, "promises to be a virtuous link in the cycle of increased and effective aid, reformed trade policies and debt relief by developed countries towards Africa."

Africa's budget commitments

About half of the Secretary-General's report looks at the actions that Africans themselves have undertaken over the past year.

African countries, he reports, are seeking to gradually align their budgetary spending with NEPAD priorities. They have committed themselves, for example, to allocate 15 per cent of their national budgets to health and 10 per cent to agriculture. About 5 per cent of both national and local budgets should be earmarked for water and sanitation, while spending on science and technology should rise to 1 per cent of gross domestic product within five years.

This process is likely to be slow, says the report, since most African countries face severe fiscal constraints and are bound by budgetary agreements negotiated with external financing institutions.

In addition, the share of external aid devoted to agriculture in Africa has been declining, while the health sector is losing professionals both to emigration and to the ravages of the HIV/Aids pandemic.

More women involved

There have been advances in promoting women's involvement in NEPAD implementation, the report notes. Out of the seven members of the African Peer Review Mechanism's Panel of Eminent Persons, three are women, one of whom is the panel's chair. Several women hold high-ranking positions representing their governments on the NEPAD Steering Committee and several also hold senior positions in the NEPAD

Secretariat.

As the implementation of NEPAD moves forward, the Secretary-General concludes, a "strengthened partnership" is needed.

Within that partnership, African countries would "deepen their commitments" to NEPAD priorities, while the continent's development partners should take a series of "carefully targeted" measures to give a major impetus to the African plan.

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.
- **12 - 13 October**, Global African Business Titans conference, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.
- **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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