

OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEPAD PROGRAMME SINCE THE G8 SUMMIT HELD IN KANANASKIS, CANADA IN JUNE 2002

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to thank the AFD most sincerely for organising this very important conference in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). I am particularly pleased with the theme of the conference which is "Policy for Infrastructure Development in Africa". African countries, both individually and collectively need essential infrastructure for two reasons; first to provide essential services to the poor and secondly to unleash the vast economic potential of the African continent that remains hidden, inaccessible and undeveloped. Sustained high economic growth and development will remain elusive as long as the provision of essential infrastructure is not included as an essential element of a comprehensive, integrated development plan for Africa.

The NEPAD programme has progressed through three different stages of development. The first stage formally commenced in September 2000 when the Steering Committee was established to develop the vision and policy framework document from the concept paper initially prepared by the President of the Republic of South Africa. The end product of this stage was the approval of the Vision and Policy Framework Document by the OAU Summit in Lusaka, Zambia in July 2001.

The Lusaka Summit also launched stage two. The signal to begin stage two was the adoption of the resolution establishing the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSIC) with a mandate to develop further the NEPAD programme. At its first meeting in October 2001, the HSIC instructed the Steering Committee and the Secretariat to prepare a detailed implementation plan for the pursuit of the NEPAD priorities, as outlined in the NEPAD Vision and Policy Framework document.

The implementation plan was completed in June 2002 with the assistance of partner organisations such as the ECA and the ADB and approved by the HSIC under the title “NEPAD Initial Action Plan”. It covers all the NEPAD priority areas and has annexures that contain detailed sectoral plans. Stage two came to a close with the approval of the NEPAD Initial Action Plan by the AU Summit in July 2002.

We are now in stage three which is implementation. In stage two, we produced the following detailed sectoral plans:

- ❖ Democracy, political, economic and corporate governance, including the African Peer Review Mechanism base document;
- ❖ Health – with an emphasis on communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and strengthening of health systems;
- ❖ Agriculture – with four strategic thrusts; extension of the area under sustainable land management and reliable water control

systems, improving rural infrastructure and market access, increasing food security and strengthening research and technology development;

- ❖ Market Access – identification of key issues and strategies to increase access of African products to the markets of developed countries and addressing supply constraints, as well as improving intra-Africa trade;
- ❖ Education – Actions required to achieve universal primary education by 2015 and development of centres of excellence;
- ❖ Infrastructure – Acceleration of the provision of key national and trans-boundary infrastructure, covering energy, transport, water and sanitation and ICT. Top priority projects are contained in the Short-term Action Plan – Infrastructure document.

The preparation of detailed plans for other priority areas including diversification of production and exports, science and technology, strengthening of the private sector, mobilisation of increased private sector investments, ODA reforms, debt relief, is ongoing. The detailed plans listed above will also be updated on a regular basis.

Parallel to the development of the detailed implementation plan, the African leaders embarked on a process of engaging the leaders of the G8 countries. The thrust of the message was that, for Africa to achieve and sustain high economic growth and self-reliant development, a new partnership should be developed

between the African leaders and the African people on the one hand and between the African countries and the developed countries on the other.

The NEPAD document spells out the principles, values and commitments that must underpin the new partnerships. The principles and commitments that are advocated for the new partnership between the African leaders and the African people are; democratic governance, respect for human rights, good economic and corporate governance, responsible and accountable leadership and the building of a capable state. On the other hand, the key principles and commitments that are advocated for the partnership with the developed countries are mutual respect, responsibility, accountability and an equitable world order.

In response to the NEPAD vision and invitation by the African leaders, the G8 countries prepared the G8 Africa Action Plan which spells out how they are going to support the implementation of NEPAD as an African owned and led initiative. The Africa Action Plan was adopted by the G8 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada in June 2002.

In addition to the G8, the African leaders promoted NEPAD among other developed countries, the multilateral development finance institutions and the countries of the South. As a result, NEPAD has become truly the internationally approved development policy framework for the African Continent. This position was confirmed by the United Nations when it passed a resolution in November 2002 calling on the international community to support the

implementation of the programme and by the Secretary-General when he instructed all UN Agencies operating in Africa to work within the context of the NEPAD policy framework and to co-ordinate their programmes with NEPAD.

Returning to the work programme of the NEPAD process, from August 2002, the focus is on facilitating and supporting implementation. The Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee continues to provide leadership. It meets every quarter to review progress and to take decisions on strategic issues. The extended Steering Committee which is composed of personal representatives of the Heads of State and Government who serve on the HSIC, meets more regularly. Its primary function is overseeing the work of the Secretariat.

The Secretariat is located in Midrand, South Africa. It is responsible for co-ordinating the preparation of NEPAD projects and programme, mobilising technical and financial support, facilitating and supporting implementation, providing information and promoting the programme in Africa and internationally, liaising with development partners, especially the developed countries and multilateral development institutions, mobilising private sector participation, representing the programme at development fora and monitoring and reporting on progress.

Currently, the Secretariat is comprised of 10 professional staff seconded by the governments of South Africa, Algeria, Nigeria and Egypt, 5 professionals on short term contracts, 6 outreach and communications staff on short term contracts and 8 administration

and finance support staff. There is an urgent need for at least 10 additional professionals. The core costs are largely covered by contributions from the promoting African countries and funding for special projects like workshops, conferences, and feasibility studies is sourced from development partners.

Having described the supportive and energising role of the Steering Committee and the Secretariat, I want to emphasise that NEPAD has not replaced national governments and Regional Economic Communities. They have line responsibility for socio-economic development in the communities that they represent. They are the parties that must assume contractual responsibility for projects. NEPAD's role is to strengthen political leadership and to champion political, social and economic transformation and renewal throughout the continent. Of course, ownership, promotion and championing of individual projects must firstly be done at a country and/or regional level. NEPAD's role is to champion the renewal agenda throughout the continent and to forge a new relationship with the rest of the world, especially the developed countries and multilateral organisations.

Bearing in mind that to achieve the primary objective of NEPAD which is African renewal, it is crucial that the programme be promoted in each and every African country and that there be participation by all sectors of society, NEPAD national task teams are being established in every African country. The task teams are co-ordinated by governments and are composed of representatives of civil society, business and government. NEPAD National Task Teams have been established in a number of

countries including South Africa, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Cameroon, Kenya and Gabon. The Plan is to ensure that every African country has its own structure responsible for promoting NEPAD principles, values and priorities.

Currently the NEPAD process has six strategic thrusts; supporting the implementation of the political and economic transformation agenda, leading the preparation of AU positions on matters that require continental co-ordination, such as negotiations on market access, debt relief and ODA reforms, monitoring and taking appropriate action to ensure that Africa meets the Millennium Development Goals, facilitating and supporting the implementation of top priority projects in infrastructure and agricultural development, nudging, supporting and pushing countries and Regional Economic Communities to accelerate the pace of project implementation and engaging the multilateral development finance institutions.

Conflict resolution is a top priority of the NEPAD leaders. As a consequence, conflicts that have been raging for many years are being tackled with much more determination. African countries are committing their own resources to conflict resolution. Unfortunately, as peace is being restored in Angola and noticeable progress being registered in the Democratic Republic of Congo, new problems have erupted in the Central African Republic and Côte d'Ivoire.

On the international front, there are new developments that signal an increased commitment by the developed countries to conflict

resolution, peace making and peace keeping in Africa. This is evidenced not only by increased financial support, but also by interventions in countries like Sierra Leone and more recently Côte d'Ivoire.

The decision by the G8 countries to work with Africa in developing a joint plan for strengthening the capacity for peace support operations, both at AU and regional levels, is a most significant development indeed. The joint task team will submit its report to the G8 Summit in Evian, France in June 2003. My appeal is for increased support of African efforts on conflict resolution by the international community.

Arrangements for launching the African Peer Review process are on track. The determination of criteria, standards and indicators has been completed and the modalities for operationalising the process have been finalised. The objective of the African Peer Review Mechanism is to promote the adoption of successful and best practices in development as well as good political, economic and corporate governance. It is about enabling African countries to improve economic growth and development through sharing of experiences and reinforcement of best practices.

The HSIC will give its final approval on 8 March 2003 and the first reviews will start soon thereafter. The Independent Panel of Eminent Persons, which will be responsible for quality assurance of the process, will be announced within the next two months.

Much as the African people and their leaders appreciate the need for thorough evaluation of projects before financial resources are committed, there is great concern about the slow pace of the multilateral development institutions and development partners in assessing and approving infrastructure projects in Africa.

As NEPAD, we accept that constructing roads, railways and electricity networks just because Africa has less infrastructure than Europe is not the right thing to do. But, at the same time we say there can be no significant scaling up of agriculture, no provision of essential services to the majority of the people, no integration of African economies and no realisation of the tourism potential of the continent; in short, no sustainable poverty reduction and development, unless infrastructure is recognised and supported as an integral component of a comprehensive approach to development.

Many African countries have adopted the correct macro-economic policies and are giving priority to poverty reduction and are committed to good political and economic governance, but they are not able to extricate themselves from the vicious cycle of poverty because, among other things, they cannot attract high levels of investment for the simple reason that their economies are small and have weak or no linkages with neighbouring countries. We admit that this is not only an infrastructure issue, but provision of infrastructure will contribute in alleviating the constraint.

NEPAD produced a Short-term Action Plan on Infrastructure in July last year. The plan was prepared under the leadership of the

African Development Bank, with the participation of the RECs, the World Bank and the European Development Fund. The projects have the full support of the countries and sub-regions concerned. The frustration now is that there is virtually no movement. There is no visible urgency on the part of the multilateral development agencies and the development partners. There is no increased tempo in the assessment of projects. Things continue as if there is no crisis.

It is well known that African countries lack capacity to promote the projects and to engage the development finance institutions, but this has been the case for decades. Surely, there must be a way of addressing the problem.

I appeal to all development finance institutions to increase their support to Africa. The projects that have been in the pipeline for many years must be fast-tracked. There must be increased co-operation and exchange of information among development agencies. NEPAD must be seen to have ushered in a new beginning, otherwise the African people will be overwhelmed by disappointment and hopelessness.

I urge you to study the NEPAD Short-Term Action Plan on Infrastructure and also take into account commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. These two documents will give you a good idea about what you can do either individually or collectively in Africa. Energy, water and sanitation are top priorities that the international community has endorsed in a number of fora.

We monitor developments in health and education as well and the picture is not encouraging. Yes, the Global Health Fund has allocated significant funding to Africa and the United States has announced an additional US\$15 billion for HIV/AIDS, which is appreciated, but there is no coordinated response or pooling of resources to cut transaction costs and to enhance the impact. There is no progress on many of the priorities identified in the NEPAD Health Programme. No progress towards developing a sustainable health systems programme, not much in developing a code of conduct for the international recruitment of health professionals. Again, there is a need for increased efforts by Africa and the development partners.

We have initiated processes on market access, debt relief and ODA reform. We will be accelerating the pace in the coming months.

Before I conclude I would like to highlight the food crisis in Ethiopia and Eritrea and in a number of countries in Southern Africa. We believe that the situation in these two regions is a great challenge to Africa and the international community.

It challenges all of us to demonstrate that the United Nations Millennium Declaration marked a break with the past. Poverty is now the priority. People in these countries live in conditions of extreme poverty and face acute food insecurity every three to five years – this is the fundamental issue, quite apart from the current crisis.

My appeal is that we must take this as an opportunity to work together to address the underlying factors in a manner that empowers people as well as protects their dignity. In other words, we must assist them through an internationally co-ordinated programme to produce food for themselves and to feed themselves on a sustainable basis.

In conclusion, Africa continues to make progress with the implementation of NEPAD. Efforts to end conflicts have been intensified and the APRM will be operational by the middle of the year. Dialogue among African leaders on democracy, political and economic governance is increasing.

On the development front, lack of capacity remains a big constraint. NEPAD is working with the RECs to ensure that linkages with development partners are strengthened and capacity building given urgent attention. NEPAD continues to engage the private sector and development finance institutions. The dialogue has been intensified but there is still no visible scaling up of development support and investment.

I sincerely hope that this conference will make a significant contribution by sensitising everyone to the need for action. Africa is in a crisis. As development partners, you cannot continue with business as usual. This is also true of Africa. As indicated earlier, I believe that NEPAD is energising Africa. The challenge is to sustain the energy through visible breakthroughs. Today, let us agree on new breakthroughs that will give hope to Africa.