

NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD)

ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PRIORITIES ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Monday 20 October 2003 (1.30 – 5.00 p.m.)

SESSION AGENDA & INTRODUCTORY REPORT

SESSION AGENDA

1. Transport Infrastructure in Sub-Saharan Africa

Mr. Peter COPLEY (The Development Bank of Southern Africa/SOUTH AFRICA)

2. NEPAD's short-term action plan for road infrastructure

Mr. Alex RUGAMBA (The African Development Bank/UGANDA)

3. The role of research and how it could assist NEPAD in achieving its goals

Mr. Phil HENDRICKS

(The Global Research Alliance, English-speaking Secretary of PIARC C20/SOUTH AFRICA)

4. Panel Discussion and Closure

Moderator:

The NEPAD Secretariat

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1. THEME

The theme of the Special Session is “NEPAD – Addressing the social, economic and political priorities on the African Continent”. NEPAD, a pledge by African leaders on a common vision and firm and shared conviction to eradicate poverty on a path of sustainable growth and development, strives towards Africa’s active participation in the world economy and political bodies. Through this new relationship and partnership, this programme consolidates the relationship between Africa and the international community with a view to overcoming the development chasm that has widened over centuries of unequal relations.

NEPAD has as its primary objectives the eradication of poverty, placing Africa on a path of sustainable growth and development, halting the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process and accelerating the empowerment of women. To achieve this, the programme focuses on the reduction of the risk profile of doing business in Africa, the creation of conducive conditions for investment, increasing competitiveness in the world economy and transforming the relationship between developed countries, multilateral institutions and the continent on the basis of mutual responsibility and respect.

This Special Session will provide opportunities for policy makers and multilateral institutions to share their views and experiences on the three topics as set out by the NEPAD programme. These topics are “**Establishing the conditions for development**”, “**Identifying the priority sectors**” and “**Mobilising resources**”.

2. SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME

This Special session will begin on the afternoon of Monday 20 October and last for approximately three and a half hours.

In order to maximize participation, the format of the meeting will be arranged in two tier panels consisting of various specialists who will be afforded the opportunity to provide their views and experiences on the questions posed. The session will consist of a first session of approximately 1 hour 10 minutes during which presentations on the three topics will be delivered. This session will be followed by a 30 minutes break where after a second session will continue with questions to the panels of approximately 1 hour 10 minutes.

3. INTRODUCTION TO THE SELECTED TOPICS

This Special Session is divided into three topics. The following is introductory briefs on the selected topics:

3.1 First topic - “Establishing the conditions for development”

Africa has long since recognised that peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and sound economic management are prerequisite conditions for sustainable development. .

For this session, the focus will be on good governance and sound economic management. One of the biggest problems faced by African countries today is the capacity to implement programmes coupled with a lack of regulatory and policy frameworks to ensure delivery of service while retaining good governance. Many countries also experience difficulty in promoting private sector growth and private sector initiatives in delivering traditionally state service and functions.

This session will examine the experiences of different countries and investigate programmes aimed at enhancing both economical and financial management coupled to the principles of corporate governance. It is expected that attendees will discuss the following:

- *promoting programmes to enhance good financial management,*
- *promoting policies and regulatory frameworks conducive to economic growth,*
- *developing assessment mechanisms with regard to corporate governance and financial management.*

3.2 Second topic - “Identifying the priority sectors”

The NEPAD programme has identified various priority sectors which include *inter alia* agriculture, health, education, information technology, energy, transport, water and the environment. The main thrust behind these sectors are the associated infrastructure and its development. The structural gap in infrastructure has already posed a very large handicap to economic growth and poverty reduction in many African countries. The question therefore remains as to how infrastructure can be provided and maintained and where to invest in infrastructure to ensure cost effective and efficiency. Although the cost of these infrastructure plays a large role in determining whether infrastructure can be provided, just as important is the reliability of such infrastructure. Cost effective and reliable infrastructure would serve both the economic growth needs of Africa while benefiting the international community in obtaining African goods more frequently, more cheaply and more reliable.

It will be expected that the following issues will be discussed:

- Improving the access to, affordability and reliability of infrastructure services,
- Enhancing regional cooperation and trade through expanded cross-border development of infrastructure,
- Increasing financial investments in infrastructure.

3.3 Third topic: “Mobilising resources”

To achieve higher levels of growth and more effective poverty reduction, Africa needs to mobilize additional resources, both domestic and foreign. These resources include national savings, household savings, more effective tax collection, the rationalization of government expenditure, the reduction of capital flight and the creation of conditions conducive to private sector investors – domestic and foreign. This session will discuss the perception of investors that Africa is a “high-risk” continent and countries’ experiences in addressing this perception. This topic will also introduce an investigation into the enhancement of entrepreneurial, managerial and technical capacities both of the public and private sector in order to improve Africa’s share in global trade.

It is expected that the following issues will be addressed:

- Addressing investors perception of Africa as “high-risk” investment,
- Financial instruments to mitigate risks associated with doing business in Africa,
- Principles of value addition for investments,
- Developing entrepreneurship, technical and managerial skills,
- Promoting Foreign Direct Investment.