

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ADVISER ON AFRICA (OSAA)

Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: July 2007 to June 2008

The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) provides support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) through its advocacy, analytical work and reporting at the global level.

High-Level Meeting on Africa's Development Needs

Following the adoption of Resolution 62/242 by the General Assembly, OSAA has been involved in substantive preparations for the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on "*Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward*" scheduled for 22 September 2008. OSAA's contribution included the preparation of the comprehensive Secretary-General's report for the High-Level Meeting. The report examined Africa's development needs and challenges, underlining the remaining obstacles to Africa's development. It also took stock of all the main pledges made by both the African countries and the international community, including the UN system, to address these challenges, and assessed their state of implementation.

The report concluded that meeting Africa's development needs is within reach, provided that the African countries and the international community act with resolution to turn existing pledges into results and words into practice. The report offered a number of practical recommendations on steps that should be taken by the African countries and the international development partners to accelerate progress towards meeting Africa's development needs.

Advocacy

OSAA, as the convener of the Advocacy Cluster, is tasked with coordinating global advocacy in support of NEPAD and acting as the NEPAD focal point at the United Nations Headquarters.

The primary objective of this cluster is to promote advocacy and support for NEPAD at the international, continental and regional levels. The eighth regional consultation meeting of the United Nations agencies, held in November 2007 noted that there is a need for increased communication and information sharing among the different clusters and that the NEPAD Secretariat needs to generate up-to-date information on NEPAD progress and implementation at country and regional levels. The cluster was asked to align with the strategic priorities of NEPAD which were articulated in the NEPAD Steering Committee document of March 2008.

Specifically the NEPAD Secretariat priorities include developing strong relations with the media and increasing interaction with diplomatic communities, development partners and international organizations. The cluster has met several times to develop and implement a joint cluster media activity funded in large measure by UNDP. A senior media dialogue event will be held for two days in Addis Ababa during the third quarter of 2008. The event is intended to improve communication about NEPAD amongst continental journalists by providing them with stories and up-to-date information about NEPAD projects and by creating opportunities for direct contact and interface with senior officials and decision makers from the NEPAD Secretariat and the African Union Commission.

Private sector

The private sector's critical role in the implementation of NEPAD has been well recognized both by the African leaders and the private sector institutions. In support of NEPAD's emphasis on the central role of the private sector in contributing to economic growth and job creation in Africa, OSAA undertook in 2007 a study on the *Private sector's institutional response to NEPAD: Review of Current Experience and Practices*, in three subregions: East Africa, West Africa and Southern Africa. The study, which built on an earlier report on the *Contribution of the private sector to the implementation of NEPAD* published in 2006, sought to explore whether the private sector associations and groups are organised for, aware of the opportunities and have the motivation to participate in the implementation of NEPAD programmes.

The study's policy recommendations included the need for institutional consolidation and strengthening of the private sector associations' capacity to broker strategic partnerships of all stakeholders and facilitate Public-Private Partnerships, as well as to secure requisite funding. The study also recommended that the NEPAD country offices or national focal points should formulate and implement a comprehensive NEPAD sensitization programme, specifically targeted to the private sector associations and private sector companies. As for African governments, they should ensure provision of adequate funding to NEPAD national focal point, as well as eliminating legal and institutional constraints hampering private sector participation in NEPAD projects.

The findings of the study were discussed at an Expert Group Meeting held in New York in November 2007. Among other issues, the meeting highlighted the importance of effectively integrating NEPAD priorities into African countries' economic programmes and the necessity to build the capacity of public sector, private sector and private sector associations.

OSAA also conducted a study on *Small-Scale Enterprise (SME) Development and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*. The inflow of FDI and the development of SMEs are both essential ingredients for economic growth in Africa. The study considered both elements and assessed the nature of the relationship between the two. In so doing, it sought to establish the requirements that are necessary for FDI to have an impact on SME development, and in particular the role of

governments and Transnational Corporations (TNCs). Clusters, local content, capacity building and skills training were analyzed as effective strategies for SME development. The study highlighted TNC-SME linkages as the optimal way of ensuring transference of the benefits of FDI to SMEs. These strategies need government intervention to a greater or lesser degree, and require the participation of all stakeholders for the development of SMEs in Africa and their competitiveness in the global market.

The Governance Dimension of the MDGs in Africa

In partnership with the United Nations University (UNU) and Cornell University, OSAA co-organized a symposium on *‘The Governance Dimension of the MDGs in Africa’* on 21 May 2008 at the UN Headquarters in New York. The symposium brought together academic experts on Africa, as well as practitioners from the UN, international organizations and NGOs with the objective to identify ways to strengthen governance and institutional development in Africa. In particular, OSAA organized a panel discussion on the Challenges of Increased Aid to Africa. The panel discussion reviewed the potential challenges resulting from increased aid to African countries and discussed appropriate policy responses. The meeting concluded that good governance and strengthening of institutional capacity in Africa are required for increased aid to result in sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. At the same time, there is a need for increased coordination and harmonization on the side of the donors.

Peace and security

OSAA organized a two-day Expert Group Meeting on *“Promoting Partnerships in Support of African Peer Review Mechanism implementation”* which was held on 15-16 November 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The main objective was to provide a forum for the sharing of experiences and best practices by countries which have undertaken the peer review or are well advanced in the APRM process and to identify ways in which the international community could best contribute to it. The main outcome of the meeting was a set of recommendations aimed at highlighting the value-added of the APRM and fostering increased support for it by all stakeholders. The meeting was attended by some 30 high-level representatives and experts from African governments, civil society and the private sector, APRM strategic partners, African regional economic communities, key continental institutions and independent experts. It contributed to supporting initiatives aimed at strengthening governance among African countries.

As a further contribution to peace and development efforts in Africa, OSAA organized the *Second International Conference on DDR and Stability in Africa* in collaboration with the Government of the DRC which was held from 12 to 14 June 2007 in Kinshasa, DRC with financial assistance from the Governments of Belgium and Sweden. The overall objective of the Conference was to improve the effectiveness of DDR programmes in Africa in promoting peace and development in post-conflict situations. The Conference was attended by some 200 practitioners and experts from 19 African countries, 17 international organizations and the international donor community. It focused on Africa-owned processes and on enhancing effective policy formulation and strategy

implementation in African DDR programmes. The main outcome of the Conference was a set of recommendations aimed at improving the implementation of various national DDR programmes in Africa, including the improvement of the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP) approach regarding the reintegration of ex-combatants. It also contributed to strengthening the network of African DDR practitioners and building DDR capacity among African stakeholders.