

**REMARKS BY THE SPECIAL ADVISER ON AFRICA MR. JOSEPH
LEGWAILA AT LAUNCH OF JOINT OECD-ADB ANNUAL AFRICAN
ECONOMIC OUTLOOK ON TUESDAY 23 MAY 2006
AT THE UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS**

Under-Secretary-General Ocampo, Mr. Mohamed Salisu, Senior Economist, African Development Bank, Ms. Céline Kauffman, Economist, OECD Development Centre, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to be able to join you this afternoon at the launch of this important report prepared through effective collaboration between the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the African Development Bank (ADB). At a time when we still hear the refrain that good data on Africa is impossible to find, it is indeed refreshing to read this wide-ranging, well written report.

We welcome OECD work on Official Development Assistance, on better coordination between donors and recipients and on mutual accountability.

We applaud the bold initiatives my brother Donald Kaberuka has already taken at the African Development Bank, and the critical role the institution, under his dynamic leadership, is playing in carrying forward Africa's development agenda.

Now, a word or two on the report itself.

First, I welcome the fact that the theme of this year African Economic Outlook is the promotion and financing of transport infrastructure. This is an important and topical issue. Infrastructure is a major priority of NEPAD and its availability is crucial to the attainment of the MDGs. The detailed analysis and recommendations will, I am sure, contribute to on-going efforts to address this problem.

Second, it is refreshing and illuminating to have a report which covers the whole of Africa, including North Africa, thereby providing a more holistic, accurate perspective, embracing the entire region.

Third, I am also particularly pleased to see an economic report address political questions, and effectively discuss issues of governance, including corruption. We know that fiscal and monetary reforms, and economic restructuring in general, without the necessary improvements in political governance, will not lead to long-term solutions to Africa's problems. It is therefore, particularly gratifying to see this economic report also touching on these seemingly non-economic matters.

Moreover, the report has succinctly articulated the progress towards democracy made in a number of African countries through elections in 2005, and highlighted the decrease in political instability in conflict zones in and around the continent.

It is important to reinforce, however, the reality that war remains the strongest threat to democracy and human rights in Africa; the international community, through the United Nations system, must do all it can to keep the wind of peace blowing through the continent. It is therefore not surprising that nearly three-quarters of the global peacekeeping operations of the United Nations and approximately sixty percent of its approved resources were stationed in the African continent during the last year.

OSAA, under my leadership, will work closely and effectively with the OECD Secretariat and particularly, with the African Development Bank in support of Africa.

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming my personal commitment, and that of OSAA, to continue close collaboration with DESA under the effective leadership of my colleague, Mr. Ocampo, in support of the African agenda.

Thank you.