



CHALLENGES OF APRM IMPLEMENTATION

Presented

By

Ambassador Ashraf Rashed,

Member of Panel of Eminent Persons of APRM

High Level Panel Discussion

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Mr Chairman

Distinguished Participants,

At the outset, I wish to stress that it is indeed an honour to have H.E Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General inaugurate this timely High Level Panel Discussion. His address is a clear manifestation of the priority the UN System and the Secretary General attach for enhancing stability, peace, economic and social development of our great continent, and the acknowledgement of the contribution of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in that regard.

I equally express our gratitude for H.E. the Under Secretary General and Special adviser on Africa, Maged Abdel Aziz for his role in organising the series of events taking place on the margins of the 68th Session of the General Assembly debate on Africa, focusing on the activities of NEPAD and APRM.

It is also befitting to commend the efforts of the Office of the Special Adviser (OSAA) in promoting the global advocacy for Africa's development process, including supporting the continent's home-grown initiatives to uphold the rule of law, respect for human rights, democracy and good governance, which are pre-requisites for Africa's growth and welfare.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As indicated by the previous distinguished speakers, the African Peer Review Mechanism is an Instrument voluntarily acceded to by Member States of the African Union, as a self-monitoring mechanism for the progress achieved by participating countries in adopting and implementing NEPAD's priorities and programme on Democracy and Good Governance.

It is an African initiative which recognises the link between Good Governance and Economic Development, and signifies a move by the African Union from the principle of non-interference to non-indifference, as supporting the processes of reform in a Member State became a collective responsibility of all Member States.

The review exercise carried by the Mechanism has to be technically competent, credible and free from political manipulation.

Certainly, since its inception, the African Peer Review Mechanism has made significant progress, in terms of the numbers of the countries that have acceded, the rolling-out of the review process, as well as the engagement of stakeholders and citizen participation in National dialogue on reform.

But we have to admit, that despite ten years of its existence and the achievements until now, challenges remain. In this context, I refer to the following:

1. The Mechanism has not witnessed yet the accession of all members of the African Union, and only 17 of the 33 APRM members have completed their first review.
2. The review process in several cases took more time than what is prescribed in the Base Document Guidelines (six months from the date of accession).
3. In some instances, difficulties arise in the implementation of the recommendations emanating from the Review and the related National Programme of Action (NPOA), as the latter became

a shopping list, a situation that limits the prospects of its implementation. Consequently there is need to harmonise and integrate the Programme of Action with the National Development Plans, and ensure adequate resources for its funding.

4. There is also a need to strengthen the link with NEPAD programmes, and to enhance APRM engagement with the Regional and Sub-Regional Economic Communities in the continent, and other Pan African Institutions.
5. The National Governing Council, which is an important element of the National Structures of APRM, should be institutionalised, and its responsibilities and mandate clearly defined and preserved.
6. The limited public awareness of the work of APRM has to be addressed by actively engaging with the civil society, and the media. It equally requires developing a communication strategy to ensure citizen participation in the process and popularise the Mechanism.
7. There are still capacity constraints to implement such a complex, resource intensive, technically demanding and participatory process.
8. Lastly but not least, we have to redouble our efforts to involve the African Diaspora in the APRM process, utilising their competence and skills in the service of Africa's development.

Distinguished participants,

Suffice it to say, we need to ascertain national ownership, inclusive participatory process, as well as the credible implementation of the review recommendations, and enhancing the effectiveness of APRM.

Accordingly, it was imperative at this juncture, the 10th Anniversary of the African Peer Review Mechanism, not only to reflect on the accomplishments so far, but more so on the challenges facing the process, and the prospects ahead.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts with you, and look forward to gain your support.

Thank you.