Africa’s Innovation in Governance through 10 Years of the African Peer Review Mechanism’

Check against delivery

Participation to the High-Level Panel Discussion on ‘Africa’s Innovation in Governance through 10 Years of the African Peer Review Mechanism’

Monday, 21 October 2013; 11:00 am to 13:00 pm, ECOSOC Chamber, UNHQ, New York

Intervention 15 min in the framework of session 1 (11h-12h), opening ceremony, comprising:
(i) Inaugural Address for the 2013 Africa-NEPAD Week by H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General
(ii) Statement by H.E. Mr. Tête ANTONIO, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations
(iii) Statement by Dr. Ibrahim Assane MAYAKI, Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency
(iv) Statement by Mr. Assefa SHIFA, Chief Executive Officer, APRM Secretariat

Mr. President of the General Assembly
Secretary General of the United Nations
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

Africa today requires transformation. More than achieving economic growth and reducing poverty, the continent’s future rests in concretising an inclusive development model for the benefit of all African citizens and for generations to come.

As a blueprint for the continent’s development in the 21st century, the NEPAD programme is about transforming Africa. Building on the policy process initiated with the Lagos Plan of Action (1980), the adoption of the NEPAD programme in 2001 at the highest political level and the establishment of the African Union in 2002 accelerated and more strongly embedded regional integration as the transformation strategy for the continent.

Since then, African countries have increased their planning capacities and their performance in achieving jointly defined benchmarks and policies. Strategic regional frameworks have been developed and are being implemented in areas spanning from agriculture and food security, to infrastructure and health. Mutually reinforcing linkages and coordination mechanisms between the national and regional levels are also being strengthened.
Under the NEPAD agenda, the continent has marked its resolve to take up its development challenges, in partnership with the international community, but with African ownership.

Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

The African State remains the driver and kingpin of the development and integration process. Successfully transforming Africa requires effective institutions at all levels, and more critically at the national level. Effective domestic governance is thus crucial to ensure that Africa is collectively achieving the desired results and outcomes defined in the NEPAD vision and strategic framework.

With the launch of the APRM in 2003, African states have collectively indicated their commitment to effective institutions, operating in a transparent and accountable manner. It is a bold, unique and innovative approach to governance designed and implemented by Africans for Africa.

Through the APRM, African countries diagnose governance deficiencies, share best practices and commit to implement solutions. This includes implementing transparent, predictable and credible government economic policies, as well as ensuring accountable, efficient and effective public office holders and civil servants. APRM process and findings – captured in the National Programmes of Action – have supported the institutionalization of domestic accountability and citizenship empowerment through increased democratic space and open discourse on governance.

Currently, about 80% of African citizens live in countries whose governments have committed to opening up their policy space and deepening their governance processes by voluntarily acceding to the APRM.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Africa is at a critical juncture. 7 of the 10 fastest growing economies in the world are in Africa. But Africa is also where social inequalities remain the starkest. The momentum for NEPAD implementation is gaining speed, with stronger institutions at country, regional and continental levels. The international context in which Africa operates is now more conducive to the formulation and implementation of its own development policies and strategies.

As the number of countries joining the APRM increases, we must continue to improve the quality and relevance of the instrument in addressing governance challenges hampering the transformation process. National Programmes of Action should therefore encompass clear, time-bound and measurable governance commitments within Africa’s priority sectors. Similarly, findings from the peer review process should be capitalised on to inform and thus improve and adapt the implementation of the NEPAD agenda.
Overall, synergies between the APRM outcomes and NEPAD implementation must be strengthened, for mutually supportive processes within the framework of the country’s strategic policy orientations. The onus is also on our institutions to apply the principles we advocate for better governance on the Continent.

In conclusion,

State-building is no longer solely an internal or domestic matter. It is shaped by the global, continental, regional and local commitments taken and processes initiated by African governments.

We have learned that Africa’s transformation requires the full support of its partners. As we step up our efforts and take charge of our development process, partners’ policies should align with African owned and led policies and complement our efforts, rather than determine the continent’s development process.

The stronger Africa’s own response and mechanisms for improving governance, the more sustainable results it will get from its transformation process.

I thank you.