

7 October 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the High-level Event to mark 10 years of NEPAD**

Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations
Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa,
Distinguished participants,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to join you for today's high-level panel discussion to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

NEPAD is an African-owned, African-led flagship programme for socio-economic and political development on the continent.

NEPAD's priorities – poverty eradication, sustainable growth, the empowerment of women – echo those of the Millennium Declaration. NEPAD is also the embodiment of African leadership and ownership of its development agenda. For this reason, these two frameworks should guide our joint efforts for Africa's development.

As we celebrate NEPAD's 10th anniversary, I would congratulate NEPAD for its contribution to remarkable economic success and social progress in Africa over the last decade. Social indicators, such as those for education and health, have significantly improved. Recently, Africa has been the home of six out of the ten fastest growing economies in the world. Africa is a growth pole and is increasingly attracting foreign direct investment.

This good performance was underpinned by sound macroeconomic policies and structural reforms. These took place in a context of a more stable political environment that has characterized an increasing number of African countries. The role for the private sector in economies has also expanded.

And the African Peer Review Mechanism has improved good governance and rule of law, thus creating the preconditions for sustainable and broad-based economic growth.

Yet it must be recognised that, despite this progress, critical challenges remain.

The majority of African countries are unlikely to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals by the 2015 deadline.

It is imperative, therefore, that we redouble our efforts. Focus is needed, in particular, on reducing extreme poverty, creating decent employment, and improving maternal and child health.

During the 66th Session of the General Assembly, one of the main focus areas I have identified is “Sustainable development and global prosperity”.

Here, the international community’s recommitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals will play a crucial role.

In the African context, making progress towards the MDGs will require lifting millions of people out of poverty and achieving sustainable development. An important component here is both political and financial commitment. NEPAD is an essential framework in this respect.

To improve effectiveness and efficiency of partnerships for Africa, and building on the Political Declaration of the Special Needs of Africa in 2008, the General Assembly has launched informal consultations on an important proposal. This proposal is for a monitoring mechanism to review commitments towards Africa’s development needs. It is intended that this mechanism will be operational by the end of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

I am pleased that this process will be co-facilitated by the Permanent Representatives of Sweden and Kenya.

While strengthening partnership with NEPAD, it is also important to look beyond aid. We must emphasize the need for a productive global partnership which includes mutually beneficial trade and investment relationships, as well as the protection of the global climate.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The tenth anniversary of NEPAD is an opportunity to renew the genuine partnership between African Member States and development partners. This partnership should capitalize and build upon achievements to-date.

Let me conclude by assuring you that Africa is - and will remain - a key priority of the General Assembly. We must work together to address Africa’s development needs, reaffirming our commitment to achieving the MDGs and strengthening our partnership within the NEPAD framework.

I wish you a successful meeting. Thank you.