



NEPAD PLANNING AND COORDINATING AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

African leaders commend NEPAD's role in Africa's transformation and regional integration

Sandton, June 13, 2015 - African leaders gathered this morning at the Sandton Convention Centre in South Africa for the 33rd NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation meeting.

Welcoming the delegation to the Opening Session, South African President Jacob Zuma commended NEPAD for keeping the dreams and potential of the African continent alive. He said, "the continent is now reaping the benefits of responsible macro-economic management and deepening integration into the world economy." President Zuma underscored that investments in infrastructure programmes, regional integration and intra-African trade is Africa's solution for sustainable growth and development.

African Union Chairperson and President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, applauded NEPAD's breakthroughs in project conceptualisation and implementation on the continent. He said "NEPAD has provided critical synergies between and among African institution, thereby enhancing a much needed continental integration". He urged the Agency to play a lead role in capacitating Regional Economic Communities to fast-track Africa's quest for industrialisation and value addition of its vast mineral resources. "Surely the African people cannot continue to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, while others delight in their resources, in our resources. With unwavering courage and collective determination, Africa can also industrialise in the same manner other regions have achieved industrialisation within the shortest period possible", President Mugabe said.

Newly elected President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, was welcomed to the HSGOC. As a founding member of NEPAD, Nigeria emphasised its continued commitment to championing NEPAD programmes and projects, said Ambassador B.Z. Lolo, Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs, reading a speech on behalf President Buhari. Ambassador highlighted commenced work on the Trans-Saharan gas pipeline from Nigeria to Algeria, as well as the Trans-Sahara Highway linking several African countries as key achievements of NEPAD. He referred to the NEPAD Agency as a strategic body for Africa's structural transformation.

The 20- membership NEPAD HSGOC met ahead of the 25th AU Assembly, to provide leadership to the NEPAD process as well as to set policies, priorities and the programmes of action.

Chair of the NEPAD HSGOC and President of Senegal, Macky Sall, underscored the achievements made by NEPAD in advancing regional integration through infrastructure and capacity development projects. He noted the need to tackle illicit financial flows from Africa and to enhance the capacities of African member countries to negotiate mining and oil contracts for the social benefit of African people. President Sall also commended the NEPAD Spanish Fund for African Women's Empowerment, in line with this year's Summit theme.

NEPAD Agency Chief Executive Officer, Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, reported back on concrete results made for the period January to June 2015. "We have achieved 313 results that each has had quantifiable impacts: 20 at the continental level, 30 at the regional level and 264 at the national levels. All the impacts demonstrated are geared towards the industrialization of the Continent", he said.

Some of the key achievements Dr Mayaki highlighted included the establishment of an Africa Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance aimed at reaching out to 25 million farmers by 2025, the launch of a Continental Business Network for Infrastructure financing in Africa, and providing access to clean water and sanitation to 9 656 women in Benin and Togo.

African Heads of State and Government will continue tomorrow at the two-day 25th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly scheduled for Sunday and Monday.

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About the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA)

The **NEPAD** Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), is a technical body and development vehicle of the African Union (AU). The NPCA is responsible for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (**NEPAD**), a strategic framework for pan-African socio-economic development. In order to address critical challenges facing the continent, the NPCA facilitates and coordinates development programmes and projects, pushing for partnerships, resource mobilisation, research and knowledge management.

