



Economic Commission for Africa

A service of the UN system-wide support to the African Union and its NEPAD Programme

NEPAD TODAY

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Lesotho hosts first UN meeting in support of NEPAD

The United Nations on June 1 signed an agreement with the Kingdom of Lesotho to host an Expert Group Meeting, known as the “Africa Regional Media Dialogue”, dedicated to the promotion of NEPAD. The agreement was signed by United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa Cheick Sidi Diarra and the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Lesotho to the UN, Motlatsi Ramafole, on 1 June, at a ceremony at the UN Headquarter in New York.

“We are deeply grateful to the Kingdom of Lesotho for hosting this meeting. The support of your government is very important to us,” said Mr. Diarra at the ceremony. He said that the Africa Regional Media Dialogue is part of the continuing interaction among partners – including the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the AU – designed to raise awareness of the economic development challenges facing Africa, particularly in implementing NEPAD projects.

Continued on page 2

NEPAD and Mozambican Government to build capacity in biosafety

Dr. Venancio Simao Massingue, Minister of Science and Technology in Mozambique said, “biosafety regulatory systems are essential in meeting critical needs for food and nutritional security in Africa”, In his remarks, Massingue welcomed the efforts made by AU-NEPAD’s African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE) in supporting biosafety systems in Mozambique. This was during the closing ceremony of the ABNE and GIIBS working sessions (25-27 May) held in Maputo, Mozambique. The three-day engagement was organised by ABNE in partnership with GIIBS, Mozambique’s National Biosafety Working Group, and was part of ABNE’s technical support to regulators in biosafety across the continent.

The overall objective of the engagement was to reflect on biosafety guidelines and to build functional bio-safety systems in Mozambique, enabling regulators to take informed decisions on bio-technology. Addressing the working sessions, Massingue emphasised on ABNE’s crucial contribution in strengthening and furthering biosafety capacities in Mozambique. At the same time, Massingue recognised that the development of modern biotechnology must go hand-in-hand with appropriate regulations in order to maximise the benefits while minimising potential risks.

Based on the outcomes of the working sessions, Minister Massingue gave ABNE

Continued on page 2

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Continued from page 1

Lesotho hosts...

Also speaking at the ceremony, Ambassador Ramafole said that, "by hosting this meeting, Lesotho gets a chance to be on the world map, as this is the first-ever UN meeting we are hosting." The UN meeting, he further noted, would help to promote NEPAD among media both in Lesotho and in the southern Africa region.

This year's Africa Regional Media Dialogue will be held in Maseru, Lesotho's capital, from 7 to 9 June. More than 100 participants are expected, including representatives from the AU, the NEPAD Agency, the ECA and about 20 senior African media personnel.

The event will consist of interactive discussions, thematic presentations by experts and participants, exchanges and contributions. Practical experiences of countries and lessons learned from implementing NEPAD Agency programmes will be presented, followed by discussions.

Source: <http://nepad.org/>

Continued from page 1

NEPAD and ...

the mandate to further support GIIBS in creating a biosafety framework which will strengthen its authority and address current needs in Mozambique.

Professor Diran Makinde, Director of the African Biosafety Network of Expertise, appraised the efforts made by Mozambique in developing functional biosafety systems which he regarded as exemplary. "It is a matter of urgency for NEPAD to support the development of effective safety and regulatory systems for biotechnology in Mozambique," he said.

At the end of the engagement, Prof. Makinde handed over office supplies to Minister Massingue worth 10,000 USD as part of ABNE's technical support to the Ministry of Science and Technology of Mozambique.

ABNE interventions in Mozambique and across the African continent are driven by its mission of helping to build functional biosafety systems that will facilitate the safe utilisation of new science and technology applications to enhance agricultural productivity in Africa. This is in line with the co-evolutionary approach recommended in the report of the African High Level Panel on modern biotechnology.

As a specialised centre of the AU and the NEPAD Agency, ABNE's mandate is to contribute to the NEPAD Agency's thematic programme on agriculture and food security by supporting African countries in building functional biosafety systems that will ensure the responsible and safe development, adoption and utilisation of agricultural biotechnology products.

Source: <http://nepad.org/>

Upcoming Event

- Regional Media Dialogue on NEPAD

Jun 7 2011 - Jun 9 2011, Maseru, Lesotho

- FANRPAN 2011 Partners' Meeting
Jun 13 2011, Pretoria, South Africa

- Expert Group Meeting on "Coordinating Development"

6-7 July 2011, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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