



Economic Commission for Africa

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

NEPAD TODAY

Every Wednesday

The articles published in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of UNECA or NPCA

NEPAD: Steering Africa to prosperity

In July 2001, African leaders adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the roadmap for the continent's development. Since its adoption a decade ago, how much has the plan achieved? In a frank, plain-talking interview, Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD, says a lot has been achieved, contrary to what most western media claim. Ibrahim Mayaki responds to Africa

Renewal's André-Michel Essoungou.
Africa Renewal: Ten years after the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), what is your assessment of it?

Ibrahim Assane Mayaki: There are three major ways in which NEPAD may be assessed. First, NEPAD is the only development initiative with a presence throughout Africa. In 10 years of existence it has achieved concrete results in areas such as science, technology, agriculture and infrastructure. The initiative has just been re-launched following its recent integration into the African Union as the Union's development agency. I do not know any other African initiative that has lasted this long and has relied on a formal, institutionalized framework such as this one, with a mandate focused on actual implementation.

Continued on page 2

Private sector in Southern Africa tackles Tripartite Free Trade Area

Private Sector representatives met in Johannesburg from 15-16 December at a forum to discuss experiences of doing business in the Tripartite Free Trade Area (T-FTA).

The Private Sector Forum was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to seek the private sector's perspective on the role of the Tripartite integration process in overcoming obstacles to intra-regional trade in Southern and Eastern Africa. The forum further sought to identify issues and challenges that deserve attention when developing the T-FTA structure,

informed by solid economic realities and supportive of private sector priorities. Officially launching the forum, ECA Southern Africa, Officer in Charge Mr Sizo Mhlanga commended the steady progress made by the three regional economic communities: COMESA, EAC and SADC "in their effort and commitment to make the T-FTA a reality and one that will make business sense to the private sector".

Mr Mhlanga said that "The private sector is a key partner in making the Tripartite Free Trade Area a success and whose involvement

Continued on page 2

Chief of Section
Kwabia Boateng

Editor

Yinka Adeyemi

Production Assistant
Meseret Arega

Continued from page 1

NEPAD: Steering...

My second point is that NEPAD has been directly responsible, from the onset, for some of the most important development strategies implemented in key areas such as agriculture, with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP); or infrastructure, with the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), areas that are also deemed to be of utmost importance. The fact that all African countries strive to implement the rules and norms contained in both strategies is a great achievement.

My third point, little known though viewed with envy by Europe as well as other regions, has to do with the African Peer Review Mechanism. This original and unique approach is about evaluating political or economic governance in countries that are willing to be assessed.

AR: Still, there are many people, particularly in Africa, who wonder what NEPAD is and of what use it is to the continent?

IAM: The problem is that many Africans spend too much of their time repeating what the Western media say about the continent and its peoples. It will take some time to move beyond this colonial way of thinking. Obviously, when you watch the way Africa is treated on a major news channel such as CNN, the feeling is that Africa is overwhelmed with misery and ruled by inept and corrupt leaders who hardly give any thought to the greater public interest. Many among us Africans tend to repeat what CNN and others have to say without taking a step back and reflecting about what we just heard. We seem to wallow in a

kind of self-disparagement. Nowhere else is such an attitude so widespread than on our continent.

Unfortunately, this self-disparaging attitude does have a negative impact. We cannot afford to keep on offering our children a negative image of Africa. We need to put things into perspective. A country like Rwanda has made significant progress while reducing its reliance on foreign aid. By mobilizing its own resources, Cape Verde has succeeded in becoming a middle-income country. Judging from the design and implementation of its new constitution, Kenya is now making significant progress in terms of governance. Botswana refuses to appeal for foreign aid, with many other countries following its example.

For full story: <http://www.inamibia.co.na/news/africa/item/12898-nepad-steering-africa-to-prosperity.html>

Continued from page 1

Private sector...

in the entire process is critical and essential". He added that the forum provided a platform for the private sector to influence the development and implementation of a T-FTA which is conducive for doing business.

Source: Special to ECA : www.uneca.org

Upcoming Event

- AU Summit, 29-30 Jan 2012, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 5th Joint Annual Meetings of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 22-27 March 2012, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- MDG Review Exhibition & Summit 2012 3-4 May 2012, Cape Town, South Africa

Please let us hear from you

How useful do you find NEPAD Today? Are there other issues you would like us to address? Please send an email to: maregaz@uneca.org