

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY H.E. THE VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER
FOR HOME AFFAIRS, HON. ARTHUR MOODY AWORI, DURING THE
OFFICIAL OPENING OF REGIONAL NEPAD MINISTERIAL MEETING
AT THE KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE (KICC),
28TH OCTOBER 2003**

**The Chairman
Honorable Ministers,
Permanent Secretaries,
Secretary Generals for COMESA, EAC and IGAD,
Your Excellencies High Commissioners and Ambassadors,
Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiaries,
Chief Executives,**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this beautiful city of Nairobi and to the Regional NEPAD Ministerial meeting in particular. This is our first Eastern Africa regional NEPAD meeting that seeks to domesticate NEPAD in our region. The meeting is, however, a follow-up to the regional Ministerial NEPAD Conference held in Kampala, in March last year and a regional NEPAD Summit held in Nairobi, in June the same year. Every long journey starts with one step. I am gratified that we have made the first step in that direction and that this meeting represents virtually all member countries of the expanded Eastern Africa region.

The challenges facing Africa are also our challenges in Eastern Africa. We should take pride that vision and foresight of the African leaders gave birth to the New Partnership for Africa Development: a new vision with ideals, objectives and action plans for the rejuvenation of the socio-economic and governance of our continent. To achieve NEPAD's vision and ideals, our governments must work in partnership with one another, and more so with our development partners, the private sector and civil society. In this context and in realisation of the important role of the private sector, that the theme of this summit is ***Promoting Public-Private Partnerships in implementation of regional NEPAD projects in Eastern Africa***. We need, therefore, to pay special attention to greater participation of private sector in supporting NEPAD projects.

NEPAD presents us with a golden opportunity to collectively address the social-economic and leadership challenges that over the years made it difficult for our people to fully enjoy benefits of development. It presents us with an opportunity for the African leadership to break away from the civil strife, poverty and other factors that impede development. It provides a platform to advocate, in unity, for improved market access for exports and to fetch meaningful prices for our people's sweat. NEPAD is indeed an opportunity for us to collectively build a vibrant continent for our future generations and for them to have a chance in life and become active participants in world economic affairs.

Tackling our challenges in Eastern Africa requires strong leadership as has been demonstrated by our Heads of States. We much understand our people's aspiration, we must know what our constraints are but more importantly we must appreciate our capabilities and have the will-power to forge ahead knowing that the development of our

region is squarely in our hands. Our people look at nobody else but trust in their leaders whom they gave the mandate to lead them.

Over the last few weeks a group of regional experts have been meeting here in Nairobi on the invitation of the Kenya Government to review and advise on regional priorities programmes or projects that will be implemented within the NEPAD flagship. Besides being experts in their own professional fields, they also represent their respective governments, research organisations, and regional organisations such as the East African Community, IGAD, COMESA, and regional development banks.

In the spirit of democracy, I am informed that each participating country nominated their experts and brought forward their draft list of priorities for review and discussions with their regional counterparts. I trust that the outcome of the experts' deliberations now before us for consideration, is what our respective governments aspire to achieve.

Fellow Ministers, as we decide the route to posterity of our region, let us remind ourselves that the continent has seen several initiatives aimed at resolving the myriad of problems affecting the continent. Let us not glorify nor be-mourn them, but to take queue from our leaders who have taken the bold step of acting in searching for solutions to our challenges. The launch of the African Union, the accession to many important protocols such as the African Peer Review Mechanism, and initiating a number of umbrella programmes for the continent are testimony to this leadership.

We all know that when an African child cries for food. When an African peasant farmer cannot find buyers for his peasantries and when he or she finds one, then the terms are not in his/her favour. When an African youth enters into adulthood without the ability to read or write, or when no health facility is within the reach of African mother at the hour of need. When an investor does not get the security yet he wants to invest. Then the African leadership will have fallen short of the aspirations. It will have not responded to people's basic human rights requirements. The aspiration of the people of Eastern Africa must be ours as leaders of our region.

To those in public service, we must remember that it is our duty to deliver affordable food to within reach of the needy; that every African child must be facilitated to go to school, health facilities must be within reach of every man and woman, our traders must have access to markets through well maintained roads, and our leadership must not only be democratic, but also responsive to the social-economic needs and well-being of our people. That is the call of duty for every leader in Government. It is the aspirations of our people, the deeper these legitimacy roots grow, and the more we inspire our people to work harder. The more we delivery these human basic needs the more we help the continent to achieve the 8 Millennium Development Goals to which all our countries subscribe to.

I wish to re-emphasise that the role of the private sector in implementation of regional NEPAD projects deserves special attention in your deliberations. It is my sincere hope that we will articulate formidable public-private partnership. Let us therefore be guided by our desire for deeper regional integration and speedy recovery and expansion of our desire deeper regional integration and speedy recovery and expansion of our economies. It is the wish of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, the current members of East African Community, that more countries in our region will seek to join the Community so that

each of the individual countries investors, consumers and citizens will share in realisation of the dream of expanded horizon for investments, markets and social territory.

I wish to conclude by thanking all those who have participated in the preparation of our meeting today and in particular I wish to thank our regional group of experts and professionals who forbearingly worked hard to review, advise and compile for us the draft list of regional NEPAD priorities. Let me also thank Kenya's Inter-Ministerial Committee that has been working to make the Summit a success. My thanks also go to those who provided various forms of support to this meeting.

Ladies and Gentlemen, NEPAD is the renewed hope for the African people. It strengthens our resolve and belief in self-determination. We must seize the opportunity and provide leadership in the development process in Africa and play a leading role in safeguarding the well being of our people.

Thank you for your attention.