

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE THIRD MEETING OF
THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM) PANEL OF
EMINENT PERSONS (APR PANEL) HELD AT HILTON HOTEL,
ABUJA, NIGERIA**

14 – 15 November 2003

1. The Third Meeting of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Panel of Eminent Persons (APR Panel) hosted by the NEPAD Secretariat, held in Abuja, Nigeria, during 14 and 15 November 2003. Ms. Marie-Angelique Savané chaired the meeting.

2. Six Members of the APR Panel, were present:

- (i) Prof. Adebayo Adedeji
- (ii) Amb. Bethuel Kiplagat
- (iii) Mr. Mourad Medelci
- (iv) Dr. Dorothy Njeuma
- (v) Dr. Chris Stals
- (vi) Ms. Marie-Angelique Savané

An apology was received from Dr Graça Machel

In Attendance were:

- i) Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairperson of the NEPAD Steering Committee and Executive Head of the NEPAD Secretariat;
- ii) Professor Ibrahim Gambari, United Nations Under Secretary General and Special Adviser on Africa;
- iii) Ambassador Isaac Aluko Olukon, Member of the NEPAD Steering Committee;
- iv) Dr. Kerfalla Yansane, APRM Lead Consultant; and
- v) Mr. Smunda Mokoena, Deputy Director-General and Member of the NEPAD Steering Committee.

3. Prior to the meeting the Panel was privileged to be received in audience by H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairperson of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) of the New partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) at the Presidential Villa.

3. In his address to the members of the APR Panel, President Obasanjo outlined the objectives and the evolution of NEPAD. He also stated that the creation of NEPAD has helped to place Africa at the apex of the global agenda by:

- i Creating an instrument for advancing people-centred sustainable development in Africa;
- ii Providing a common African platform from which to engage the rest of the international community in a dynamic partnership that holds real prospects for creating a better life for all.

4. President Obasanjo reiterated his conviction that Africa through NEPAD, will comprehensively deal with the indignity of poverty, ignorance, and economic marginalisation.

5. President Obasanjo elaborated on the APRM, which is a process voluntarily acceded to by member states of the AU as an African self-monitoring mechanism. He stressed that the APRM is a critical instrument for advancing reforms in governance and socio-economic development and in building capacity to implement these reforms. The APRM is not an instrument for punishment or exclusion but is meant to identify and address weaknesses, and share best practices. President Obasanjo emphasised that it is important to always view the APRM within the context of NEPAD as an instrument of monitoring and evaluating the progress we as Africans make in improving governance and development on the continent.

6. President Obasanjo congratulated the Members of the APR Panel on their appointment and for accepting the difficult but necessary assignment. He reassured the APR Panel of his unqualified and full support and that of the other Heads of State and Government who are participating in the APRM.

7. As mandated by the HSGIC, President Obasanjo appointed Ms. Marie-Angelique Savané from Senegal, Chairperson of the APR Panel with immediate effect for a period of one year to allow him to consult further with the Committee of Participating Heads of State and Government of the APRM (APR Forum). The President further confirmed the appointment of Mr Mourad Medelci from Algeria as the seventh Member of the Panel.

8. After the audience with President Obasanjo, the APR Panel members continued their meeting. The Panel considered and adopted, amongst others:

- i. Guidelines for Country Preparations for and Participation in the APRM.

9. The APR Panel deliberated on and agreed modalities to finalise the following:

- (i) questionnaire for country review in the four areas of the APRM;
- (ii) modalities of assistance to countries to prepare for and participate in the APRM;
- (iii) draft Memorandum of Understanding that spells out the duties and responsibilities of member countries and the APRM structures;
- (iv) draft Memorandum of Understanding that determines the working relationship between the APRM structures and Partner Institutions; and
- (v) Code of the APR Country Teams.

10. Thereafter, the APR Panel officially launched the country review process.

11. The APR Panel resolved to hold a special meeting to finalise its Work Programme and the Budget in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 14 to 15 January 2004, in preparation for the proposed meeting of the Committee of Participating Heads of State and Government of the APRM (APR Forum) scheduled for 7 February 2004.

12. The APR Panel registered its appreciation to the NEPAD Nigeria Office for its warm welcome and hospitality. The members of the APR Panel expressed their gratitude to H.E. President Olusegun Obasanjo, for taking time off his busy schedule to interact with them and provide invaluable guidance on the conduct of the peer review process and the implementation of the objectives of the APRM.

Issued in Abuja, Nigeria, 15 November 2003.

End.