

THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM(APRM) SUPPORT MISSION TO RWANDA

21st to 24th June 2004

COMMUNIQUÉ

1. From 21- 24 June 2004, Mrs. Marie- Angélique Savané, Chairperson of the Panel of Eminent Person (APR Panel), led a Support Mission of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to Rwanda. The Team of six included the representative of the APR Secretariat, Dr. Moïse Nembot, Coordinator for Democracy and Good Political Governance; Mr. Louis Napo, Communication Manager from the NEPAD Secretariat; Prof. Augustin Fosu, Senior Policy Advisor, and Dr. Kojo Busia, Development Management Officer of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); and Ms. Zemenay Lakew, Senior Regional Programme Coordinator of the United Nations Development Programme Africa Bureau (UNDP).

2. The purpose of the Support Mission was to assess the processes and mechanisms put in place by the country to undertake its self-assessment that would lead to the preparation of a Programme of Action, and sign the Memorandum of Understanding. The Support Mission to Rwanda was pleased to note that Rwanda has reached an advance stage of preparation for its self-assessment creating the requisite conditions, namely:

- i) Appointing the APR National Focal Point;
- ii) Appointing a National Commission to oversee the whole process;
- iii) Commissioning four Technical Review Teams in the areas of Democracy and Good Political Governance; Corporate Governance; Economic Governance and Management; and Socio-economic Development; and
- iv) Embarking on a sensitization campaign throughout the country to educate and involve all national stakeholders in the self-assessment process.

Briefing Session with the NEPAD/APR Focal Point

3. On June 21st the APR support mission team met with the focal point to review the draft programme for the Support Mission and the programme of activities for the implementation of the APRM in Rwanda. The Mission took the opportunity to brief the Focal Point on the responsibilities of the country during the support mission. It also reviewed a set of background documents provided. The Mission made suggestions regarding the proposed APRM National Commission and the Technical Review Teams.



Working session with the Technical Review Teams

4. On June 22, the Support Mission met with the technical review teams, which made presentations on the four thematic areas: Corporate governance, democracy and good political governance, economic governance and management and socio-economic development. The Mission expressed its appreciation for the substantial amount of work completed so far by the Technical Teams, and made a number of recommendations in terms of the way forward, including appropriate processes, methodologies and participation and representation of stakeholders.

APR National Stakeholders Workshop (June 23, 2004)

5. In her opening remarks, the Chairperson of the APR Panel expresses the need to openly debate the issues under all the four thematic areas of the review. The objective of the exercise, she said, was to build a consensus around these issues, with the ultimate aim of moving the country forward. She cautioned against uniformity of opinion, emphasizing that diversity is at the center of consensus-building; hence it should not be suppressed nor denied. All stakeholders' views and proposals may not be necessarily accepted nor implemented by the government. She further highlighted the following points:

- Rwanda is the second country after Ghana to receive the Support Mission for the APRM self-assessment.
- APRM is a process that requires national ownership and leadership of the entire process.
- The APRM process is historic without precedent initiated by Africans for Africans. As such it is a learning process for all involved including the APR Panel and Rwanda.
- APRM is intended to help countries identify problems and adjust their policies for development, without recourse to conditionalities.
- The exercise of self-assessment needs to be carried in a technically sound and credible manner.
- This exercise should contribute to institutional development, democratic consolidation and political stability in the country

6. The keynote speech by the Guest of honour (Hon Dr. Donald Kaberuka) stressed a number of issues:

- The Minister emphasized that the review visit was a testimony to Africa's forward-looking agenda and the need for change against the challenges of

global marginalization and poverty on the continent. He stressed that the APR is an engine for growth by creating an environment for investments and unleashing Africa's potential.

- The APRM was a learning process and an opportunity for Africans to encourage each other through learning from best practices and “peer pressure” where that is needed and in the process find the right path to development. In this process, African countries would be able to emasculate donor conditionalities and enhance ownership of the development process. Good governance, he said, was the sine quo-non of achieving this goal.
- Good governance takes into account the diversity, context and initial conditions of each country. Example, a post conflict country like Rwanda faces a different set of circumstances compared to steady state countries. However there must be a shared vision about the goals.
- The requisite institutions have been put into place and that the government is committed without any reservations for the APR review.

7. Following presentations by the four thematic review teams, there was an open discussion by the audience, which comprised representatives from the various stakeholders: public sector, civil society, and the private sector. A number of suggestions were made by the various stakeholders intended to strengthen various aspects: the consultation process, participation, methodology, and stakeholder validation. While appreciating the level of preparedness, it was understood that this is the beginning of the process and much work still lay ahead. However, it was noted that Rwanda is likely to be one of the first set of countries to complete the review.

Courtesy call on the Minister of Finance, President of the Chamber of Deputies, the President of the Senate, Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative of UNDP, Rwanda:

8. The APR Panel Chairperson paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Finance who is also the Chair of the APR National Commission. They discussed the next steps and timeline for completion of the review.

The President of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies expressed their strong interest and commitment to support the review process. To that effect they will organize a series of interactions within both chambers to sensitize the members.

During her visit to the UNDP Rwanda Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative, the Chairperson discussed the ongoing support UNDP is providing to the APRM process at the country level. They also discussed the recently approved Preparatory Assistance programme for the support of the



Panel and the Secretariat in launching the process. They further agreed to work together towards the preparation of the African Governance Forum (AGF VI).

Official Inauguration of the APR National Commission (June 24, 2004)

9. The APR National Commission was officially inaugurated in a ceremony under the Chairmanship of the President of the Senate. The National Commission is composed of 50 members from a cross section of Rwandese society including the public, private and civil society. The Commission is chaired by the Minister of Finance. In his acceptance speech, the Minister announced the commitment of Rwanda to complete self assessment and a preliminary Programme of Action by September 2004 and review report will be issued in December, 2004.

Courtesy Visit to H.E. President Paul Kagame

10. The Chairperson of the APR Panel accompanied by the APR Country Support Mission comprising of Dr. Moise Nembot, Ms. Zemenay Lakew, Dr. Kojo Busia, and Prof. Augustine Fosu paid a courtesy visit to the Head of State. The President in the presence of his Minister of Finance, Dr. Donald Kaberuka, the Personal Representative of the President to the NEPAD Steering Committee, Mr. Claver Gatete, and APRM national focal point, Mr. Aimable Kabanda underscored the commitment of his government to the review process. The President regards the APRM as a "mirror" in which each country looks at itself and corrects its image. He noted that the APRM is not only a participatory process but also a corrective one whereby the country would identify its weakness and strengths and make appropriate adjustments.

The President expressed his confidence that the process will be objective and that Rwanda has nothing to hide. The APRM would provide an alternative view of Africa to external reviews. He added that Rwanda is happy not because it is among the first, more importantly because the process is taking off.

H.E. President Paul Kagame reiterated Rwanda's offer to host the Africa Governance Forum (AGF VI) in December 2004 whereby Rwanda will share its review experience with other countries.

11. The President of the Republic of Rwanda and the Chairperson of the APR Panel of Eminent Persons, signed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Rwanda and the APR Panel.



Appreciation:

12. The Government of Rwanda expressed its appreciation to the Support Mission for a highly useful contribution to the APRM process in Rwanda. It also expressed its intention to continue to work very closely with the Panel and its Secretariat as well as the Strategic Partner Institutions. The Chairperson of the APR Panel, on behalf of the Support Mission, expressed her profound appreciation to the Government of Rwanda for the warm hospitality and the enthusiasm with which Rwanda has embraced the APR process. The Chairperson expressed her appreciation for the hard work by the support mission team members and further acknowledged the enthusiastic support being provided by the Strategic Partners for the process.

**Mme. Marie-Angelique Savane
APR Panel Chairperson**

**H.E. Dr. Donald Kaberuka
Chairman of the APR National
Commission**

Issued in Kigali, Rwanda, 24th day of June 2004

P.S. The APR Panel Chairperson has several interviews with local and international Media prior and during the support mission. At the end of the mission the Rwandese and international Media attended a Press Conference organized by the APR Panel Chairperson and the Personal Representative of the President at the NEPAD Steering Committee.