

## **Speech of Thanks by Beacon Mbiba**

### **On behalf of Commission for Africa Secretariat Colleagues**

To Southern Africa Civil Society attending the Southern Africa Regional Consultation  
At Indaba Hotel, Tshwane, Gauteng, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2005

In the Presence of AU Ambassador, H. E. Mrs Susan Sikaneta

In the Presence of UK High Commissioner to South Africa (Designate) Mr Paul Boateng

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Excellencies, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen. Take it that all protocols have been observed.

Colleagues from the Commission for Africa Secretariat have tasked me to make a brief statement of thanks to all of you for the support you have given to our work over the past one year. As you already know, present here with me for this consultation are colleagues Hester Le Roux and Cecily Smyth. It has been a 'long journey' and along the way were times appeared lost; but now there is more consensus on the way forward.

Somewhere north of the Limpopo they have a saying that "*Rwizi rukuru runozara nama dururiro*" - in other words, for a big river like the Niger, Congo, Zambezi, Zaire, Limpopo to be in floods, it needs waters from all the smaller rivers and streams in the catchment. It is your inputs to the CFA process that gave us this [CFA report] in the form it is - your contributions before the Lusaka Conference, during that meeting and after to the present day. Now the river is in floods. Some of our partners and colleagues along that journey are not here today. But **their contributions continue to inspire and guide us We thank them all.**

The CFA Secretariat would like to thank SARPAN for its pivotal co-ordinating role in Southern Africa. **Sue Mbaya and her team** have done a sterling job. I will not go down the list of names of those at SARPAN but you will agree with me that both at our Lusaka meeting and this time at Indaba Hotel, Gauteng, women have demonstrated their capacity and abilities to lead, to organise and to make things work. Lets get more of this gender aware at all levels in all walks of life.

We do this work not so much for personal gain but for what we believe is good for Africa, for humanity and as the Commissioners put it, for "Our Common Interest".

Over the past two days **the main concern has been on how and by whom the CFA ideas will be implemented, monitored and evaluated and what power/ instruments we in Southern Africa have to deal with non-performers.** It is a concern shared by many in Africa and our partners around the world. Allow me, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, to borrow from a speech made by Secretary of State Hilary Ben (who is also one of our CFA Commissioners). Speaking to African Ambassadors in London on the occasion of Africa Day (25<sup>th</sup> May) he among other things gave us a piece of advice; **that development and giving reality to the CFA report is a political process and that we should not take things for granted.** It is a

political process where we seek change for the better, to shift the balance of power in favour of the poor and to achieve development justice for all.

Excellencies, ladies and gentleman, don't take things for granted; don't just agonise on these things but organise as well. **Organise effectively and keep the pressure on African Heads of State as we approach the G8, keep on the pressure on the global powers at the Gleneagles G8 meeting and beyond it.**

Along the way we have made new friends, met old friends, consolidated partnerships and made plans for the future. As we go away, **we from the Secretariat, wish you well. God willing, we will meet again soon.**

Asante Sana Sana (Kiswahili)  
Medi –asi Pa-apa (Ghana)  
Siyabonga kakhulu (Ndebele/Zulu – Southern Africa)  
Thank You All

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