

## PARTNERSHIPS AND NEPAD

*BY SUNDAY T. DOGONYARO; NEPAD SECRETARIAT*

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The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an initiative, a programme of the OAU/AU, initiated by African Heads of State as a framework for the sustainable development of the continent. It is based on the following basic principles;

- i. African ownership and leadership;
- ii. anchoring the redevelopment of the continent on the resources and resourcefulness of the African people;
- iii. accelerating and deepening of regional and continental economic integration;
- iv. creation of conditions that make the African countries preferred destination by both domestic and foreign investors;
- v. new partnerships with the industrialised world;
- vi. comprehensive, holistic and integrated development approach;
- vii. recognition of diversity of levels of development, capacity and resources of African countries, yet provides for the fast-tracking of programmes by countries ready to do so.

## The Case for the Initiative

The state of underdevelopment, poverty and declining African share of world trade, make the case for a new initiative compelling:

- i. The initiative serves as a means of consolidating the pride of Africa's people in their own humanity and as a confirmation of the common humanity of the peoples of the world;
- ii. the continued marginalisation of Africa from the globalisation process and the social exclusion of the vast majority of its peoples constitute a serious threat to global stability;
- iii. Africa has made and continues to make a significant contribution to the prosperity of the global community;

- iv. the ecological lung provided by the continent's rain forest and the minimal presence of emissions and effluents is a global public good that benefits all mankind;
- v. the challenges facing the continent – conflicts, communicable diseases, protection of the environment, negotiating a new partnership with developed countries require a coordinated approach. They cannot be adequately tackled by individual countries or sub-regions;
- vi. the end of the cold war has created unprecedented convergence in priorities and values across the globe. Eradication of poverty has become an accepted global priority with democracy, market-based economies and globalisation, the most dominant features of the New World Order;
- vii. the result is the emergence of like-minded leaders in Africa who are committed to democracy, human right and good political and economic governance. It is these leaders who are leading the search for a new partnership with the African people and like-minded leaders in the developed countries. This new generation of African leaders is accepting responsibility and accountability for creating conditions for sustainable development, namely, ending conflicts, consolidating democracy, promoting good political and economic governance, increasing the pace of regional economic integration and instituting peer review mechanism and is calling on the industrialised countries to support the African regeneration programme through a genuine partnership to overcome the legacy of under-development and marginalisation.

A new partnership is necessary because the redevelopment of Africa will benefit, not only Africa but also the global community as a whole. A prosperous Africa, free of conflicts and diseases, will contribute to global prosperity.

## Partnerships in NEPAD

The concept of “partnership” was deliberately chosen by the initiating African leaders in christening this initiative to emphasize that this must be a relationship of partners, of peoples who share a common future – both positive and negative. This is at the heart of globalisation and of developing humanity or what has come to be known as the “world citizen”. The principle of “international responsibility “ in creating this world citizen is what underscores the partnership in NEPAD.

Partnership is at two levels in the NEPAD initiative:

- i. Partnership between Africans and among Africans themselves, both as individuals, countries and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). It is also an invitation by African leaders to the led, to partner with them to create the conditions and environment necessary for development. That is why the issue of integration, of improving intra-African trade and encouraging trans-border projects are central to NEPAD. Here the issues of trust and accountability become crucial. The African leaders are saying that we have experienced governance and economic decline and have decided that good governance is good for Africa, not because somebody else want or has demanded for it. They are saying that under the initiative, the ruled are partners, not subjects, and together they forge a common destiny.
- ii. Partnership with the rest of the world: NEPAD provides the platform for Africa to bring to the table its contribution to the world – material and human resources, biodiversity, market etc – and partner with the rest of the world on terms it considers acceptable.

Let me quickly state, however, that the initiative recognizes that partnership does not mean equality; rather it is a relationship, an association with common interest(s) over a long period of time. Partnership implies a sharing of burden and rewards, and as in any partnership, the size of the investment is not as critical as the fact that the environment is conducive and stable for investment. Even if Africa were the junior partner, this does not in itself, diminish the respectability that Africa gains as it redefines and redesigns its relationship with the rest of the world. By enhancing codes of conduct and values of governance for the continent, NEPAD is placing primacy on indigenous ownership of development.

Since 2000, the initiators of NEPAD have interacted and sold the initiative to different potential partners – G8, European Union (EU), Nordic or G.7 countries, United Nations, World Economic Forum and the Private Sector at the DfD in Monterrey and recently in Dakar.

## From Okinawa to Kananaskis

Let me use the evolving partnership with the G8 to illustrate partnership in NEPAD. The troika of Presidents Bouteflika, Mbeki and Obasanjo first briefed the G8 on the emerging initiative in 2000 in Okinawa, Japan where the G8 showed interest. African leaders of the

initiative followed this in July 2001 with the presentation of the New Initiative approved earlier at the OAU Summit in Lusaka to the G8 Summit in Genoa, Italy. The G8 leaders gave overwhelming support and endorsement of the plan and went a step further to each appoint a Personal Representative, thus constituting a committee of Personal Representatives of G8 Leaders, to work on a concrete response to the plan. The G8 leaders also invited African leaders to the next G8 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada in June 2002, where Africa is the main agenda item. Effectively the G8 will be responding to NEPAD plans of action.

To consolidate the relationship by developing understanding, the leaders decided that the expanded Steering Committee of NEPAD should interact with the G8 Committee of Personal Representatives. So far, four such interactions have been held with the last one slated for Maputo, Mozambique in about 2 weeks' time. These interactions have been useful in building confidence, understanding and consensus for Africa to show its commitment to its own initiative. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time that interactions at such high level have taken place in the process of developing an African plan for sustainable development. To show the level of commitment of its leaders, Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada spent an hour with the Steering Committee/G8 Personal Representatives meeting in Dakar on 12 April 2002 where he assured that he, as Chairman of the G8, is working for good results. As the Prime minister of Canada, he has also put Africa firmly on his agenda.

This example illustrates the building of a partnership for the common good. It demonstrates recognition, respect and understanding of the position and interest of each partner on the table, but with all agreeing to pool some resources together to create a desired secure future. The strategic investments the partners make today, define and determine the world of tomorrow.

As in all relationships, confidence building is crucial and can only be developed over time. Current interactions by the initiators and members of the Heads of State Implementation Committee (HSIC) with various potential partners, and by the Steering Committee serve as the starting point for this confidence building. One concept that is emerging from these interactions is what has come to be known as "mutual accountability". In NEPAD and certainly at the Secretariat, we believe that this is right and the success of the initiative may well be dependent on how well we develop, and adhere to this concept. Accountability and transparency must underpin both levels of partnership discussed earlier. This is why the governance issues are emphasized in NEPAD, and understood as preconditions for development. Civil Society and all stakeholders must hold the leadership and make them accountable to them through democratic means. Democracy has set the rules and parameters of behaviour in both public and corporate

worlds. Likewise the rules that guide the partnership between Africa and the rest of the world must be negotiated and agreed before the partnership takes effect. This is why the African leaders in their wisdom appointed a 15-member HSIC chaired by President Obasanjo of Nigeria and the Steering Committee to act on their behalf in these negotiations. A Secretariat, independent for now from, but working closely with the OAU/AU Secretariat was formed to provide technical and logistical support to the Steering Committee and the Heads of State Implementation Committee.

In developing the partnerships, some consultations have been taking place and are still taking place within the continent especially with Africa's knowledge institutions, world bodies operating in the continent and RECs. NEPAD is drawing on the work that has already been done by these institutions and bodies, African Scholars, as well as on existing international standards and codes. However, the process is an ongoing one and suggestions and inputs are expected and welcomed from all major players. We at the Secretariat thus consider this proactive step to have this Forum for African Scholars as very important and we await your inputs.

Thank you.