

The African Development Bank Group

EMINENT SPEAKERS PROGRAM

**Presentation by His Excellency Mr. Benjamin
Mkapa on “Governance and Investment:
Experience after 40 Years”**

Opening Remarks by

**Dr. Donald KABERUKA
President of the African Development Bank Group**

Tunis, Tunisia

12th December 2006

Your Excellency, Mr. Benjamin Mkapa

Ambassadors

Executive Directors, Top Management, Staff

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is with great pleasure that I welcome His Excellency Mr. Benjamin William Mkapa to the Temporary Relocation Agency of the African Development Bank.

2. We are grateful to Your Excellency for honoring our invitation to share with us your views on Governance and Investment in Africa. Considering your overbooked schedule, particularly at this time of the year, I am inclined to see your visit as a gesture of the festive season's goodwill to the Bank for the forthcoming and New Year. This Seminar is the last for the year under the Eminent Speakers Program of the Bank, which is part of the newly-designed framework to enhance the visibility of the Bank as a knowledge institution.

The primary objective is to provide opportunities for Bank Staff to interchange and learn from the experiences of world- renowned personalities such as Your Excellency on key development challenges facing Africa.

3. His Excellency Mr. Benjamin Mkapa graduated from Makerere University in Uganda. Many universities have honored him with their honoris causa. He has behind him, a solid career: as a civil servant, journalist, diplomat and politician. He started his working life in 1962 as a District Officer. Five years later, he embarked on a career in journalism.

It is the then President of the country, H.E. Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, one of the founding Fathers of modern Africa who identified his talent and appointed him his Press Secretary.

4. He subsequently embarked on a brilliant diplomatic career, served as Ambassador to Nigeria, Canada, USA. He then joined the Cabinet and served as Minister in various portfolio of

Information and Culture; Communication and Broadcasting; Foreign Affairs; Science, Technology and Higher Education. In 1995, he was elected with comfortable majority when he won the first multi-party election for the Presidency of the United Republic of Tanzania.

5. During his 10 years tenure as President, from 1995 to 2005, he pursued economic reforms with diligence and prudence, which boosted economic growth and foreign investment, and Tanzania made remarkable strides in the economy. Mr. President Tanzania is one of our largest beneficiary countries and we are witness to the progress your country has attained and we are glad the Bank was able to make its modest contribution.

6. President Mkapa was equally active in the efforts for democracy and stability in the Great Lakes region. He was instrumental in conflict management and resolution and was an influential promoter of regional cooperation within the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which he chaired in 2003 and 2004. In 2002, he was appointed, together with the President of Finland, Co-Chair of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization.

In 2004, he served as a member of the Blair Commission for Africa; and he continues to sit on a number of eminent personality panels including UNCTAD. We are sorry Mr. President, Mr. Supachai got to you before we did. Today, although no longer in the State House, he continues to be active nationally and internationally, examples are the Co-Chair of the African Investment Climate Facility and the South Centre, an inter-governmental organization based in Geneva, Switzerland.

In 2005, President Mpaka stepped down from office and handed power to his successor, Tanzania's third peaceful and exemplary democratic transition. (He never attempted to change the constitution – and I am reliably told scoffs down attempts to do so. Is there a better person to talk to us about Governance?)

Your Excellency,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. It is often said that Africa is the continent that has most suffered from poor governance including its extreme form, violent conflicts. The African Development Bank attaches great importance to the promotion of governance as a pre-condition for prosperity and how it affects investment and reduction of poverty. Indeed, in the reorganization of this Bank, we have a new Department of Governance and Economic Management and it is our intention to see it grow and play a bigger role. We are continuously learning as to how best to help build institutions, capacity and operate in risky environments where governance is a challenge. Your Excellency's presentation here today therefore fits so well within the core of our work.

We are keen to listen and engage in further discussion on this important subject.

8. It is now my singular honour to call upon His Excellency Benjamin Mpaka to take the floor.