



THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP

“Rededicating to Africa – at a time of promise”

Inaugural Statement at the beginning of the second term

Donald Kaberuka
President

Tunis, September 1, 2010

**Right Honourable Prime Minister,
Mr. Chairman, Board of Governors,
Eminent Personalities,
Governors,
Executive Directors,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Thank you so much Mr. Chairman, Minister Santos, for your kind words. I am very honoured and delighted to see so many of you here today;

Thank you, Prime Minister Ghannouchi, for honouring us with your presence, despite competing demands on your time.

We appreciate the hospitality which your Government and People have offered us since our temporary relocation to Tunis.

I wish to recognize members of the Bureau of the Board of Governors, Ministers present here this morning, eminent personalities, members of the Diplomatic Corps, management, Executive Directors, Staff and friends of the Bank.

I am also honoured by the presence of my two good friends from the two sisters Pan African Institutions;

Abdulai Janneh, Head of ECA and AU Commissioner Maxwell whose presence here is a strong testimony to our ever growing theatre of collaboration in the interests of the African People in domains ranging from infrastructure development, climate change and the G20.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A day such as this is special for all of us at the Bank and for its President. It is indeed a statutory moment to swear in a new President, but also a day of pride, a day of reflection, a day of humility, but above all a day of rededication.

Pride of the contribution we as a Bank are making to better the condition of Africa, a day of reflection on where we have fallen short,

humility in front of the challenges we face and above all a rededication to overcome obstacles to our noble goals.

On September 5, 2005, member countries of the Bank conferred on me the singular honour of leading the Bank for five years.

As I assumed office as President of the Bank Group, I fully understood the weight of that responsibility, and what it means for any son or daughter of Africa, to be called upon to undertake this noble mission.

Building on the foundation laid by my six predecessors, and with your support, I believe we have, together, made some headway.

But I am also the first to recognize that the road ahead is a long one.

Some of our achievements are still in their infancy, several initiatives can only be described as “work in progress” and there are still many hills to climb.

Nonetheless, whether it is in consolidating the finances of the institution, building its internal capacity, reorienting the strategic choices, managing successive crises, strengthening partnerships, and above all, delivery where it matters most-on the ground, these are achievements to celebrate.

We have together, demonstrated that the AfDB has come of age, a mature institution, which knows what to do, at a time of strong demands on the Bank’s capacity and resources.

Today, member countries entrust me once again with the custody and the honour and responsibility of steering the ship for the next five years-at a time of profound changes in Africa and in the global economy.

I am truly humbled by the overwhelming confidence in me as Captain of a Team: a team of the talented and devoted men and women who constitute the management and staff of the Bank to whom I would like to render homage.

As I assume my new term of office I want to thank all who have provided me their advice, counsels and support during the last five

years; my country and my Government, for proposing my name for a second time, and to all the member countries for your unanimous vote of confidence.

In assuming these responsibilities for a second time, I commit here, today, that we will continue to strive, everyday to build a world class organization, a purposeful, responsive, institution for which the founding fathers can be proud and people of Africa deserve.

And that means we must be prepared to deepen and anchor institutional reforms even, and especially when, they appear to be painful or inconvenient.

I have no illusion about the obstacles. I am aware of existing commitments on which in the past we have fallen short, I am cognizant of the complexity of the emerging economic landscape, but I am also fully confident of our determination to succeed.

Our resolve is reinforced by the challenges confronting Africa at this time, but also the opportunities now open to her as a result of structural shifts in the global economy.

Our determination is comforted by the solid, sustained support and confidence which member countries have shown to the African Development Bank, over the last decades and especially the last five years, to enable the Bank to respond to Africa's growing and changing needs.

Whether it is the resourcing of the institution, building its internal capacity, extending its reach, and bolstering its ability to adjust to external shocks, you have shown full confidence in your institution.

In so doing, you have shown belief in the promise of Africa, empowering its people, in building Africa's own strong institutions, for which the recent historic tripling of the Bank's Capital stands out as a monument.

I am fully aware that, going forward, the economic conditions in many partner countries, participants to the ADF, are much tougher, but that political will and commitment to support our mission in Africa remains unwavering.

You are right, in return, to demand results and greater effectiveness that commitments we have made internally and externally be adhered to.

I undertake here to stay true to that promise of reforms.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends

The last decade, and especially the last three years, have seen tectonic shifts in the global economy, and a shifting discourse on Africa, not only from the perspective of the best world cup organized; but from McKinsey to Goldman and a widening constituency of analysts, there is acceptance that the positive momentum Africa has built since the turn of the decade is not a flash in the pan – not another false dawn.

True, in many countries poverty is still deep and growth in per capita incomes is frustratingly slow. In short we have not yet attained “escape velocity” but the ground has shifted.

As we move forward in the next five years – consolidating our strategic options, we must now take cognizance of these profound changes in the global economy – and the renewed confidence and momentum in much of Africa.

There is little doubt:

Our strategic directions remain valid, deepening regional integration, developing the private sector, closing the infrastructure gap particularly energy, enhancing high level, technical skills, building strong governance and institutions’ and of course support to fragile states.

These are, and they remain the strategic axes best placed to support Africa’s momentum. A special challenge remains climate change and its implications including for energy and food security.

As we deepen, consolidate our strategic options, two particular areas of the new landscape require us to adapt with agility and innovation:

First; adapting to a world of tight budgets, tough budgetary choices, from our traditional partners.

This will require of us, all international financial institutions, stronger partnerships and meaningful division of labour. But more important we must begin now, to innovate around how to leverage and assure effectiveness of each dollar to the African Development Fund and giving functional meaning to the idea of the one Bank Model.

Second: exploiting the opportunities created by the structural shifts in the global economy to enable Africa to reap the dividends by building enduring partnerships with the emerging poles of those opportunities rather than simply purveyor of raw materials,

But in order to do so! We will need to fully understand this new ecosystem. We will need to ask ourselves the question about our instruments, our methods, our model – which; remember; date back to the 1960s.

In the next five years, I intend to strongly reinforce our internal knowledge generation, dissemination capacity, to inform our own work in this area, but also to determine how best Africa draws dividends from this new global economy.

Let me conclude: In four years' time, the African Development Bank will commemorate its Golden Jubilee, fifty years of service to Africa. It is customary, of late to sometimes minimize the achievements of this Continent; in the last half a century but take a look at the AfDB: from a modest institution in 1964 to a global player at par with the best in the world, delivering in 2009 alone 12 billion dollar of support. An institution that makes Africa proud.

Take another look at this mosaic that is Africa's 53 countries. You will see a lot that which can be dispiriting. But also, much worth of celebration – a continent that is steadily unlocking its potential, charting its fresh course, in a changing global economy.

This morning, together, we rededicate our energy, our talent, our imagination, to that Africa, a time of much hope and promise.

Thank you.