

African Development Bank



OPENING REMARKS FOR THE AFRICA REGIONAL MEETING ON PEACEBUILDING AND STATEBUILDING

- 7-9 SEPTEMBER 2011 –
ADDIS ABABA

Your Excellencies, Honorable Ministers

African Union, Economic Commission Colleagues

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of President Kaberuka and my own behalf it is a pleasure to welcome you for these two days of important discussions on peacebuilding and statebuilding in Africa. Let me start by thanking the UN Economic Commission for Africa for so graciously opening their premises to us. I would also like to thank the African Union for their partnership in organizing this meeting and the International Dialogue for their support. I also want to give thanks to the Government of the Netherlands for their generous financial support, which enabled us to hold the meeting today.

We are here to gather our ideas and inputs at the last stage before the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which will take place in Busan, Korea this November. With just four years to go before the Millennium Development Goals target date of 2015, the Busan Forum will be an important opportunity to revitalise existing commitments and sustain political momentum. With that in mind, we hope our discussions can help shape the Busan agenda from an African perspective and promote broader collaboration on peacebuilding and statebuilding in Africa.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My remarks will focus on three important themes: **leadership, accountability and commitment.**

Leadership. “If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough,” said Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Big dreams enable brave leadership. As leaders, we know what it will take to build thriving economies and vibrant democracies in countries struggling with and recovering from conflict. That is the purpose of this meeting - to bring our ideas and priorities to pave the road to Busan, ensuring that the diversity of African voices and perspectives help define development effectiveness for the future.

We need a new focus on peacebuilding and statebuilding to address political settlements, security, justice, jobs, growth, revenues and services. This means ensuring people are secure in their communities; abuses are addressed through fair legal processes; jobs are created for young people, former combatants and female headed households; and natural resources are a factor of growth and not a cause of conflict. These are the Monrovia Peacebuilding and Statebuilding objectives. It is an ambitious set of goals, but to quote Ms. Johnson Sirleaf again, "the challenges are huge, but they're not bigger than the challenges we've faced in the past".

Development effectiveness is not an abstract term for us. We have studied and worked to perfect our knowledge through experience and service. We must share that knowledge and be the guides along the path to effective development in Africa.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Last year, at the Bank's annual meeting, we organized a discussion about women as agents of change in fragile states. One of the panelists was Mme. Saran Daraba from the Mano River Women's Peacebuilding Initiative. She saw a need to ease the way for women earning their living through trading small goods across borders in the Mano River region. Unscrupulous customs officers were trying to cheat them by lying about what the customs duties were. Mme.

Daraba led a group to help publish the laws and make sure women knew what was fair – building stability and a chance for economic growth along those borders. **Those are the stories we must bring to our discussions on the road to Busan.**

Ladies and Gentlemen

Accountability. For 2011, Somalia prepared its budget framework and accounts for approval by its cabinet – for the first time in 20 years. The African Development Bank played a small role in helping them achieve that goal, and we are proud of it. Helping support systems that enable accountability to citizens is something we see as central to our work, especially in countries building peace and stability.

Accountability is what each of us owes our constituents. For many of you, those are the citizens in your communities who look to you to act in their interest, provide the services they depend on, and build on hard-won progress. Somalia delivered accountability in that action of preparing its budget for approval.

At the African Development Bank, you are our constituents. We are accountable for how we as an African institution support your priorities, deploy our expertise, and invest our resources. As President Kaberuka said in Tunis last

fall, “Aid is only ever a means to an end. Aid that is truly effective will eventually do itself out of a job.”

And the final theme - **commitment**. Peace is not built in a day. Nor is it built in a year. Peace is built over time, through the commitment of all of us who believe that tomorrow should bring stable, prosperous nations for our children. The fact that you are here shows you know what commitment is.

As we work during the next two days and over the coming years, I call on each of us to remember **and act** on those themes: **leadership, accountability, commitment**.

Thank you.

Dr. El Kheshen
Vice President