A Minister of Agriculture needs to work hand in hand with a Minister of Finance and a Minister of Trade and Investment. And yet it’s only Government’s role to create policy, incentives and infrastructure – it’s ultimately the private sector which must step up and invest along the length of the agricultural value chain, from producing to processing, from farm to fork.”

“See agriculture as agribusiness: it’s the best way to create jobs and make money. Our problem is that we have viewed African agriculture through the wrong lens for too many years. Agriculture is not a development activity or a social sector: it’s the biggest money-making business in the world. It’s not for older people – the average age of our African farmers is 60 – but it’s for young people. That’s why we have launched the ENABLE Youth programme with the aim of establishing 10,000 youth-run agribusinesses in every country in Africa.”

“Our non-regional member countries support us with development funds, but more importantly they invest in Africa for their own good. So India contributed USD 27 million to our African Development Fund replenishment last year ... but in 2015 it announced a USD 10 billion Line of Credit through the India Exim Bank over the next five years for Indian companies wishing to invest in Africa. We have 80 member countries – yes, we need their resources, but we also need to help them increase their business and investment opportunities in Africa.”

“The African future is not, as some people think, based on oil and gas: you can’t drink oil or smoke gas. The future is food – you can eat food. Our continent’s food and agriculture markets will be worth USD 1 trillion within 13 years.”

“So I talk about money, of course, but above all I want to talk about the impact of the work of this Bank. What matters most to me is not the financial figures, but figures like the fact that in 2016 we estimate that 3.7 million Africans benefited directly from the Bank’s work to improve water and sanitation. 3.3 million Africans benefitted from our work to improve electricity supply; 5.7 million from our work to improve agricultural yields, 9.3 million from our work to provide better healthcare; and 7.0 million from our projects to develop better transport systems. That is what this Bank is about – transforming African lives, and transforming the African continent.”

“The Bank made a record USD 10.4 billion of approvals in 2016, and USD 6.1 billion of disbursements. These figures are the highest in our history.”

“In the spirit of self-determination, the African Development Bank - and the continent for which it works - is proud to hold these Annual Meetings in the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi.”

“We launch partial risk and credit guaranty products designed to de-risk others’ lending, we have the capacity to coordinate syndicated loans, and we negotiate co-financing arrangements, notably with China, Japan and South Korea. So we are truly sweating the balance sheet.”

“India is an inspiration to Africa, in that its green revolution took just 3 years. That was in large measure due to the power of political will, and you will see much political will on display here at the Bank Group’s Annual Meetings in Ahmedabad in the next few days.”

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I'm here in Ahmedabad because my subject is social enterprise and the way it can be scaled up. What is social enterprise? It’s meeting a social challenge with a commercial solution, and its possibilities are endless. Africa and India do it better than anywhere in the world, so it couldn’t be in a better place. Take an example like Amul, one of the largest social enterprises in the world, a farmer/cooperator which delivers milk in India. Or look at some of the African examples – on Wednesday we’re going to hear from Neelam Chhibber who wants to create ‘a million women artisans’, with her sights set on East Africa. So this is an exciting opportunity for me.

And the Bank can help with this agenda of social innovation. It has a huge infrastructure agenda – and it’s coming from social enterprise elements, to see each project, in education and health and more, then it will be thinking smartly. This is my first visit to an ADB Annual Meeting, but my 196th conference since the start of 2010! Today I have met Bank staff, C-level representatives from Egypt and Lechoso. I met ex-premier Mahama of Ghana: my Accra associate now needs to follow up. A striking moment of today was the start of 2010! Today I have met Bank people, and Government project, in education and health and more, then it will be thinking smartly.

From ‘behind the scenes’ at the Annual Meetings

The ‘third sector’ (civil society), the ‘fourth estate’ (press)

M y name is Mukesh Dalbhl and I am a liaison officer, working for the Government of Goa, though my everyday role is as a Manager for the GoaGral Mineral Development Corporation Ltd. In this conference, I am in charge of picking up the Ministers and managing their logistics. The Minister comes from abroad to participate in the meeting in Ahmedabad. To look for partnerships. And what’s interesting about this Minister is that he’s not from Africa or India – but Nauru! A tiny island in the Pacific.

Today, we attended a seminar on agriculture but I did not really understand what the meeting was about, simply because I don’t speak English well. The minister enjoyed it. For my part, I like the way Africans and Indians are working together in these Meetings. I would like to visit Africa one day, particularly South Africa, just to see its physical beauty. My son-in-law graduated as a medical doctor, a gynaecologist, and I would like to explore job possibilities for him in Africa – he wants to take his expertise to where it’s needed.
Follow the stories, photos and videos as they are posted on www.afdb.org and www.afdb.org/am
End the day with an AMEN – the Annual Meetings Electronic News, highlights and hyperlinks emailed directly to you

Tweets of the day, 22/05/17
#AfDBAM2017

@OECD_Centre
“When it comes to creating jobs to #African #youth, growth is not the point: the quality of growth is the key”
@mariopezzini #AEO2017

@JDMahama
Tomorrow, I’ll be speaking on ‘Agriculture is Cool: Engaging Africa’s Youth’ at the @afdbam2017. It’s a cool to be a #farmer. @AfDB_Group

@CMOGuj
Guj CM inaugurated ‘India & Africa: partners in Growth’ exhibition at 52nd annual meeting of @AfDB_Group at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar

@narendramodi
On Tuesday, I will be in Gandhinagar to participate in the opening ceremony of the meetings of the @AfDB_Group. #AfDBAM2017

@EdsonMpyisi
#Agripreneur finalists from #Agripitch2017 featuring big at #AfDBAM2017 starting today @AfDB_Group @IITA_CGIAR @AAINOnline @CTAflash

@edithbrou
"Les agriculteurs les plus célèbres au Nигéria utilisent à fond les réseaux sociaux pour leur business” - Mme Evelyn Ohanwusi #AfDBAM2017