Visit of the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation
Welcome Address

Dr. Donald Kaberuka
President

Event: Visit to the Bank of the Dutch Minister for Development Co-operation,
Mrs. Agnes van Ardeene-van der Hoeven
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On behalf of the Board of Directors, Management and the staff of the African Development Bank as well as on my own behalf, it is indeed a pleasure to welcome you to the Bank. I am confident that your visit will contribute to reinforcing the strong relations that exists between the Bank Group and the Government of the Netherlands.

It is a pleasure for me to note that the Netherlands has always been a strong supporter of the African Development Bank and, more broadly, to Africa’s development efforts. Its commitment is evidenced not only by the high ratio of its ODA to GDP but also by its pledge to allocate half of its development budget to Africa. In addition, the Government has demonstrated its commitment to major international initiatives by its strong support to sustainable development and poverty reduction.

The cooperation between the Bank Group and the Netherlands is, I believe, based on a fundamental convergence between the Bank’s own development goals and the principles that underlie Dutch assistance to developing countries. In particular, not only are we committed to the reduction of poverty, but we also share a deep commitment to improving in Africa water and sanitation, energy, education and health, promoting gender equity, as well as the sustainable management of the environment.

In line with these shared values, I am pleased to note that the Netherlands’ assistance to the Bank has in the past been considerable and varied. The Government has contributed 12 million dollars to three thematic trust funds: the first, to help our regional member countries design their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs); the second, to finance the establishment of a Water Partnership Programme; and the third, to provide funds to the Alternative Energy Programme - FINESSE. In addition, the Government has put at the disposal of the Bank two consultancy trust funds.

More generally, the strong partnership between the Netherlands and the Bank is also evidenced by the Government’s commitment of 135.5 million euros to the tenth replenishment of the African Development Fund and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your personal efforts in making it possible.

Mme. Minister: Your visit today thus represents for us a confirmation of our shared values and represents for us a continuation of the fruitful cooperation between our two institutions.

As you are aware, the Bank is currently in a period of transition. To ensure that we fully deliver on our development mandate and achieve concrete results on the
ground, we will be instituting a number of important institutional reforms in the coming months. I am certain that we can continue to count on the support of your Government for these reforms.

Let me conclude by expressing to you once again our deep appreciation for your visit. We look forward to closer collaboration in the future in our common goal of reducing poverty and improving the livelihoods of the peoples of Africa.

I thank you for your kind attention.