Implementing the African Peer Review Mechanism

Challenges and Opportunities

Report of the Sixth Africa Governance Forum (AGF-VI)

Kigali, Rwanda
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Acronyms

ADB	African Development Bank
AGF	African Governance Forum
APR	African Peer Review
AGF-VI	Sixth African Governance Forum
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTR	Country Team Review
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOCC	Economic, Social and Cultural Council (of the African Union)
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FP	Focal Point
GC	Governance Council
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NEPAD	The New partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
TRT	Technical Review team
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Preface

The African Governance Forum (AGF) is a UNDP flagship governance programme conceived as a joint initiative with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) within the framework of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (UNSIA). It is a policy forum that brings together African leaders, cooperating partners, representatives of civil society and the private sector to discuss a thematic subject that is considered to be important and timely in the advancement of good governance on the African continent. Six AGF sessions have so far been held. The first one was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1997 and focused on a multiplicity of issues that included constitutional reforms, the media, capacity building, and decentralization. The second AGF, held in Accra, Ghana, focused specifically on 'Accountability and Transparency while the third was held in Bamako, Mali, and addressed Good Governance and Conflict Management. The fourth AGF was held in Kampala, Uganda, and looked at the Contribution of the Parliamentary Process in Strengthening Good Governance in Africa. The fifth one was held in Maputo, Mozambique, on the theme: Local Governance and Poverty Reduction in Africa. This Report records the deliberations and outcome of the Sixth Africa governance Forum (AGF-VI) held in Kigali, Rwanda from 9-11 May 2006 under the theme "*Implementing the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM): Challenges and Opportunities*".

1. Introduction

Background

The background to the decision to choose support to APRM implementation as the theme for AGF-VI is noteworthy. Many challenges in the areas of peace, governance and high poverty levels have continued to compromise Africa's socio-economic development prospects. Individually, African countries have attempted to tackle their domestic problems. There is mounting recognition, nevertheless, that without collective effort, sustainable development would remain illusive. The emergence of NEPAD testifies to the growing realization regarding the virtue of a collective African response to the Continent's challenges. Through the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance that the OAU Summit adopted in July 2001, African governments reaffirmed their commitment to the promotion of democracy and good political governance. It was agreed that the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) would monitor the observance of these commitments by the countries that acceded to it. The Mechanism's base document was approved by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government and Implementation Committee and later endorsed by the African Union (AU) Summit in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002.

The Mechanism is a mutually agreed instrument for self-monitoring by the participating member governments. Participation in the APRM process is open to all member states of the African Union. Table 1 gives the list of the 25 countries that have so far acceded to APRM, standing at 25 as of June 2006.

Table 1: APRM Signatories

Algeria	Mali	Malawi
Burkina Faso	Mauritius	Lesotho
Republic of Congo	Mozambique	Tanzania
Ethiopia	Nigeria	Angola
Ghana	Rwanda	Sierra Leone
Kenya	Senegal	Zambia
Cameroon	South Africa	Sudan
Gabon	Uganda	Benin
	Egypt	

The mandate of APRM is to ensure that the policies and practices of participating states conform to the agreed political, economic, and corporate governance values, codes and standards that are contained in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic, and Corporate Governance. The primary purpose of the Mechanism is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration through sharing of experiences and best practice. Its mandate also includes the identification of deficiencies and assessment of capacity building shortfalls. It is expected that every review exercise that is carried out under the authority of APRM shall be technically sound, credible, and free of political manipulation.

APRM has four distinct organizational components, namely, (a) The Forum of participating Heads of State and Government as the highest decision-making authority in the APRM (APR Forum); (b) the African Peer Review Panel of Eminent Persons (APR Panel) (c) the APRM Secretariat; and (d) the Country Review Team that is appointed to visit a country to review progress with that county's Programme of Action and produces the APRM report on the country.

The African Peer Review Panel of Eminent Persons oversees the review process to ensure the integrity of the process and, in partnership with the Lead Partners, provide overall leadership and direction of the Mechanism. It is backstopped in this over-arching mandate by the APRM Secretariat that provides the secretarial, technical, coordinating, and administrative support services for the Mechanism.

The adoption of NEPAD and APRM coincided with the convening of the Fifth African Governance Forum in Maputo-Mozambique. At the Forum, and in recognition of the support that the AGF framework could provide to NEPAD in the advancement of the cause of good governance, participants agreed that the Sixth session of AGF would be devoted to the deliberation on APRM implementation. Pursuant to this recommendation, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and NEPAD secretariat undertook several consultations on the specific theme of the sixth AGF and held two preparatory workshops-one in Cape Town in 2003 and another in Algiers in 2004 prior to its convening in Kigali-Rwanda.

Specific Objectives of AGFVI

In this regard, it was agreed that specific objectives of AFGVI would be as follows:

a) To facilitate national consultation processes, soliciting examination of critical issues and problems relating to the implementation of APRM;
b) To share experiences and lessons learned arising from APRM implementation among the participating countries;
c) Assess the challenges in the implementation of APRM, including those arising from the APRM instruments, process, institutions, government policies, partnerships as well as the capacities and resources required to ensure effective implementation;
d) Discuss the opportunities presented by APRM implementation in strengthening mechanisms for good governance, including the role of stakeholders, governments, parliamentarians, civil society organizations, professional associations, the media, private sector, youth and women; and
e) To deliberate on the partnerships required for delivering effective support to the implementation of APRM as well as of the National Programmes of Action and the role of partners in this regard.

The AGF-VI Preparatory Process

In order to standardize the presentation of country reports for AGF-VI, Guidelines[1] and an Issues Paper [2]were prepared that included modalities on organizing national consultations; the format of national consultations; who the participants should be; and the contents and format of AGF-VI country reports. A Synthesis Report was prepared summarizing the country experiences based on

[1] See Guidelines under background documents for AGFVI at www.undp.org/agf

[2] See Issues Paper under background documents for AGFVI at www.undp.org/agf

the country reports that were prepared specifically for AGF-VI. The Report highlighted the opportunities, challenges and lessons learnt from the 13 countries whose submissions were available to UNDP at the time.[3] All the APRM signatory countries were then invited to take part in AGF-VI meeting that was held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 9-11 May 2006 under the theme "Implementing the African Peer Review Mechanism: Challenges and Opportunities". Other countries that are in the process of joining were also invited to AGF-VI.

Organization of the Sixth Africa Governance Forum

The Forum was co-convened by the APR Panel and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank under the theme "Implementing the African Peer Review Mechanism: Challenges and Opportunities". In preparing for the Forum, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and APR Panel supported the convening of national workshops in a number of APRM participating countries that led to the preparation of national reports on the challenges and opportunities of the mechanism. These reports were tabled at the Forum and used in the exchange of experiences and good practices among the countries and partners.

The Sixth Africa Governance Forum was organized in two parts - the first being the usual forum at Ministerial Level bringing together the key stakeholders from each of the APRM and invited countries, representatives of key regional institutions as well as partners. The second part was a Heads of State Segment - a town-hall interactive type of meeting bringing together some APRM Heads of State and the participants of the Forum to exchange views on the conclusions of the Forum and the place of APRM in meeting the governance challenges in Africa. In addition and as part of promoting awareness of APRM, a media workshop was convened on the margins of the Forum bringing together journalists from APRM countries and representatives from international media to deliberate on the APR Mechanism and to interact with the forum participants. The Forum was preceded by a joint one day technical workshops of the focal points of the African Governance Inventory and selected APRM national focal points. The African Governance Inventory is an initiative on governance emanating from the AGF series.

The Forum was held in plenary and working groups. The plenary sessions received individual country reports on status of APRM implementation, deliberated on the broad issues pertaining to the role of APRM in strengthening governance in Africa, the opportunities and challenges it presents and the kind of partnerships that are needed to facilitate the implementation of the mechanism and heard the experiences of the partners. The plenary also considered the reports of the working groups and agreed on the outcomes of the Forum. Four working Groups were established for in-depth discussions of thematic issues respectively on APRM instruments, Institutions and Processes, Implementation of National Programmes, Partnerships and resources and Post APRM Review, Evaluation and Monitoring. Appendix 1 gives the official statements that were made while Appendix 2 gives the AGF-VI Programme.

[3] These were Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda.

2. Opening Session

The AGF-VI Meeting in Kigali-Rwanda began with official statements (see Appendix 1). In his welcoming Statement to AGF-VI delegates, the Chairperson of ***the African Peer Review (APR) Panel of Eminent Persons***, Ambassador Betuel Kiplagat, noted the pioneering role of Rwanda in the APRM process for it was that country that hosted the Mechanism's Inaugural Summit of the Heads of State and Government in February 2004. He reminded participants of the special place of the APRM process in the renewal and development of Africa particularly in the facilitation of peace, stability, democracy, good governance and socio-economic development on the Continent. The APRM, he reminded the delegates, is not an instrument for punishment or exclusion, but rather, a mechanism for the identification and sharing of African countries' strong points, and a tool for collectively rectifying the Continent's weak points. After documenting the positive efforts that have been registered in a good number of APRM member countries, albeit at different levels of progress, Ambassador Kiplagat extended a word of encouragement to all the other countries to follow suit. He challenged the APRM Focal Points to put the mechanism on the top of their agenda. He acknowledged that, after two years of implementation of APRM, countries now better appreciate the huge and demanding task of self and peer evaluation. The sharing of experiences thus far, he noted, shall be the main objective of the AGF-VI deliberations. The recommendations from such deliberations shall inform the recommendations to the Heads of State and Government on how to streamline the APRM methods of work. Lastly, while acknowledging, with appreciation, the role of cooperating partners, particularly UNDP and other APRM Strategic partners, in the advancement of the Mechanism's ideals, he concluded that the greatest strength of the APRM lies in its ownership by the Africans themselves.

In echoing Ambassador Kiplagat message, ***the United Nations Assistant Secretary General and UNDP Regional Director for Africa***, Mr. Gilbert Houngbo, welcomed the AGF-VI delegates and reminded them of their important role in the advancement of the cause of good governance on the African Continent. He noted that the African Governance Forum has become a versatile policy forum and framework that brings Africa and its partners into dialogue on the challenges of promoting good governance. He commended the members of the African Peer Review Panel for the important role that they continue to play in overseeing the implementation of the APRM and for allowing UNDP to partner with them in this noble cause. He hailed the decision by NEPAD countries to establish the Mechanism as this has facilitated African leaders to submit to self-scrutiny, an aspect that has facilitated greater openness in the management of national affairs. Mr. Houngbo saw APRM as an important tool for the promotion of good governance, hence the need to give it all the political space and resources necessary to permit the fulfillment of its mandate. He also noted the positive progress that APRM has thus far registered especially with respect to the enhancement of a culture of political dialogue within and between the member countries.

Notwithstanding the positive progress that has been registered by APRM, Mr. Houngbo flagged a number of challenges that still require attention. They included the need to align the APRM instruments to the specific circumstances of each country; the importance of building and strengthening capacity both at national and continental levels so as to better manage the Mechanism; the urgency of credible data bases that would provide reliable information for informed decisions; and how best to mobilize the requisite resources for fulfilling the APRM mandate. He also reminded the delegates of the strategic importance of the National Programmes of Action and why these should be managed and led by the African countries themselves. The establishment of 'creative partnerships' that open opportunities for maximizing domestic

contributions to the Mechanism's resource base was also stressed. He also underscored the APRM implementation process being managed in a transparent, inclusive, and democratic manner for it to remain credible and inspire the confidence of the people it is intended to serve. He called upon APRM countries to learn from the experience of Rwanda and Ghana that are fairly advanced in the APRM process. Finally, Mr. Houngbo challenged delegates to recognize the value in monitoring and evaluation so as to be able to measure the real impact of APRM efforts in the area of good governance in Africa.

The African Development Bank (AfDB)/African Development Fund Vice President in charge of Operations, Ms. Zeinab El Bakri, representing Dr. Donald Kaberuka, AfDB President, added her voice to the recognized value of APRM. She noted that, by helping to enhance national ownership and developing greater public awareness about the need for, and requirements of, good governance, the APRM is laying a crucial foundation for positive development on the Continent. She informed the delegates that AfDB has increasingly taken greater interest in aspects of good governance as this, in the Bank's view, assures sustainable development and poverty reduction in Africa. A key development within AfDB has been the change in the perception of what creates the environment for sound economic management and successful poverty reduction strategies. The fact that bad governance violates public trust and corrodes social capital, she argued, justifies the special attention being extended to this area. She took time to demonstrate how good governance is good for economic growth and development, something that demonstrates why AfDB sees APRM as providing a useful framework in this area, hence, its continued provision of technical and 'modest' financial assistance to the Mechanism. She informed the delegates that AfDB shall substantially increase its support to the APRM process in the next phase, i.e. during the implementation of National Programmes of Action.

In delivering the remarks of the ***UN Under-Secretary-General and ECA Executive Secretary*** (Mr. Abdoulie Janneh), the Director in charge of Development Policy and Management Division at the ECA, Mr. Okey Onyejekwe observed that the partnership between UNDP and ECA in the field of governance was reflected in the joint undertaking to create AGF. Africa's adherence to the principles of 'Good Governance,' Mr. Janneh observed, has been a major contributing factor to what he saw as a positive 'sea change' is the manner African countries now run their affairs. He observed that, increasingly, African countries are opening up political space and civil society is operating without the level of retribution of the past. He noted that some African countries have also undertaken substantive constitutional reforms towards the rule of law and political accountability, aspects that collectively contribute to the emergence of a capable state that should enhance growth, peace and stability on the continent. As in the case of the other speakers, Mr. Janneh also recognized the strong link between good governance and improved economic performance. The role of APRM in pushing forward these ideals was acknowledged. He informed the delegates of the role of ECA, as a strategic partner, particularly in the provision of extensive technical support to the entire APRM process.

To improve the APRM process, Mr. Janneh identified a number of challenges that he alerted the delegates as requiring immediate attention. They included the need to reflect on the simplification and improvement of the APRM methodology and duration; and taking into account, by way of harmonization, the new instruments and frameworks that also seek to raise the standards of democracy, human rights and good governance in Africa such as the draft African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Good Governance, the AU/NEPAD Framework of Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, and the draft road map for a Continental Early Warning System. He laid stress on the importance of African countries mustering the resources and capacity that is required to implement their National Programmes of Action and monitor progress

of achievement. In this regard, he stressed the importance of cultivating strong partnership support both from within and outside Africa.

Lastly, drawing on the messages coming from ECA's *African Governance Report*, Mr. Janneh flagged several challenges that, when addressed, would further improve the emerging positive image of Africa. They include wiping out corruption; improving the efficiency of government services; decentralizing government structures; ensuring transparency and accountability of the civil service; enhancing the independence and efficacy of the judicial systems; and providing an environment in which people feel secure, in which civil society is able to flourish, and in which governments are able to provide and improve core public services, respect human rights and the rule of law, foster economic growth, promote the equitable distribution of the fruits of that growth, provide an enabling setting for the private sector to generate jobs and incomes, and promote measures to ensure equitable access to political power by all citizens.

After listening to the preliminary statements above, ***His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda***, delivered his speech to officially open the Sixth Africa Governance Forum. After welcoming the delegates to Rwanda, the President reiterated the fundamental principles of the APRM as the governance premier programme for NEPAD. He saw APRM as a unique endeavor for it has never happened before for statesmen and stateswomen who are still in power to subject voluntarily themselves to both internal as well as external scrutiny. The President reminded the delegates about the underlying motivation that led to the emergence of APRM. He stated that countries have been subjected to unsolicited external reviews and evaluations that have had adverse effects on Africa. He added that the launch of APRM, as the home-grown statement of principle that good governance is paramount, should be applauded. He, however, still saw areas of improvement especially with respect to the administration of the questionnaire and the entire methodology of data gathering and analysis. The President challenged African countries to take a more credible, empirical approach so that the whole APRM process, including at the national institutional level, ceases to be seen as a subjective exercise. He cautioned that, in order to improve the Mechanism, the role and capacity requirements of the APRM Secretariat; the selection of country review experts and the peer review exercise itself; the role of cooperating partners (particularly in the post-review phase); and the depth of involvement of the panel members will all have to be reviewed in order to make them more relevant and effective. In a similar vein, President Kagame challenged countries to ensure that the implementation of the National Programmes of Action are best implemented and without creating parallel government programmes. Lastly, the President pledged his country's continued support for the APRM process, including upholding its principles and objectives.

3. Progress Report from the APRM Secretariat

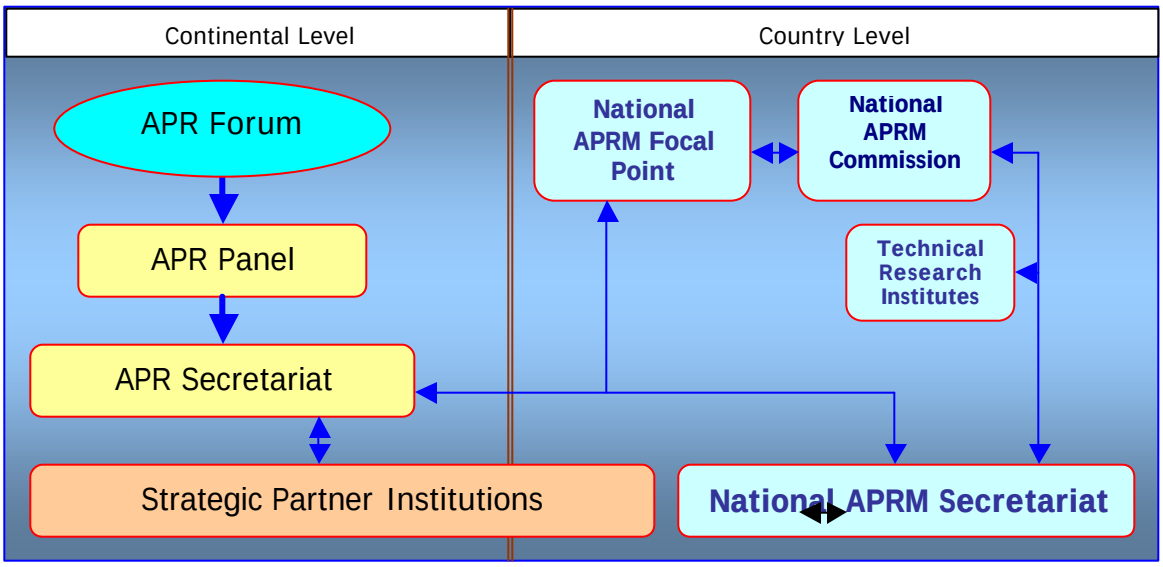
3.1 Introduction

The APRM Secretariat briefed the AGF-VI delegates on the registered progress so far. The presentation served as the basis for the subsequent discussions.

3.2 Progress Report from APRM Secretariat

In its submission to the AGF-VI, the APRM Secretariat stressed that APRM is basically a self-monitoring mechanism whose main aim is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, and sustainable development. The Secretariat reminded AGF-VI participants that the over-arching goal of the Mechanism is to accelerate progress towards sub-regional and continental economic integration through the sharing of experiences and the reinforcement of successful and best practices. Participants were further informed of the existing APRM structure as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: APRM Structure



The APRM Secretariat further reported that although only 25 countries has so far acceded to APRM, these account for as much as 73.6 percent of the total population for Africa, thus, giving an indication of the Mechanism's importance on the Continent. AGF-VI participants were further informed that the current 'Strategic Partners' of APRM are the African Development Bank (AfDB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). These institutions have continued to play an important role through, *inter alia*, the provision of technical, human and financial support. They have also participated in all APRM missions and have continued to share data and country information with the APR Panel/Secretariat. The APRM Secretariat also highlighted the responsibilities of countries that have acceded to the APRM framework as follows:

a) Sign accession document (MoU).
b) Sign the MoU on technical assessments and the country review visits.
c) Appoint national APRM focal points, national APRM commissions and other structures.

d) Contribute to the funding of the APRM.
e) Sensitization and information dissemination.
f) Ensure participation of all stakeholders.
g) Conduct the national self-assessment exercise and the country self-assessment report.
h) Develop and implement a realistic National Programme of Action (NPA).

With respect to the funding of the APRM, participants were informed that all actions at this level were being based on APRM Work Plan that cover the 2005-2007 and which was approved by the Heads of State during the Algiers Forum. The funding level was initially estimated at US$15 million. However, Participants were informed that this will be expanded as more countries join and as APRM work extends beyond the current three-year plan period. Participants were further told that cooperating partners are the main contributors towards the APRM funding, complimented by APRM countries that provide a minimum of US$100,000 each. An APRM Trust Fund is currently operational.

In terms of the registered progress so far, the APRM Secretariat reported that nine Country Support Missions have been undertaken to Ghana (May 2004); Rwanda (June 2004); Mauritius (July 2004); Kenya (July 2004); Uganda (February 2005); Nigeria (March 2005); Algeria (July 2005); South Africa (November 2005); and Benin (November 2005). Moreover, Country Review Missions were undertaken to Ghana (April 2005); Rwanda (April 2005); and Kenya (Oct 2005). Overall, the APRM Secretariat reported positive progress in a number of countries (Box 1).

Box 1: APRM Progress: Country Examples

Ghana
- Focal Point: Minister of NEPAD and Regional Integration.
- NGC-7 members (civil society) appointed by President.
- 4 Technical Research Institutions: One for each thematic area.
- Instruments: (Desk Research, Expert Panel, Household Survey)
- Extensive information dissemination.
- National Validation Exercise.

Rwanda
- Focal Point: Minister for Finance and National Planning.
- National Commission of about 50 Chaired by Minister of Planning-membership from government, CSOs, private sector.
- Questionnaires sent out, Volunteer thematic groups within the National Commission.

Kenya
- Focal Point: Ministry of National Planning
- Commission of 33 members – membership from CSOs, key ministries
- 4 Technical Research Institutions
- Instruments: Desk Research, Expert Panel, Household Surveys, Focus Group Discussions
- External Expert Review
- National Validation

4. Country Presentations

4.1 Introduction

The participating countries made presentations based on their respective progress, focusing mainly on identified opportunities, challenges, lessons learnt thus far, and recommendations on how best to implement the APRM process. The country submissions were later complemented by a UNDP presentation of the synthesis of country reports. The main messages from the submissions, complemented by a rich discussion in the plenary, are recorded below.

4.2 Presentations

4.2.1 Main Opportunities

4.2.1.1 Benchmarking Good Governance

Most country reports stressed the importance of 'Good Governance' in securing the socio-economic wellbeing of citizens. Essential components for good governance have been recognised to include aspects related to free and fair elections, zero tolerance on corruption, independence of the judiciary, and the upholding of the rule of law. There was appreciation of the fact that APRM encourages countries to measure good governance by standards that obtain at both the domestic and international levels.

4.2.1.2 Enhancement of Participatory and Inclusive Approaches in Governance

All country submissions to the AGF-VI underscored the importance of popular participation in national life and recognized the APRM process as encouraging citizens to fully participate in the identification of appropriate developmental programmes and their effective monitoring. There was a general appreciation of the fact that increasing opportunities for voice and participation would improve democracy and good governance when citizens are permitted to express their opinions, formally or informally, and freely press their opinions within the framework of the law. In this regard, APRM was seen as providing an opportunity for the general public to participate directly in the process through questionnaire responses; workshops interaction; and media commentaries. Through the participatory and inclusive Peer Review process, Civil Society is increasingly being mainstreamed into governance issues, thus providing ordinary citizens with the requisite tools to tease the manner their countries are being managed. Through its elaborate process, the APRM is seen to offer a diversity of state and non-state actors the opportunity to jointly assess the performance of political, social, and economic institutions against a set of standards, criteria and indicators as well as identify areas of low performance that they commit themselves to rectify. In this respect, most country submissions observed that the APRM process does increase political space for non-state actors, thus, encouraging them to be fully engaged in the development of their respective countries. The APRM process was also seen as an opportunity for countries to evaluate their ongoing national initiatives in the context of their respective National Visions.

4.2.1.3 Enhancement of the Role of the Media

Country submissions to the AGF-VI saw the APRM process as enabling the media to make a major contribution towards making developmentally-relevant information available and accessible to citizens. Countries agreed that, as the APRM ideals maintain, wide access to information is healthy for democracy. Thus, a number of countries stressed the importance of strengthening the capacity of media institutions to be more proactive in the APRM process beyond mere reporting of events. AGF-VI delegates were informed that, in many countries, the press has continued to occupy centre stage in informing citizens through feature articles, editorials, announcements, commentaries and periodic coverage of APRM events. This was reported to have resulted in positive developments, thanks to the complementary role of the APRM process itself.

4.2.1.4 Promotion on Public-Private-Partnerships

Countries recognized the opportunities that are being created by APRM for improved developmental prospects that are based on Public Private Partnership (PPP) involving governments, on the one hand, and the people, including CSOs, professional associations, media, academia, private sector, youth, women, and development partners, on the other. Based on country submissions, there is a growing recognition that in poor economies that suffer from fiscal constraints, PPP has the advantage of leveraging additional private sector resources (administrative, human and financial) to address qualitative and quantitative service shortfalls. This point was stressed more emphatically by representatives of the private sector during deliberations that followed country submissions. In spite of the merits of PPP, however, there was recognition of the reality that, while providing opportunities for improved service delivery, PPP could also relapse into inefficiencies that could introduce significant fiscal burden on the generally poor local level communities. It is in this regard that it was suggested that PPPs should be cautiously introduced, initially on a pilot basis, and adopted as part of quality improvement in government structures rather than as a sudden and radical departure from state provision of services. Hence, it was proposed that one of the opportunities that the APRM process could provide is the identification of the preconditions for effective PPP application.

4.2.1.5 The advantage of Strong Collaboration

AGF-VI participants recognized that cross-country comparisons and exchange of experiences through APRM does provide the requisite stimulus towards improved performance in the areas of policy making and implementation. It was recognized that constructive peer pressure should ensure that member countries do not derail the principles of good governance as enunciated in the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (2002) and the Constitutive Act of the AU (2000). To the extent that there will be synergies and common positions among APRM countries around basic fundamentals in the areas of democracy and political, economic and corporate Governance, this was seen to promise Africa another opportunity to act together on the basis of shared values and principles-including at the international level

4.2.1.6 Sensitization on Good Corporate Governance

For most APRM countries, the APRM process promises to provide a channel through which corporations and their executives get access to modern corporate governance methods and practices. Good economic and corporate governance, including transparency in financial

management, were recognized as being essential for the promotion of sound economic growth and poverty reduction. In the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, 8 codes and standards for good corporate governance are given to guide action by APRM countries in this field and countries acknowledged their strategic value towards the enhancement of good corporate governance. These are:

a) Code of good practices on transparency in monetary and financial policies;
b) Code of good practices on fiscal transparency;
c) Best practices for budget transparency;
d) Guidelines for public debt management;
e) Principles of corporate governance;
f) International accounting standards;
g) International standards on auditing; and
h) Core principles for effective banking supervision.

In the light of the above, good corporate governance is seen to offer opportunities for businesses in APRM countries to engage in social responsibility and, consequently, contribute to poverty reduction.

4.2.2 Main Challenges

During the submission of country reports to AGF-VI, complemented by the Synthesis of Country Reports, a number of challenges were raised at both the *national* and *APRM process* levels. These are summarized below.

4.2.2.1 Country-Level Challenges

1. Weak micro-economic environment

   There is a generally poorly performing public sector that operates under weak macroeconomic environment. Because of the multiplicity of these structural obstacles, the main challenge that was identified related to how best to develop the institutional and human resource capacities that are needed to turn around African economies.

2. Lack of capacity at country and regional level

   There is inadequate capacity within the appointed Focal Points/Governing Councils to effectively manage the tasks that are associated with the Peer Review process. This is due to a host of reasons that included the *'additionality element'* of the APRM processes that is said to have introduced additional functional stress on poorly-equipped and over-stretched civil service personnel. There was acknowledgement that this challenge could be minimised through the cultivation of stronger linkages between the APRM process and objectives, on the one hand, and the domestic development agenda, on the other. In this respect, the task ahead was perceived to be twofold, namely, (a) the enhancement of the capacities of Focal Points and Governing Councils to coordinate the technical processes as well as the political and policy inputs; and (b) the harmonisation of APRM process with countries' development programmes such as the PRSP and those elements that strive to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.
   It was also noted that the APRM Panel and secretariat lacked the requisite capacities to effectively provide leadership and technically manage the APRM processes. In this respect it

was suggested that measures be undertaken to strengthen the capacities of these two bodies and to review the skills of the secretariat staff.

3. Quality and comprehensiveness of national data systems

There are generally weak national data systems for purposes of conducting high quality national assessments as required by the APRM process. There was recognition that many APRM countries currently suffer from poor statistical information and inadequate personnel to interpret raw data. Institutional capacity building at the level of data processing was, thus, considered to be an important element towards the improvement of the APRM process.

4. Status of national APRM institutions

The acceptable level of APRM structures' autonomy from governments was seen as a challenge that is yet to be resolved in some countries. On the one hand, there was a strong argument for internalising the APRM processes within the government system as a way of securing its legitimacy and access to public resources. On the other hand, some countries argued for the exact opposite: the independence of the governing Councils so as to secure freedom to effectively undertake the APRM reviews. This issue provoked considerable level of debate/reflection during the plenary sessions as well as during the Heads of State segment. It was generally concluded that 'absolute independence' from the governments was neither feasible not desirable while there is value in ensuring that APRM structures at the country level retain significant professional leverage and freedom of action to manage the processes without undue state influence that could compromise professional judgement.

5. Ensuring the objectivity and integrity of the APRM process

There was recognised need to ensure that the capacity of national systems, particularly members of the country-level APRM technical teams, is driven by the desire to conduct a professional and technical assessment to the highest APRM standards of objectivity. The challenge at this level, according to country submissions, related to the importance of observing objective criteria in the putting together of APRM Technical Teams. In countries where there is no common 'National Vision,' the concern that the APRM process could be 'hijacked by contending groups and political divisions' in a way that could threaten countries' united voice, patriotism and nationalism was expressed. The need to address the challenge brought about by the quadripartite dialogue between the State, CSOs, private sector and external partners in those countries experiencing little harmony among the different groups was flagged as a real challenge that has implications for the APRM process.

6. Role of governments as the main catalysts for APRM processes

Some countries indicated the existence of 'fragile' governance systems and institutions due to a number of factors that included civil strife. The challenge at this level related to the capacities of governments to provide leadership and effectively provide the needed financing and institutional back up for APRM implementation.

7. Ensuring /deepening national ownership of APRM processes

The limited capacity of citizens to claim ownership of APRM was raised. This arose from the general lack of information on the mechanism and exposure to it. The challenge at this level related to how best to ensure that APRM is effectively internalized and the involvement of all

the main stakeholders in both the peer review process and the implementation of the National Programmes of Action are secured.

4.2.2.2 Challenges related to the APRM Process

1. The time factor

   Some countries argued that the time for the APRM process is inadequate. The whole process of review is currently expected to last nine months, covering all the four pillars of governance. Some countries, particularly the larger and more populous ones, considered this time of nine months to be too short to meaningfully address all the issues that should be covered. In the same spirit, it was suggested that the duration of external review missions to countries (with the Panel of Experts having only ten days in a country) is generally too short to enable the reviewers to get a sufficiently clear picture of what is on the ground, particularly the constraints under which country teams operate. Notwithstanding the apparent merits of this argument, there were countries that argued for the shortening of the period. Generally, a comprehensive review of the process was recommended in order to establish an ideal timeframe.

2. Need for flexibility and accommodating country innovation

   Some participants saw the need for the APRM process to be made flexible and able accommodate country-level innovations and specificities. In this respect, more local input in the design of the APR Questionnaire and the self-assessment Guidelines was suggested. It was maintained that the capturing (during the APRM self-assessment process) of the sensitivities related to special interest groups such as the women, youth, children, the aged, ethnic minorities, and physically handicapped persons was important. Similarly, it was argued that the linkage between APRM objectives and countries' domestic development agenda could easily be addressed through the suggested flexibility in the Mechanism's process. This implied the need for a re-examination of the balance between perceived external orientation of APRM and internal focus. This issue was further taken up during Group discussions.

3. Financing the APRM processes

   The highly consultative nature of the APRM process was found to be quite expensive for the relatively weaker economies. At this level, the primary challenge identified was how to extend to the APRM process sufficient resources to enable it hold as many consultative meetings as possible and to sustain stakeholder interest amidst limited resource base. It was recognised that additional resources from both domestic and external sources were required. The role of cooperating partners, including the Mechanism's Strategic Partners, was seen as important in this regard. Through PPP, the private sector could also be challenged to supplement government effort. Moreover, it was suggested that enhanced coordination and communication links between the APRM countries could be cultivated in order to open up more opportunities for inter-country collaboration, including the exchange of personnel. The more resource endowed APRM countries were called upon to assist with resources. The challenge here related to how best to upscale the level of direct contact between and among stakeholders across political boundaries, in addition to the current link between the APRM Secretariat and governments.

4.3 Main Recommendations

The following are the main recommendations that are derived from the country submissions, Synthesis Report and discussions:

1. The quality and density of the commitment of all governments are preconditions for the success of APRM. In this respect, the capacity of governments to take ownership of the doctrine, objectives and mechanism of APRM must be streamlined and strengthened so that the national challenges do not appear to be the interests of a few (ministry responsible for NEPAD, for example) and not of others.

2. The ultimate test of the credibility of the whole APRM process lies in the extent to which it is seen by all stakeholders to be objective. The process should, therefore, meet stringent standards of objectivity. It is also for this reason that an external review should remain a key component of APRM. Notwithstanding this, it is important to ensure that the professional standing of the persons that undertake the external review should be solid and non-partisan and their draft reports should mandatorily be subjected to country-level (not only government-level) review and approval prior to its submission to the Heads of State and Government (APR Forum) for review

3. The Peer Review reports should be released simultaneously to the public and to the APRM Heads of State and Government so as to both minimize negative speculations and to satisfy the "transparency and ownership criteria.'

4. The relevance of APRM should be judged primarily against its prospects for improving the wellbeing of the citizens of the countries that have acceded to it. The ultimate end result of the peer review should be improved good governance in the political social, economic and corporate spheres. APRM should be change agent and should bring with it better welfare of Africans.

5. Sufficient resources should always be mobilized to ensure that all the mandates of the APRM are funded if they are to achieve the desired results. For a process as widely consultative as the APRM, a country requires an outlay of sufficient human, material, and financial resources. Even allowing for the selective use of volunteers, the need for adequate funding remains strategic for the successful implementation of APRM in all its four main stages. External support for countries that are unable to raise the required resources should be one of the priorities of the APRM continental Secretariat. The private sector should also be challenged to make their contribution.

6. The body implementing the APRM programme should be vested with a certain degree of autonomy without necessarily being independent of the government.

7. To the extent that *Country Ownership* of the APRM processes has been acknowledged, all participating countries must be involved in the preparation of future questionnaire development because civil society will not participate in a committed way in the self-assessment mechanism unless it understands what is at stake and that the process has adequate mechanisms to make its voice heard.

These recommendations were revisited and subjected to further deliberations during Group discussions (see Chapter 6 below).

5. A view from the Partners

Cooperating Partners that are supporting the APRM were given an opportunity to share their experiences in supporting the mechanism and their perspectives for the future. Their messages are summarized below.

5.1 Strategic Partners

Speaking on behalf of other Strategic Partners, ECA explained the nature of their collective support to the implementation of APRM. The strengthening of the APRM Secretariat was recognized as requiring immediate attention, as is the need for national institutions to strengthen their capacities to enable them to better implement the APRM objectives. On its part, the ECA reported that it has established a secretariat within its organization that addresses the APRM concerns. Similarly, AfDB established a unit in charge of NEPAD/APRM issues. Likewise, it was reported that UNDP has provided technical assistance at both the APRM Secretariat and individual country levels, mainly targeting the strengthening of systems that oversee the APRM process. UNDP is also providing management support to the APRM Implementation Trust Fund to which it has contributed $2.75m. Collectively, Strategic Partners have reviewed various country self-assessment reports prior to their submission to the APRM Forum. Moreover, they have thus far participated in country missions to Ghana, Rwanda, and Kenya. UNDP, in particular, has also supported awareness building and the deeper understanding of the APRM process.

5.2 United Kingdom

The United Kingdom, giving its perspective as a bilateral partner also stressed the value of the ideals of APRM and highlighted the following issues that it considers to be important:

a) Stressed the importance of good governance, which entails accountability to citizens; capability to deliver services equitably; and the maintenance of peace.
b) Identified peer learning as being important and that it should be strengthened by making it more participatory.
c) Flagged the need to reduce APRM's heavy dependence on Strategic Partners.
d) Stressed the importance of the National Programmes of Action (NPA) being integrated into the countries' own budgetary systems. In this regard, it was suggested that NPA should be formulated in a consultative and inclusive manner to include other wings of government beyond the APRM focal ministries.
e) Recognized the need for NPA to be prioritized and integrated into country programmes rather than being stand-alone enterprises.
f) Stressed that the focus of APRM should be on *impact* and positive change.

5.3 General Discussion

In the discussion that followed, participants agreed that countries themselves must, first and foremost, cultivate the requisite political will and develop clear strategies on how to proceed with the APRM process. It was generally recognized that the speed of reforms ought to be aligned to the capacities of countries to undertake them. It was agreed that NPA must always be part of self-

assessments, bearing in mind that such plans must, of necessity, be an integral part of the existing country-level programmes. In this regard, it was suggested that the budget of NPA should be reflected in the national-level budgets. This entailed the need to ensure that cooperating partners avoid setting up parallel implementation and monitoring systems. In the same vein, an appeal was made to donors to simplify their messages and avoid sending conflicting signals. The importance of scaling up of African countries' contribution of resources was stressed, recognizing that this is one effective way of allowing the continent to own and drive the APRM process. The role of the private sector in resource mobilization from within the APRM countries themselves was also underlined as an important part of reinforcing local *ownership and* to reduce external dependence.

6. Report from the Working Groups

6.1 Introduction

Based on the deliberations that preoccupied the first day of the forum (mainly the official opening speeches and the country reports), more focused discussions were held during the second day of the deliberations. The discussions in both the Working Groups and the plenary session that received group reports were structured around responding to the following questions.

a) How to advance the APRM process, focusing on the effectiveness and appropriateness of the APRM instruments (e.g. Memorandum of Understanding, questionnaires, standards, criteria, and methodologies that are used);
b) How to strengthen the institutions at the country and regional levels (e.g. the APR Forum, APR Panel, APRM Secretariat, Panel Reports, Peer Reviews, national structures, participation levels, self-assessment, and Country Review Teams)
c) After the APRM country-level process, how the National Programmes of Action (NPA) could best be managed to ensure effective implementation (focusing *inter alia*, on implementation modalities, partnerships and resource requirements); and
d) How best to structure post-review follow-up, including monitoring and evaluation.

The following are the main conclusions under each one of the four areas above, focusing on opportunities, challenges, lessons learnt and recommendations. While the presentation below presents the issues thematically, an effort is also made to capture the richness of individual groups' deliberations.

6.2 Improvement of the APRM Instruments

A number of issues were raised regarding how best the APRM process could be improved upon. The following conclusions are noteworthy in this regard:

6.2.1 Memorandum of Understanding

At the level of *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU), the following issues were considered:
a) Should accession to APRM be preceded by consultations with stakeholders?
b) How best can countries guarantee the continuity of the APRM process?
c) How binding should the MoU be?
d) Can a country withdraw from the APRM?

From the discussions around the issues above, the following challenges and recommendations emerged:
a) There has been recognition that the voluntarism associated with entering into an MoU is itself a strength and a weakness. Since the Document is not legally binding, there remains the challenge of how best to secure compliance. At the

same time, the flexibility that is associated with the enforcement of the MoU's provisions allows countries to freely dialogue with each other while retaining their sovereign rights to make decisions that respect their peculiarities. In this respect, it was agreed that it is not yet time to elevate the status of the MoU to a legally binding treaty status. Notwithstanding this consideration, participants cautioned that while a non-binding MoU allows for individual country's flexibility, the process must be managed properly and peer-pressure applied so as to ensure that commitments are adhered to in the interest of the enhancement of good governance in the member countries.

b) The accession MoU should be preceded with "limited" consultations at the country level, involving such stakeholders as the Cabinet and Parliament. This would improve compliance with respect to the commitment APRM country governments make, through the MoU, on behalf of their people. It was also recognized that APRM is about countries, not Heads of State, hence, the value of making the Mechanism's country-level process as consultative and inclusive as possible.
c) It was agreed that the best guarantor of continuity of APRM country membership is the attainment of quality results and benefits.
d) Notwithstanding this, there was acknowledgement that every country is free to belong to, and withdraw from, APRM since it is a voluntary undertaking.

6.2.2 Questionnaire

With respect to the issue of *Questionnaire* that is used for country assessment, a number of issues were tabled. They included the following:

a) Is the questionnaire unwieldy?
b) Can it be adopted to fit specific contexts?
c) Is it missing important aspects that should have been included?
d) Are there any protocols or international commitments which could compromise the questionnaire?
e) Is it justified to focus the Questionnaire exclusively on governments and remain silent on civil society?

A number of challenges and opportunities regarding the Questionnaire were recognized during the discussions. The following are worth noting:

a) The questionnaire appears to be repetitive especially on cross-cutting issues, thus, making the Country Self-assessment Review tedious and difficult to follow and digest. This has implications for the Country Review Team (CRT) Report as well as the final Panel Report.
b) A number of important aspects are missing in the Questionnaire, e.g., international humanitarian law; child soldiers; human rights; maternal mortality; press freedom; etc.
c) There is also need to determine how the evaluation of governance in civil society can be done (including associated indicators and benchmarks) so that this important stakeholder is also included in the Questionnaire.

In the light of the above, a number of recommendations were tabled during AGF-VI. They included the following:

a) The Questionnaire should be reviewed and subsequently revised, taking into account the missing issues that are generic to the governance question in

Africa. The APRM Secretariat should assume leadership in the provision of guidance on the adoption of country specificities, drawing on the experiences of Rwanda and Ghana that have reached an advanced stage in the APRM process.

b) Civil society should also be assessed. Thus, indicators and benchmarks targeted at this category of actors should be included in the Questionnaire.

6.2.3 APRM Methodology

A number of issues were raised with respect to the *Methodology* that is used in the APRM process. They include the following:

a) There is the danger of the methodology that is used being lopsided in favour of one group at the expense of the others. This is explained by the different levels of technical competencies and levels of commitment in different countries. The sampling frame and size has also not been standardized as it has differed from one country to the other.
b) There is the challenge regarding how best to make the poor and illiterate people effectively participate in the APRM process.
c) The challenge of inadequate finance to the effectiveness of the APRM process was raised and identified as the major hurdle to the effective realization of country assessments.
d) The sensitisation and popularization of APRM has also posed a serious challenge at the level of modality (how best to do it) and capacity (given the resource, technical and human resource limitations, particularly in the more populous countries).

Notwithstanding the seemingly insurmountable challenges that are posed by the APRM process amidst resource and structural constraints, a number of lessons were acknowledged from the experience so far. The following were recognized as being essential for strategizing the way forward:

a) Countries should share best practices, particularly from nations that have had a long tradition of decentralized modes of consultation. The experience of South Africa was singled out as one example where a multi-layered Governing Council and the effective deployment of mass communication through the media have paid dividends in the advancement of the cause of the APRM process.

b) Technical research institutes were also identified as possessing a reservoir of knowledge and experience in the administration of the questionnaire and the unbundling of this and related research instruments in a manner that takes into account current shortcomings of such tools. These institutes' experience in the deployment of a wide range of survey techniques was also acknowledged as an important asset for the APRM process. Their deployment in the APRM process was, thus, recognized as being essential.

c) The role of the media in the APRM process was acknowledged as being strategic and a number of countries reported their positive experiences at this level. There was, nevertheless, recognition of the need to improve press freedom in many of the APRM countries so that the quality of reporting goes

above the more journalistic reporting of events to more critical assessment of issues, including governance issues that are covered by APRM.

Against the above background, a number of recommendations were made that aimed at improving the methodology used. The following are particularly important:

a) The APRM Secretariat should give a prototype research design, drawing on the collective experience of Rwanda, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa. By defining the general guidelines, countries would be assisted in avoiding the possibility of ending up with a lopsided survey that could favour one group (say, the elite) to the disadvantage of other social groups.
b) There is need to invest in the development of capacities for national research institutions that should assume more strategic responsibilities in country assessments and, subsequently, in the monitoring and evaluation of activities in the National Programmes of Action that follow the APRM process.
c) In order to secure the requisite resources that are essential for the successful fulfillment of the APRM process, countries need to budget ahead of the process. This would avoid compromising quality on grounds of cost.
d) Governments should demonstrate a high level of commitment to the APRM process, in general, and to the employed methodology for country assessments, in particular.

6.3 APRM Institutions and Processes

6.3.1 Identified Challenges and Opportunities

A number of issues pertaining to the APRM systems and structures were raised, focusing, in particular, on the whole process; the APR Panel and Secretariat; the Country Review Team (CRT) and its activities; the panel reports; national activities; and the country-level self-assessment process.

During discussions, the main issues included the following:

a) Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the CRT in terms of organization, composition and intervention /reporting timeframe;
b) Insuring the independence and integrity of the CRT;
c) Determining the credible country level APR process;
d) How best to identify and mobilize relevant stakeholders and ensure inclusiveness of the APRM process;
e) How to ensure a credible self-assessment that is acceptable to all stakeholders;
f) How to improve the different Panel reports (background papers, issues papers, etc.) and the timeframe of their release;
g) How best to improve the functioning of the APR Panel and APR Secretariat
h) How best to strengthen the credibility of APRM process

With respect to the *national structures*, the following issues were raised:

a) Should the National Focal Point (FP) and the national Commissions be independent of government or not?

b) How best can the FP be made accountable to both government and other stakeholders?
c) What should be the relationship and the coordination modalities between the FP and the Governing Council or National Commission?
d) How should the national structure be established, taking into account the best modalities for decentralization at the regional and local levels?
e) What should be done, in terms of capacity building, to enable national structures to undertake credible, objective and effective self-assessment?

A number of challenges were identified at the level of APRM process alignment and institutional capacity strengthening. They included the following:

a) How best to make the APR process non partisan, transparent and efficient;
b) Need to clarify conceptual ambiguities, including those between the African Union, NEPAD and APRM Panel;
c) How best to build capacities at both APR Secretariat and national levels;
d) How to ensure the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders, including women, at the country level;
e) How credible databases could best be established at the national levels;
f) How best to establish efficient and decentralized national structures;
g) How to benchmark the self-assessment process;
h) How to shorten the APR process without compromising its effectiveness; and
i) Ensuring that greater part of the funding are sourced domestically.

6.3.2 Recommendations

There was a general recognition that the challenges above are best addressed in the light of lessons learnt from the experience of APRM thus far. People-centered programmes/initiatives such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and existing governance programmes/initiatives were recognized as providing the framework for addressing the identified challenges. Above all, political will was singled out as being an important prerequisite for the strengthening of APRM institutional structures, focusing on the commitment of all parties, including Heads of State, governments, the APR Panel, national stakeholders and external partners. Additional resources are also required from cooperating partners to secure smooth establishment and operations of country-level structures.

In the light of the above, the meeting came up with the following specific recommendations in the area of APRM institutions and processes:

(a) Clarify conceptual ambiguities

There is need to disseminate more effectively the objectives and underlying ideals of APRM, focusing of the clarification of any ambiguities that still remain. This should be done through sensitisation and advocacy campaigns that target the different levels and types of stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, civil society, and communities. By so doing, the objectives of the Mechanism would be better appreciated and support for their realization more assured.

(b) Avoidance of One-Size-Fits-All Approach in the Review Process

AGF-VI recognized the imperative of ensuring that there is minimum standardization of the APRM review process so as to capture country specificities, peculiarities and variations in capacities as well as to accommodate country innovations. Participants recognized that, by adopting this approach, the APRM process would enhance the needed objectivity while accommodating national flexibility. The standardization of country self-assessments, it was agreed, should be avoided while, at the same time, recognizing that there are common and internationally accepted benchmarks that should remain standard frames of reference for guiding country actions and to facilitate comparability of experiences as well as monitoring and evaluation.

(c) Development of APR Implementation Roadmap

Participants recognized the value in agreeing and implementing a realistic roadmap for the APRM process that takes into account the potential variability in the content, duration, and speed of undertaking country assessments from one country to the other.

(d) APRM Secretariat Capacity Strengthening

Participants underlined the importance of strengthening the capacity of the APR Secretariat in terms of staff members and its structure. To do this effectively, a review of the Secretariat's mandate and staff skills needs to be made, taking into account the emerging issues and challenges arising from implementation experiences.

(e) Better Definition of Partnerships in the APRM Process

Participants called for better definition of the criteria for identification and selection of national stakeholder representatives in the APRM process. These should include national government; local government; parliament; judicial system; private sector, professionals, women and youth associations, minority and disadvantaged groups as well as political parties.

(f) Database Development and Utilization

The establishment of credible national databases at both regional and national levels was recognized as being essential for the generation of policy-relevant information. The harnessing of existing studies to form the basis of APRM database was highlighted. These include the National Long-Term Perspective Studies (NLTPS), National Visions, National Development Plans, UNDP Human Development Reports, ECA database, etc. It was recognized that all these data sources constitute an important repository of the required information and a resource to advance the APRM objectives. The development and preservation of these databases, participants recommended, should receive special attention in the APRM process.

(g) Country Ownership of the Processes

Participants recommended the setting up of effective and efficient national institutional frameworks that are country-owned with Governing Councils/National Commissions that are decentralized to the regional and local levels. Participants generally agreed that, as already consented to by the Heads of State and Government, the Focal Point should be a high government official, preferably in the Office of the President. The role of the Focal Point is not to make

decisions but to serve as the coordinator and interface between the government, civil society and private sector entities with respect to the conduct of the APRM business.

6.4 Implementation of the National Programme of Action

6.4.1 Opportunities

Participants also addressed the challenges that are associated with the National Programme of Action (NPA). A number of opportunities were identified that favour the effective implementation of NPA.

a) Participants recognized that it is a reflection of the African leaders' goodwill towards the promotion of good governance which led to the establishment of APRM. Thus, this should be exploited during the implementation of NPA.
b) *T*here already exists the African Governance Forum (AGF) and electronic media platforms that provide a forum for the sharing of experiences and best practices among countries and stakeholders. These opportunities should be utilized as countries acquire the required expertise for the implementation of the NPA.
c) *P*articipants noted that the collaboration that has been established between state and non-state actors during the national country assessment stages continues to provide an avenue for mobilizing the required resources from all fronts and for building synergies during the implementation of the NPA.
d) Participants noted that the existence of, and support from, regional and international institutions, including the Strategic Partners, has continued to provide avenues for technical and financial support for the implementation of the NPA.
e) *T*here was recognition that national development plans in APRM member countries do provide a framework for the integration, funding and implementation of the NAP.

6.4.2 Challenges

Notwithstanding the opportunities above, AGF-VI participants identified a number of challenges that require immediate attention in order to secure effective implementation of NPA. They include the following:

a) Inadequate financial, human and institutional capacities, which vary among countries and which have the potential to hamper the effective implementation of NPA.
b) Costing of the NPA can be quite difficult especially for activities that span over a considerable period of time. This calls for national capacities to plan and budget for NPA activities bearing in mind, nevertheless, of the financial stress that many of the member countries continue to face.
c) The constraint of time during the assessment stages could result in inadequate involvement of a large number of stakeholders and, consequently, compromise the level of commitment of relevant stakeholders to the implementation process.
d) The harmonization of NPA with the existing national processes and agenda could pose a real planning and functional challenge in those APRM countries with limited institutional and human resource capacities. The value of collaboration, through Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP), was acknowledged by AGF-VI participants as one way of addressing this challenge.

e) Participants acknowledged that there should be no difference between the NPA and existing national development strategies. In this regard, efforts should be made to integrate or harmonize all existing plans, such as the PRSP, with the NPA and produce one single national development document. Notwithstanding the value of doing this, participants cautioned that a single or combined national strategy was bound to confront some challenges that should be acknowledged. For instance, the NPA could lose its essence once it is integrated into the other plans. NPA could also lose its own identity as a reference document for 'good governance' once it is integrated into the national plans and instruments. In the event that this happens, the needed support and enthusiasm for NPA could dissipate. The challenge here, therefore, is how to integrate NPA into the national systems without sacrificing the APRM ideals and objectives.

6.4.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations with respect to the implementation of NPA:

a) The implementation of NPA should involve the participation of all stakeholders (government, civil society, development partners, private sector, etc.) so as to win their support. In the same vein, NPA implementation requires capacity strengthening of relevant institutions as well as the establishment of new institutions where necessary.
b) Issues concerning NPA ought to be integrated into the country assessment instruments in order to secure the appropriate level of their treatment.
c) The level of dialogue that is initiated during the country self-assessment stages should be sustained in order to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged during the monitoring of NPA implementation.
d) The NPA should be mainstreamed into the national planning and budgetary processes while recognizing that additional resources may be required for more specific aspects of the APRM process.
e) The issue of funding is critical and should be deliberated upon right from the conceptual and assessment stages of the APRM process. As a rejoinder to this, the continental APRM Implementation Trust Fund should be expanded and made accessible to countries that are facing resource constraints during NPA implementation. The strengthening of domestic resource mobilization to boost NPA funding and, consequently, reducing the current heavy reliance on external resources should also be taken into account.
f) There is need to mainstream gender in the implementation of NPA.
g) Countries should facilitate more effective private sector involvement in NPA implementation.
h) The NPA should serve as the reference document during preparation of future national development plans.
i) Through the work of technical teams, the NPA should be divided into short, medium and long-term phases to facilitate ease of implementation.
j) There is the need for a strong monitoring and evaluation system to ensure the effective implementation of NPA.

6.5 APRM Post-Review Follow-up

The Forum also discussed post-APR issues concerning the National Programme of Action and its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Four broad issues were focused upon, namely,

a) What is the difference between NPA and existing development plans? Should there be a difference?
b) What is the role for the Governing Council, the government and other stakeholders in implementation and evaluation?
c) How should monitoring and evaluation be carried out?
d) How should NPA be financed?

Participants deliberated and reached conclusions and recommendations as presented below.

6.5.1 Difference between NPA and National Plans

Participants recognized the value of harmonizing and integrating all existing plans, including NPA, and produce one single plan. Notwithstanding this, the challenge remains regarding how not to lose the essence of NPA in the integrated approach and secure the document as reference tool for 'Good Governance.' As a solution to this challenge, participants agreed to harmonize all existing development plans into a single document while retaining the essence of NPA. This may entail the Governing Councils or Commissions and civil society developing the strategies for selective M&E of some pertinent aspects of the integrated NPA. The retained pertinent aspects of NPA could include recommendations that require specific policy dialogue. To ensure a systematic and effective implementation, participants recommended that implementation strategies should prioritize the integrated plan into short, medium and long-term targets. In this regard, short-term would relate to recommendations that call for immediate policy actions; medium-term would refer to activities that could be implemented with governments' own resources within two-to-five year's timeframe; and long-term would refer to projects requiring mobilizing external resources over a long period.

6.5.2 Role of Stakeholders in Post-Review Monitoring and Evaluation

The different stakeholders in the post-review monitoring and evaluation were identified. These included the Governing Council; Government; civil society; private sector; APRM Strategic Partners (UNDP, AfDB, ECA); bilateral and multilateral partners; APR Forum; APR Panel; sub-regional bodies (e.g., SADC, ECOWAS); continental bodies (e.g., AU); friends of Africa (i.e., International NGOs/Agencies); and the Africans in the Diaspora. It was recognized that although all the listed stakeholders could be relevant to the post-review period of NPA monitoring and evaluation, the key roles would revolve around the Governing Council, Civil Society and External Partners. To be effective in their respective roles, the Governing Council should produce user-friendly (popular) versions of the APRM Review Report as part of a communication strategy to disseminate and advocate for support. Civil society, on the other hand, should develop the "culture of national appraisal" with the media embarking on public sensitization. External partners were seen as important sources of technical and financial resources, complemented by their role of facilitating mutual accountability.

AGF-VI participants cautioned that, in carrying out their roles, the key stakeholders are likely to meet a number of challenges that should be addressed, namely, (a) resources to enable them play their respective roles; (b) potential conflicts among them if roles are not clearly defined; (c)

mobilizing and building their capacity to play their roles; and (d) prevalence of high illiteracy among African communities and its limiting factor.

To maintain an effective monitoring and evaluation system and assist the various stakeholders in playing their roles, participants recommended that the bodies that managed the APR process (Governing Councils or Commissions) should be maintained to coordinate and supervise the monitoring and evaluation tasks. Additionally, it was recommended that "Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines" should be developed to ensure coherence and consistency.

6.5.3 Implementation of M&E

The third challenge addressed by participants was how to implement the monitoring and evaluation system. It was agreed that the Governing Council or Commission should be the focal point for monitoring and evaluation with roles for the other key stakeholders clearly assigned. It was also recognized that the "one-size-fits-all" approach could not work since the APR process could vary from one country to the other.

Participants also recognized that M&E and integrated/harmonized national development strategy that included NPA posed some unique challenges. For instance, how best should NPA be monitored and evaluated within the larger context of national strategies? Should the NPA be monitored and evaluated in isolation of, or together with, the other development plans? Would that compromise the credibility of the M&E and ensure gender-sensitive processes? At this level, participants identified the critical challenge as one regarding how to produce a simplified and adaptable M&E mechanism and make it user-friendly. To address these challenges, participants noted that Governing Councils or Commissions might not have to invent new M&E instruments and could adapt and modify some existing international M&E tools. Nonetheless, there was consensus that templates should be developed to ensure coherence and consistency. It was further recommended that stakeholders should also be galvanized to participate in the M&E process. It was also suggested that, in some cases, the Technical Research Institutions that helped in undertaking self-assessments could be deployed to assist in M&E. Lastly, it was recommended that, to the extent possible, existing in-country M&E mechanisms should be refined, upgraded, and utilized.

6.5.4 Resource Mobilization for M&E

The main issue was how to mobilize resources in support of the NPA implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Overwhelmingly, participants agreed that African governments should endeavor to support the NPA from domestic sources, including the creative engagement of the private sector. This could strengthen "African ownership" that the APRM has sought to entrench at all levels. Consequently, the idea of mobilizing resources from Africans in the Diaspora was mooted although the problems of sensitisation of such Africans, and coordination and mobilization of their resources, were acknowledged. It was recognized that the Diaspora African would not easily buy into supporting the NPA unless they were sensitized enough to accept the self-interest imperative. In view of the weak economies in most countries, the importance of support from external partners was equally recognized. Additionally, it was agreed that given the right orientation and engagement, "Friends of Africa" (i.e., international organizations and agencies that have long-standing commitment to Africa's development) could channel their support toward NPA.

In the light of the above, the following recommendations were made during the AGF-VI meeting to address the issue of resource mobilization for M&E:

a) A strategy for resource mobilization (technical, financial, human) should be developed by experts and validated by APR stakeholders.
b) African countries should seek to align the NPA with national budget for General Budget Support or Multi-donor Budget Support.
c) A percentage of the national budget should be allocated for monitoring and evaluation systems.
d) Considering that certain elements of NPA are capable of releasing funds (for example, sealing the leakages in the economy through effective anti-corruption and accountability measures), participants recommended that those elements should be hurriedly and painstakingly implemented. Participants agreed that these could constitute the "quick wins" of the APRM process.

7. Dialogue with Heads of State

The Sixth Africa Governance Forum concluded with a dialogue between AGF-VI delegates and President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso. Both Presidents reaffirmed African ownership, management and leadership of the African Peer Review Mechanism. In his statement during this Heads of State Segment of AGF-VI, President Kagame stressed that the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism in African nations is critical for the improvements of livelihoods in our region. He observed that heads of state had previously not been invited to meeting of the African Governance Forum, something that he saw as being inappropriate. He, thus, encouraged organizers of this important Forum to include African leaders in future meetings. The President stressed the importance of Africans to be in control of the governance debate in Africa by leading the dialogue and by finding solutions to the many challenges in this area.

For his part, President Compaore detailed the steps taken by his country, Burkina Faso, to solidify democratic governance. While acknowledging the value of APRM, the President congratulated the Forum for its work, which he said he hoped will contribute to strengthening good governance in Africa. He saw the APRM as an innovative mechanism on which Africans can base their work when facing the challenges of creating sustainable development on the continent.

The UNDP's Regional Director for Africa, Mr. Gilbert Houngbo, in his speech following the statements by the two Heads of State, characterized AGF-VI as a 'historical' event for the African Peer Review Mechanism and for the cause of good governance in Africa. He observed that since the launch of the APRM, there has not been an opportunity where African leaders have been able to interact with stakeholders to discuss the Mechanism, thus, seeing the occasion as serving to "bridge that gap of interaction and information exchange." Mr. Houngbo saw the results of the AGF-VI deliberations as a resounding reaffirmation of the centrality of good governance in achieving development in Africa and the critical role APRM can play in this regard. He highlighted some of the important messages that emerged from the deliberation, namely, that:

a) the APRM process needs to move faster within the countries that have already joined and to do this, the processes and instruments of APRM need to be constantly adjusted and simplified sufficiently to permit speedy implementation;
b) APRM needs to be rooted in the realities of countries and must be implemented in a manner that promotes and deepens country ownership through greater decentralization, transparency and inclusiveness;
c) APRM needs to be mainstreamed into the development strategies of countries so as to avoid duplication, secure greater coherence and better use the available resources;
d) the implementation of APRM requires partnerships and resources both within countries and with partners, bearing in mind, though, that the sustainability and credibility of the APRM process depend on national ownership;
e) There is need to deepen interaction and promote mutual learning among the APRM countries and people.

The Minister of Public Service of South Africa- representing the AGFVI participants presented to the Heads of State and participants a summary of what was achieved by AGF-VI during the previous two days. Noting that the AGF-VI Agenda has provided participants with an opportunity to learn from each other about their respective experiences with respect to the APRM process, the representative reported the resounding affirmation by AGF-VI delegates of the centrality of Good

Governance in the attainment of Africa's development agenda and the critical role that APRM is expected to play. In the context of this, the following eight 'Key Issues' were highlighted as having constituted the main messages from the AGF-VI deliberations:

a) Centrality of political will in the implementation of APRM;
b) The processes and instruments of the Mechanism need to be constantly adjusted and simplified, taking into account local specificities and innovations;
c) Need for APRM to be implemented in a manner that promotes and deepens country ownership through greater decentralisation to the people and being an agent of change;
d) APRM needs to be mainstreamed into countries' development plans and strategies so as to avoid duplication and secure greater coherence;
e) The implementation of APRM requires partnerships and resources both from within countries and from Partners;
f) Capacities of institutions at national and continental levels are critical for effective APRM implementation;
g) Need, through better advocacy and communication, to deepen the understanding of APRM and the challenges member countries face individually and collectively in its implementation; and
h) The centrality of sustaining mutual learning among the APRM participating countries and with partners.

Discussion with Presidents

During the open discussion with the Presidents after the formal presentations, the following issues were raised and discussed:

a) A representative of the President of Algeria reported that the President of that country reaffirms the importance of good governance and, hence, Algeria's support for APRM. Similarly, a delegate from Ghana reported that the President of that country has stressed the value of APRM and informed the delegates that a Governing Council, consisting exclusively of civil society members, has been established.

b) In conveying the apology from the President of Senegal for not attending AGF-VI, one of that country's delegates stressed the need for 'local ownership' of the APRM process. In this respect, he emphasized the need for APRM to ensure that, as Africa improves upon its governance record, no one should be allowed to dictate to Africa what its people should do. He further stressed the need to mainstream gender in the APRM activities and processes, an issue that was also highlighted later by the civil society representative from Gabon. In response, the President of Burkina Faso acknowledged that governance is a concern in Africa. He underscored the Heads of State's awareness of this limitation. In this respect, the President saw the need for direct dialogue with all stakeholders, including those that are marginalized. He stressed the necessity for countries to focus on the implementation of the National Programmes of Action while recognizing country specificities. Notwithstanding this, President Compaore agreed with one of the conclusions of AGF-VI that there must be universally-agreed principles in management and administration, especially on how to accommodate all players.

c) A representative from the Youth Union in Tanzania called upon the delegates to recognize the role of the youth in the debate about good governance. In a similar vein, a representative from the media in Kenya stressed the strategic role of the media and, thus, called APRM to facilitate their enhanced involvement on all aspects of good governance. In the debate that

ensued, President Kagame agreed with the call for a strengthened media but added the caveat that the media must also understand its responsibilities to the various national programmes and processes.

d) President Kagame, in his contribution to the debate on the issue of governance (especially with respect to the challenge from the floor that presidents in Africa should be more accountable to their people and that APRM should provide some form of sanction or exclusion for non-performers), he stressed the earlier point that he made in his official opening of AGF-VI that African leaders have "...articulated our problems but problems are with implementation." He added that there is still a credibility challenge with respect to APRM's self-assessment process that should be addressed. He further argued that, for a long time, Africa has always been at the receiving end: "they tell us what to do and what not to do." Thus, he added, APRM should aim to put a stop to this. He also stressed that donors should give Africa resources and put them into programmes that have been decided upon by Africans. In the same vein, he proposed, Africa should fight corruption not because the World Bank is telling it to do so, but because Africa believes it is a good thing.

e) On the issue of "continuity" that was raised with respect to the tendency for some presidents to resist leaving office, President Kigame argued that African leaders' performance should be judged on the basis of what they do after they are elected and what they leave behind. In this regard, he reminded delegates that viable institutions should be created "that are larger and stronger than individuals…It is institutions that secure continuity."

f) On the issue raised on the floor regarding APRM national institutions remaining 'independent,' the President Kagame indicated that this should be qualified and added that independence should mean freedom of action and not independence from other complementary systems. In expressing similar sentiments, the President of Burkina Faso agreed with President Kigame's position and stated that, with respect to the call for independence of national institutions, it is important to observe that, in African societies, there are many independent bodies and that their collective efforts should collectively target "the efficiency of our nations." In this regard, President Compaore added, the APRM Commissions in countries are expected to represent all the stakeholders. Thus, he argued, ideas must be given freely but, at the end, the decisions should be codified into laws and norms and, at this level, it is the elected government that should facilitate the process. In this context, he contended, to talk of the independence of the APRM bodies from government influence would be unhelpful. With regard to the discussion on gender, President Compaore noted that gender is not just a notion of equality but that, perhaps more importantly; it is a challenge of inclusiveness.

Conclusion

Overall, there was an overwhelming appreciation from the floor that the two presidents accorded the delegates the opportunity to deliberate with them on the important issue of governance. In his closing remarks, the Chairperson of the African Peer Review (APR) Panel, Ambassador Betuel Kiplagat, thanked the two Presidents for gracing the special segment of AGF-VI and for offering the delegates a rare opportunity to exchange their views with them.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

The AGF-VI Meeting in Kigali arrived at a number of conclusions and recommendations. The main ones are summarized below.

8.1 Main Conclusions

1. The AGF-VI deliberations were a resounding reaffirmation of the centrality of good governance in achieving development in Africa and the critical role APRM can play in this regard. APRM is a unique endeavor for it has never happened before for statesmen and stateswomen who are still in power to subject themselves voluntarily to both internal as well as external scrutiny.

2. By helping to enhance national ownership and developing greater public awareness about the need for, and requirements of, good governance, APRM is instrumental in laying a crucial foundation for good governance on the Continent.

3. The APRM process has enabled the media to make a major contribution towards making developmentally-relevant information available and accessible to citizens.

4. Public Private Partnerships (PPP) are important in addressing the challenges of capacity and resources that constrain the ability of Africa to comprehensively deal with governance and development.

5. Cross-country comparisons and exchange of experiences through APRM provides the requisite stimulus towards improved performance in the areas of policy making and implementation.

6. The APRM process promises to provide a channel through which corporations and their executives get access to modern corporate governance methods and practices. In this regard, good corporate governance offers opportunities for businesses in APRM countries to engage in social responsibility and, consequently, contribute to poverty reduction.

7. The highly consultative nature of the APRM process has been quite expensive for the relatively weaker economies, thus, necessitating the need to address the challenges that are associated with resource mobilization from both within and outside Africa.

8. The flexibility that is provided by the APRM Memorandum of Understanding's allows countries to freely dialogue with each other while retaining their sovereign rights to make decisions that respect their peculiarities. In this respect, it is not yet time to elevate the status of the MoU to a legally binding treaty status. Notwithstanding this, the best guarantor of continuity of APRM country membership is the attainment of quality results and benefits.

9. The country self-assessment questionnaire has left out a number of important aspects such as international humanitarian law; child soldiers; human rights; maternal mortality; press freedom. It also does not provide information that would assist in the evaluation of civil society behavior and yet this is an important aspect of good governance at the country level.

10. There still is lack of harmony between the APRM-facilitated National Programmes of Action and existing national development strategies, thus, minimizing the required harmony in the two important tools for national development.

8.2 Recommendations

8.2.1 Key recommendations

AGF-VI made the following four key recommendations for APRM:

1. To facilitate speedy implementation, the APRM processes, instruments and institutional arrangements need to be constantly adjusted, strengthened and simplified, taking into account local conditions and innovations.

2. To avoid duplication and secure greater coherence, the Mechanism needs to be mainstreamed into African countries' development plans and strategies.

3. Implementing APRM requires partnerships and resources within countries and from partners, bearing in mind, though, that the sustainability and credibility of the Mechanism process hinge upon national ownership.

4. Mutual learning through advocacy and awareness-building are central to the successful implementation of APRM.

8.2.2 Other main recommendations

1. Political will is central in the implementation of APRM. In this regard, the quality and density of the commitment of all governments are preconditions for the success of APRM.

2. The relevance of APRM should be judged primarily against its prospects for improving the wellbeing of the citizens of the countries that have acceded to it. The ultimate end result of the peer review should be improved good governance in the political social, economic and corporate spheres. This, in turn, should bring with it better welfare of Africans by implementing the APRM Plan of Action and the recommendations from the peers.

3. APRM needs to be rooted in the realities of countries and must be implemented in a manner that promotes and deepens country ownership through greater decentralization, transparency and inclusiveness.

4. The development of credible databases is essential and should be addressed as a matter of urgency as this is required for informed decisions.

5. National Programmes of Action (NPAs) are pivotal for the realization of the APRM ideals. In this respect, there is need to ensure that NPA implementation is effected without creating parallel government programmes. Similarly and in the spirit of local ownership, NPAs should be managed and led by the African countries themselves.

6. The ultimate test of the credibility of the whole APRM process lies in the extent to which it is seen by all stakeholders to be objective. The process should meet stringent standards of objectivity. It is also for this reason that an external review should remain a key component of

APRM. The APRM implementation process should therefore be managed in a transparent, inclusive, and democratic manner for it to remain credible and inspire the confidence of the people it is intended to serve.

7. Monitoring and evaluation are crucial for the APRM process as they facilitate the measurement of the real impact of the Mechanism's efforts in the area of good governance in Africa.

8. There is need to take into account, by way of harmonization, the other new instruments and frameworks that, like APRM, also seek to raise the standards of democracy, human rights and good governance in Africa.

9. In order to improve the APRM process, there is need to strengthen and make more relevant (a) the role and capacity requirements of the APRM Secretariat; (b) the selection of country review experts and the peer review exercise itself; (c) the role of cooperating partners, particularly in the post-review phase; and (d) the depth of involvement of the APR Panel members.

10. The Peer Review reports should be released simultaneously to the public and to the APRM Heads of State and Government so as to minimize negative speculations and to satisfy the 'ownership criteria.'

11. The body implementing the APRM programme at country level should, as much as possible, enjoy a certain degree of autonomy without necessarily being independent of the government.

12. To the extent that *country ownership* of the APRM processes has been acknowledged, countries must be involved in the development of future instruments for self-assessment, including the questionnaires.

13. The country self-assessment questionnaire should be reviewed and subsequently revised, taking into account the missing issues that are generic to the governance question in Africa.

14. The APRM Secretariat should assume leadership in the provision of guidance on the accommodation of country specificities in the APRM process. Civil society behavior should also be assessed and appropriate indicators and benchmarks targeted at this category of actors should be developed.

15. Regarding APRM Methodology, the APRM Secretariat should give a prototype research design, drawing on the collective experience of successful countries in the APRM network.

16. There is need to invest in the development of capacities for national research institutions that should assume more strategic responsibilities in country assessments and, subsequently, in the monitoring and evaluation of activities in the National Programmes of Action that follow the APRM process.

17. In order to strengthen the APRM institutions and to ensure that Mechanism would be better appreciated and supported, there is need to (a) to disseminate more effectively the objectives and underlying ideals of APRM through sensitisation and advocacy campaigns that target the different levels and types of stakeholders; (b) avoid the one-size-fits-all approach in the review process while, at the same time, recognizing that there are common and internationally accepted benchmarks that should remain standard frames of reference for

guiding country actions; (c) develop the APR implementation roadmap that takes into account the potential variability in the content, duration, and speed of undertaking country assessments from one country to the other; (d) strengthen the capacity of the APRM Secretariat; and (e) strengthen partnerships among key stakeholders.

8.3 Theme for AGF-VI1

In recognition of the centrality of capacity in the delivery of good governance and development generally, participants suggested that the next session of the Africa Governance Forum be devoted to the consideration of the challenge of building state capacity for development. Accordingly, an understanding was reached during the closing session of AGF-VI that the Seventh Africa Governance Forum (AGFV11) would be convened under the theme *" Building the Capable State"*. Consultations would be undertaken on convening of the Forum.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

AGF-VI OFFICIAL SPEECHES

1 SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY PAUL KAGAME, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA, AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SIXTH AFRICA GOVERNANCE FORUM

It is my privilege and honor to welcome you to Rwanda on behalf of the Government and all the people of Rwanda, and on my own behalf. We wish you a happy and enjoyable stay in our country. May I also welcome you to this Sixth Africa Governance Forum, which is taking place against the background of five preceding ones that have served Africa well since its launch in 1997 in Addis Ababa

In fact, the underlying principles of the Africa Governance Forum, which emphasize dialogue among all stakeholders in governance, set good ground for the subsequent emergence of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). It was only fitting, therefore, that upon the launch of the APRM in Kigali in 2004, the Africa Governance Forum would be designated the forum of choice for the first review of its implementation. For us in Rwanda, to have been associated with the launch of the APRM, and now to host its first implementation review is a tremendous honor.

Let me reiterate the fundamental principles of the APRM as the governance premier programme for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). First, that peace and security are the primary foundation for the socio-economic development of our continent. Second, that good governance is the thread that ties together all the elements of national development. In our particular case, the imperative for peace and security and any notion of good governance resonate well. We have first hand experience of what happens when these are absent, as evidenced by the tragic 1994 genocide that many of you are now familiar with.

The theme for this event, which is "Implementing the APRM: Challenges and Opportunities", in essence, tasks us with the responsibility of taking stock of the progress we have made, two years on. But let us reflect for one moment where we have come from. The APRM is a unique and rather bold endeavor in the history of mankind. Never before have had statesmen and stateswomen, who are still in power, ever subjected themselves voluntarily to both internal as well as external scrutiny. And that is what African leaders set out to do. No wonder, therefore, that there have been many skeptics that doubted whether the APRM would ever take off. These skeptics failed to capture the emerging mood and momentum on the African continent, but rather cited a litany of reasons for its impending demise.

Despite the skepticism, there is tangible progress that has been made, of which we all need to be proud. This should generate more energy for us to do even more, and better. For one, your presence here today, solely to share your experiences, is testimony to that.

And as you know, we now have a complete implementation cycle of one country, and for this I want to congratulate Ghana. We in Rwanda were ready at about the same time and we look forward to our Peers' review at the opportune time. Besides, several of your countries have either hosted external review missions, support missions, or even commenced the self-assessment exercises. You have also put in place the national institutional frameworks in your countries.

All this indicates that there is already a rich body of experience to share with one another. This experience should inform and guide the refinement of the mechanism, should the need arise. And most importantly, this experience will be instrumental in institutionalizing the APRM's intended objective of peer learning. That said, we must be objective and realistic in order to add value to whatever we are doing. We need, therefore, to remind ourselves of the underlying motivation that led to the emergence of APRM. For a long time, African countries have been subjected to unsolicited external reviews and evaluations that have had adverse effects on our countries. To me, APRM is the home-grown statement of principle that good governance is paramount but also should form a reference point for any assessment of our countries.

For this to happen, we need to critically consider areas of improvement, especially in regard to the administration of the questionnaire and the entire methodology of data gathering and analysis in general.

We need to take a more credible, empirical approach so that the whole process ceases to be seen as a subjective exercise. To that end, we will need to revisit the national institutional processes and devise acceptable common approaches, which until now have had little guidance. Right now, there is a proliferation of different national structures that require harmonization. The role and capacity requirements of the APRM Secretariat, the selection of country review experts, as well as the depth of involvement of the panel members will have to be reassessed. The conduct of the peer review exercise itself needs clarification. For instance, what nature of compact is APRM? Is it a compact between countries or one between Heads of State, or both? How can this conduct have sustainability beyond existing national authorities in power? How can it be strengthened as a mobilizing instrument for national participation and external support, rather than an instrument for discrediting purposes? Lastly, we need to think of how we can effectively utilize the outcome of the whole review cycle. For example, how the resultant programme of action can be implemented without creating a parallel government programme.

In the spirit of the African Governance Forum, the role of our development partners and, in particular, in the post-review phase should be explored.

The APRM is a challenging undertaking, but it is a good instrument. For it to play its vital role, however, it has to be flexible enough to allow for improvements, like those which, I hope, will come out of this forum. We all collectively have to become agents of confidence building for this mechanism, and we need to continuously advocate for it, adopt it, but most importantly, we need to implement it in an expeditious manner. The

spirit and philosophy of the APRM must permeate our daily activities and become part and parcel of how we conduct our affairs.

In conclusion, let me say that in Rwanda, we pride in our association with the APRM, and we will continue to give the necessary support, including upholding its principles and objectives. I would like to thank all participating countries and their representatives here present. I would also like to thank the UNDP, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, and all of you Development Partners, for providing support to the APRM, and to this Sixth African Governance Forum, as well as affording us the opportunity to host you here in Kigali.

I wish you a good meeting and fruitful deliberations, and it is now my privilege to declare the Sixth Africa Governance Forum officially open.
Thank you.

2 OPENING REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR BETUEL KIPLAGAT, CHAIRPERSON OF THE APR PANEL AT THE 6TH AFRICA GOVERNANCE FORUM, 09 MAY 2006, KIGALI, RWANDA

It is a great honor and an immense pleasure for me to welcome all of you to the 6th Africa Governance Forum [AGF VI] on Implementing APRM: Challenges and opportunities. I am also very happy to return to Rwanda-a pioneer and leader in the APRM process. The Inaugural Summit of the Heads of State and Government participating in the APRM [APR Forum] was held, as you will recall, here itself in Kigali in February 2004.

More than two years ago, in 2003, at the inception of the APRM, the UNDP, AGF Convener and one of the strategic partners for the APRM process, offered AGF VI as a forum for peer learning and sharing experiences about the implementation of the African Peer review Mechanism. Today, thanks to the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and other APRM strategic partners as well as the very positive response of the APRM participating countries including the host country-Rwanda, we are gathered to discuss the implementation of the APRM on an unprecedented scale.

I believe that this is the first time indeed such a great number of people have been brought together in the same room as part of an effort to work collectively on the APRM including:

- Representatives of the 25 countries participating to the APRM and a few others contemplating to join in the near future;
- APRM strategic partners;
- Multilateral institutions;
- Bilateral partners;
- Various representatives of civil society and the private sector;
- And, of course, several African experts whose valuable work is critical in advancing the NEPAD agenda.

I would not like to revisit the APRM and what it stands for. Indeed all of you should be well aware of the special significance of the APRM process by now. All of us, individually and collectively, have a responsibility for the renewal and development of our continent. The establishment of the African Union (AU) itself, together with the launch of NEPAD-its socio-economic programme, has presented us with a framework and opportunity for effectively addressing the issues relating to peace and stability, democracy and good governance and socio-economic development on the African continent.

The APRM is essentially the critical instrument for advancing reforms in governance and socio-economic development required to help implement our various recovery and development plans advocated by NEPAD. The APRM, if someone is still in doubt, is not an instrument for punishment or exclusion, but rather it is a mechanism to identify our

strong points, share them and help rectify our weak areas. Therefore, it is important to always view the APRM within this context as an instrument for monitoring and evaluating the progress we, Africans, are making in improving governance and development in our continent.

As you may be aware, the APRM process has necessitated, in many cases, the setting up of new national institutions to fully address the type of in-depth and broad-based consultations between all stakeholders, which is a prerequisite of the process. Given the novelty and uniqueness of the APRM process compounded with our well known financial and capacity constraints, we have done pretty well to deliver the first set of results.

The Country Review Reports of Ghana and Rwanda were already presented to the APR Forum in June 2005 in Abuja, Nigeria. The APR Forum conducted the peer review of Ghana at its last Summit in Khartoum in January 2006. The peer review of Rwanda will certainly be conducted at their forthcoming meeting.

Following the path set by Rwanda and Ghana, one other country, Kenya, has completed its self-assessment exercise. Two other countries, namely, Algeria and South Africa, are in the process of completing their self assessment. Four others (Nigeria, Uganda, Mauritius and Benin) have launched the process and very soon, will be undertaking the self-assessment exercise. Lesotho, Senegal, Tanzania and Mozambique have indicated their readiness for the launching of APRM process in these respective countries.

The Head of State of Sao Tome and Principe has yet to sign the MOU although the accession of the country to the APRM was approved by the APR Forum in Khartoum at its last meeting. Recently Djibouti has announced its intension of joining the process. Unfortunately, the remaining twenty-six Members of the AU have yet to accede to the mechanism. We are thankful to those countries which have made significant progress and we would wish to encourage those who are still hesitant.

The accession is voluntary, but once you accede as a country, it is your responsibility and your obligation to accept and undertake the peer review as stated in the MOU and the APRM base documents. I therefore appeal to those participating countries that have not yet launched the APRM process, to pursue their efforts and ensure that the agreed upon calendar is respected. Furthermore, I would like to call upon the APRM Focal Points, to put the APRM on the top of their agenda. This will strongly contribute to accelerate the country processes and increase ownership by participating countries.

After two years of implementation of APRM, all of us, including the APRM Panel, have learnt some valuable lessons during the different stages of the process. Therefore, I believe that we have today enough understanding of the APRM processes to say that this huge task of self and peer evaluation is very much demanding, very challenging, but achievable as demonstrated by Ghana and Rwanda. These two countries and some others where the process is at an advanced stage have given us the opportunity to identify some challenges in our methodologies.

The instruments, documents, guidelines and processes of the APRM are novel, complex, lengthy and sometimes difficult to comprehend. Most stakeholders are thus, compelled to learn and domesticate the APRM instruments during the implementing the APRM. All actors and parties in this process need to share their experiences, lessons and best practices amongst themselves. This will be the focus of our deliberations during these next three days and the results will inform our recommendations to the Heads of State and Government on how to streamline the APRM methods of work. The AGF VI provides a very good platform for such an interaction.

The participating countries could learn from their experiences and share same with others at an early stage. In this regards, I am very encouraged that some countries not yet party to the process have been invited in this event. The APRM Panel looks forward to interacting with all participants, to learn and share our experiences towards improving and consolidating good governance in our continent. Development partners have also been invited to experience first hand the positive changes happening on this front in Africa. This is the true partnership advocated by our political leaders under the aegis of NEPAD.

Allow me to conclude by saying that things cannot be the way they were before if Africa wants to make its mark in a rapidly changing world. The APRM Panel is listening carefully to your views.

I believe the greatest strength of the APRM lies in its ownership by Africans. The APRM Panel and all participating stakeholders require your ideas and suggestions to support the political and economic renaissance of our continent. There is no greater challenge than that. For me the APRM is not simply a process but a journey.

I thank you and wish you all successful deliberations.

3: STATEMENT BY MR. GILBERT HOUNGBO, UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL/ UNDP REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA

Allow me to join the host Minister, His Excellency Mr. Protais Musoni in welcoming you all to Kigali and to the Sixth Africa Governance Forum. I wish to thank the President of Rwanda H.E. President Paul Kagame for gracing this Forum with his presence and through him, the people of Rwanda for the warm welcome and hospitality they have accorded us. We are grateful for your engagement to a democratic process in Rwanda, which is evidenced by the efforts you are undertaking in this country and leading your country's participation in the APRM process.

Let me also welcome representatives of the bilateral partners, regional African and multilateral institutions as well as the colleagues from the United Nations system to the Forum and to thank them all for the partnership and support they have extended to UNDP and to the APRM. In a variety of ways, each one of your countries and institutions has brought important contribution to the cause of good governance in Africa and to the APRM specifically. We look forward to your continued engagement with the mechanism and to your expanded support to it.

We are meeting here in Kigali for the Sixth Africa Governance Forum devoted to the consideration of the challenges and opportunities presented by the African Peer Review Mechanism in advancing the cause of good governance in our continent. AGF has since its inception grown into a versatile policy forum and framework that brings Africa and its partners into dialogue on the challenges of promoting good governance. Through it, we have been able to address critical governance issues such as transparency and accountability, strengthening parliaments and parliamentary systems, conflict resolution and local governance for development and to facilitate the elaboration of concrete programmes. Through the Forum it was possible to reinvigorate the discussion of governance and stimulate new thinking.

In this respect allow me to recognize the presence of the members of the African Peer Review Panel and its chairperson Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat and to commend them for the sterling work they are doing in overseeing the implementation of the APRM. I wish to thank them most sincerely for allowing UNDP to partner with them in rendering support to the implementation of the Mechanism.

The APRM is a unique African instrument that is trail-blazing and setting standards for good governance. It is African in origin, it is African inspired and it is African owned. It seeks to assess and measure the quality of governance in our countries in a new and interactive way. It seeks to promote and engender into the political processes of our countries, the attributes of democratic rule and good governance. Those of our governments here present have made the courageous political choice and decision not only to agree to be bound by the political principles underlying APRM, but to submit to self-scrutiny and peer-review. This is significant in its political message of commitment to uphold the principles of good governance and to strive to strengthen them.

The decision by the NEPAD countries to establish the Mechanism was rooted in the recognition of the centrality of good governance in meeting the challenges of Africa's socio-economic development. By submitting to governance self-scrutiny and by peers, African leaders and governments have ushered in a new era of greater political openness and readiness to learn from each other, to engage your partners and to build for good governance.

The APRM is a novel and bold initiative and has great potential as a tool to promote and strengthen good governance in Africa. It is therefore in our collective self-interest that the mechanism is given all the political space and resources necessary to permit its effective implementation and build credibility for the process.

The experiences emerging out of the APRM implementation process are very encouraging indeed. It is clear that the process has been empowering in ways that were not envisaged when it started. The interactive and broad inclusiveness of the process has spawned and strengthening a culture of political dialogue in the countries. The preparedness of your governments to engage the civil society and deliberate on national challenges of governance and attempt a framework for addressing them is profoundly significant and should be consolidated. Likewise the willingness to let outsiders examine national findings and express a view on how a country is governed is equally a new experience that should convince the nay-sayers that Africa is serious about tackling the issues of governance. We need to nurture this emerging culture of openness and collaboration, if we are to make good governance a reality.

The APRM provides real opportunities to strengthen the institutions and systems of governance in the continent. It is making it possible for countries to benchmark good governance in Africa on shared African and international norms and standards as well as for citizens to participate in the evaluation of how they are governed. Through the APRM, African countries are able to learn from each other and deepen African solidarity. Capacity is being developed and partnerships within and with external partners are being created and facilitating greater advocacy for the APRM and show-casing African innovative thinking in governance. Indeed, the APRM has contributed to refocus world attention on Africa. Yet with the attention, comes the expectation for the mechanism to deliver and demonstrate that Africa is serious about tackling the governance challenges that stand as obstacles to its development.

As is apparent in the emerging experiences in the countries implementing the APRM, along with the opportunities it presents, a number of challenges exist and need to be addressed. The need to align the questionnaire to the specific circumstances of each country, to standardize the review processes, build and strengthen capacity both at national and continental level to effectively manage the mechanism must be addressed. Since the APRM needs to be grounded in valid information, the imperative of creating credible data bases is paramount so as to avoid conclusions or review judgments that may be wrongly premised. The question of resources to finance the APRM processes, as well as the national programmes of actions remains central to the sustainability of the process.

If countries are to effectively own APRM, they must ensure that the mechanism has both the political and financial autonomy and to operate independently and objectively. Failure to do so will expose the mechanism to influences that may compromise it or steer it away from the intended objective of strengthening good governance under African leadership based on priorities determined by Africans.

Related to this, is the issue of implementing the highly resource-demanding national programmes of action. It is commendable that the APRM countries recognize their primary responsibility to secure implementation of the national programmes of action within their regular budgetary systems even if they are to seek partnership to source additional resources. It is critical in this regard that these programmes are costed realistically and remain within manageable range. Within this context, countries should endeavor to establish creative partnerships that maximize internal contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action before resorting to external funding. It will be unfortunate if, in seeking funding for these programmes, an impression is created that the APRM is another aide delivery modality. If this happens, the mechanism will be severely undermined and its credibility may suffer.

While all these challenges are critical, none is more urgent than ensuring that the APRM implementation process at the country level is conducted in a transparent, inclusive and democratic manner for it to remain credible and inspire the confidence of the people it is intended to serve. This is why, countries need to take the requisite time and care to prepare adequately and to consult broadly on the process. The citizens must be convinced that they own the process. A rushed process will do irreparable harm to APRM. Yet the question remains: could we find ways to shorten the duration of the whole process without compromising all the above?

UNDP is proud to be associated with this great political process for the simple but basic fact that human development, which is at the core of our mandate, is only possible if the challenge of good governance is comprehensively addressed. How a society organizes itself, how it deals with issues of basic human rights, how it exerts itself to promote transparency and accountability, gender equity and equality, and how much space it allows in expanding political participation and inclusiveness, ultimately determine how it is able to address issues of poverty, shared growth and development. It thus goes without saying that good governance is a necessary condition to achieve people centered and sustainable development and to meet the Millennium Development Goals. It is that commitment and new dedication of governments of Africa that continue to inspire UNDP in supporting the process and that is why we have provided institutional and technical support to the APRM institutions and are progressively aligning our governance programmes in Africa with the broader objective of supporting the implementation of APRM.

The launch of the African Peer Review Mechanism and the completion of the first two country reports of Rwanda and Ghana and the actual peer-review of the latter, represent a transition to a qualitatively important stage of Africa's commitment to the consolidation of political, economic and corporate governance as well as for the continent's socio-

economic development. It is thus critical that we draw lessons from these first experiences in order to refine, strengthen and inspire the review process in our respective countries. Needless to say your countries are at different stages of its implementation. Later, we shall hear from those that have started with the process. We shall hear of the challenges they faced and how they addressed them. We shall learn from their difficulties and successes at this early stage of the process. We shall use this forum to inquire and to compare notes bearing fully in mind that in the final analysis, the APRM is work in progress in which we are all learning. Indeed, the more responses we shall get to our questions, the clearer we shall be about what needs to be done, how and with what means. The partners present here will also have the opportunity to share their views on the mechanism, how they view it as an instrument for promoting good governance and relate their own experiences in supporting it. The more we learn from each other, the more we are able to harmonize the APRM implementation processes in our respective countries, align the instruments to the demands of the governance reviews, the better we can organize ourselves to render effective support.

Unlike the previous sessions, AGFVI will have the innovation of a Heads of State segment whereby the leaders and the participants will have the opportunity to interact and bridge the information and perception gap. We hope that the interaction, however brief it will be, will enable the leaders to hear from the various stakeholders about experiences, challenges and opportunities as seen from different vantage points.
A media workshop is also being held on the margins of this forum to enable journalists to deliberate on the role of the media in promoting the implementation of APRM. This is also an added opportunity for learning and advocacy for APRM given especially the low level of knowledge in our countries about the mechanism and NEPAD at large.

Our experience in supporting the APRM has reinforced our belief that we need to work closer and harder as we expand the process to all countries. UNDP will apply itself to the best of its ability and within the means of its limited resources to be a worthy partner. As we look to the future, we must prepare here in Kigali and use this opportunity to think ahead. We believe that we need to come from here with concrete recommendations on how we can effectively support APRM.

Firstly we at UNDP believe that AGF has and continues to make important contribution to improving governance in Africa. We should be able to examine how it could strengthen as a policy forum and framework for promoting good governance and how this framework can continue to advocate for the expansion and deepening of the APRM.

Secondly and in view of the fact that the APRM is a new and a continuing learning experience, this Forum should provide the opportunity for best practices exchange and mutual learning among the participating countries and partners and for reaching agreement on how to best support the implementation of the mechanism. To be effective, we need to be systematic and better organized both within the APRM countries, within the APRM institutions and among the partners. We need a mechanism that will facilitate continuing dialogue, information and experiences exchange and learning.

Thirdly, we all recognize that the APRM instruments as they exist are generic and their implementation poses different challenges to every country. Your respective experiences confirm that each country is unique in many ways and that the instruments and processes of APRM respond differently in each circumstance. Yet there is need of some general standardization in a way that will permit comparability of the review results across the board. This is why I believe we should at this forum be able to examine the applicability and efficacy of the APRM instruments with a view to their codification, harmonization and standardization to generate better benchmarking.

Fourthly, it is emerging that APRM - its processes, procedures and results has implications to and relate to other country processes such as the PRSPs. Indeed findings point to the need to progressively align APRM to PRSPs and other strategies in a way that will enable harmonization and where possible coupling. As membership of the APRM grows and new APRM national programmes of action are developed, their implementation will create the need to harmonize the country level processes in order to use resources rationally and minimize the consultation fatigue among the citizens.

Lastly, this Forum should also elaborate concrete mechanisms for post-review monitoring and evaluation to assess the impact of APRM upon the overall objective of strengthening good governance in Africa.

I wish to end my remarks by reiterating our sincere gratitude to the President and people of Rwanda for hosting this important meeting. I am hopeful that the level of engagement demonstrated in the APRM when carried through, by implementing its recommendations in the area of good governance, will provide an important lever to socio-economic development in Africa. Let me also reiterate UNDP's commitment to support the APRM process and the countries which are embarking on this worthwhile exercise.
Thank you.

4; SPEECH BY ZEINAB EL BAKRI, VICE PRESIDENT, OPERATIONS, AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK/AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND

Introduction

Let me begin by bringing you greetings from Dr. Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank, who is unavoidably absent and to his great disappointment. He had been eagerly looking forward to coming home to participate in this important forum, but had to cancel his plans because of the call of duty related to the preparation of the Bank's Annual meetings that commence early next week. He sends his sincere apologies, but also wishes the forum great success.

On my part, I am very pleased to represent the President and to participate in this forum, not only because I have just taken over the responsibility of overseeing the Bank's involvement in and support to the African Peer Review Mechanism, but also because I have personal interest in the work of fostering good governance in African countries. Because of this personal interest in good governance, I have followed progress in the APRM with keen interest since its inception, and I must confess my admiration for the process and its role in fostering good _governance in the participating countries. By helping to enhance national ownership and developing greater public awareness about the need for and requirements of good governance, the APRM is laying a crucial foundation for good governance in Africa.

I wish, therefore, to salute the courage of our Heads of State and Government who saw the need to introduce this innovative approach. For the first time, Heads of State and Government have undertaken to submit themselves to a comprehensive assessment in the area of governance. Let me also commend the Panel of Eminent Persons, who coordinates this important process and help to ensure its credibility and technical soundness. I would also like to thank the organizers of the .forum for their decision and efforts that have given us this opportunity to reflect on the progress and the challenges of the APRM and to exchange views on how to further improve the process. Above all, I wish to thank H. E. President Paul Kagame for hosting this important forum, a gesture further attesting to his seriousness about issues of governance. He represents a new generation of Heads of State and Government, with whom the Bank share a common vision about the importance of governance reforms in Africa.

Increasing attention to governance issues in African countries

The Bank's role in governance issues has been evolving over the years, and good governance has taken on increasing importance in our traditional mandate of promoting sustainable development and poverty reduction in Africa. Happily, the APRM underlines the fact that it is not only the Bank, but also its member countries that have awakened to this concern, although with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Indeed, as recently as a decade ago, there was little support among our regional member countries for the Bank, or for that matter, for any other regional organization, to become more actively involved in governance issues. There was the fear that in taking on such issues the Bank would

become politicized and lose its effectiveness in dealing with the development and poverty reduction issues. Others attached higher priority to projects. In short, there were several excuses for keeping the Bank's focus away from governance. Today, however, not only have governance issues become a key concern, but in many cases governance reform has become increasingly significant in our policy agenda and country and program operations. Why is this?

A key development has been the change in the perception of what creates the environment for sound economic management and successful poverty reduction strategies. While underdevelopment has multiple and complex causes, Africa's experiences with the adverse consequences of governance problems have also been very clear. It violates public trust and corrodes social capital. It can also have far-reaching effects such as misallocation of resources, as well as poor service delivery, undermining, in the process, the legitimacy of the state, sometimes with serious, even violent, consequences. The absence of good governance has proved to be particularly damaging to the "corrective intervention" role of government. Programs for poverty alleviation, for example, have been undermined by corruption, lack of public accountability and participation of the beneficiaries.

We acknowledge, of course, that Africa's development and poverty reduction efforts are undermined by a number of adverse external and internal factors, including deteriorating terms of trade, unfavorable weather conditions and recurrent drought. Many countries have also been devastated by violent or recurrent societal conflicts. However, looking back, we now understand better, from empirical evidence that poor governance has been a major stumbling block even in the ability of governments to formulate and implement appropriate responses to adverse developments that beset their countries. We now understand, for example, that we did not quite succeed in the past, because we did not give adequate attention to the importance of having predictable regulatory frameworks and an effective and transparent public administration. We did not attach much premium to having a functional and independent judiciary. We under-estimated the devastating effects of bribery and corruption on the productive use of resources and economic development. We also failed because we did not place adequate emphasis on the need to involve the civil society, especially grass roots organizations, both in terms of giving them a voice in decision-making, as well as the means to effectively participate in the development effort. And not least, we under-rated the crucial role of women in the development process

Poor governance has not only had costly consequences for the productive use of resources, it also constrained the ability of African countries to mobilize resources. In our globalized world in which private capital has become very mobile, there is clear evidence that corruption undermines the confidence of the most serious investors and adversely affects private capital inflows. This is the case in all too many countries in Africa, and partly accounts for their inability to be competitive in attracting private capital.- At the same time, with government budgets under pressure in virtually every country in the world, donors have become more conscious of the need to direct their resources to countries that they believe will use those resources most productively and in which such

use can be monitored. The ADS itself also has a responsibility to its members to ensure that the resources they provide to it are put to good use, and governance performance is one of the criteria used in assessing allocation of country resources. African countries have come to understand these connections between governance and resource availability very well.

The APRM is the centerpiece in the African Union's efforts to promote good governance, which underlies efforts to enhance resource mobilization and allocation towards poverty reduction and to addressing the continent's negative international image in the area of governance. The APRM also provides an excellent opportunity to advance the efforts of the donor community to harmonize processes at the recipient country levels: the assessments of the APRM are based on international standards, the process is nation-ally owned, participatory and transparent; and its structures, including the Forum of Heads of State, the Panel of Eminent Persons, the independent Secretariat, and the designation of credible continental institutions as Strategic partners, are designed to protect its credibility. In addition, the end product of the process is a Program of Action that expresses the consensus of all national stakeholders on the program to improve governance.

Therefore, the APRM provides a framework within which the Bank can also support governance reform efforts of the member countries. Not surprisingly, the ADB has actively provided support to the APRM, right from the very beginning when the concept was being formulated and now as a strategic partner to the assessments process. The Bank's assessment of country governance and private sector profiles provide background information for the APRM work; the Bank participates in the support missions to launch the self assessments and in the country review missions. While the Bank's support has been mainly technical, some modest financial support has been provided the continental process, and some country level preparations for self-assessments. I need not go into the details of all these support activities, as I understand that, later on in this forum, we shall have a presentation on the support of the strategic partners to the process. But, let me hasten to say that the Bank will be more involved, and perhaps even leading, support in the next phase of the APRM, which is implementation of action plans to correct weaknesses in governance. This is because, as I have already said, since the last decade, governance reform has become significant in the Bank's policy dialogue and country and project operations.

5 REMARKS BY ABDOULIE JANNEH UN UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, ECA[4]

I am honored to deliver this opening statement on behalf of Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ECA, who was not able to be present here today because he had to be in Ouagadougou for the ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development taking place from 10- to 1 5 May back-to-back with the Annual Meeting of the African Development Bank from 16 to 18 May. First of all, let me welcome you all to this 6th African Governance Forum taking place in the beautiful city of Kigali. I want to pay homage to His Excellency President Paul Kagame and the people of Rwanda for hosting this Forum, for the excellent facilities provided to ensure its success, and indeed for their warm hospitality to all delegates. Let me also, Mr. Chairman, say how delighted I am for the ability that this Forum gives us to share experiences and strengthen our resolve to improve governance in Africa.

Allow. me also, Mr. Chairman, to express my appreciation for ECA's collaboration with UNDP, the African Development Bank, and the APRM Secretariat in convening this important and topical forum. We at ECA greatly value such collaboration and, partnership and look forward to strengthening it further in the months and years to come. The partnership between UNDP and ECA - in the field of governance was clearly reflected in the joint undertaking several years ago to create the African Governance Forum (AGF). We now need to build on this collaboration with UNDP and all the strategic stakeholders and partners, and explore how ECA's analytical and research capacity on governance issues, the APRM process and follow-up actions, can best be used to support the significant activities in these areas at the national level.

Today, there is a sea change in what this continent used to look like 20 years ago, often referred to as the "lost decades" and, what it is now at the turn of the 21st Century. In recent times, Africa has improved in growth rates and on economic fundamentals such as low inflation, better public finance management, and improved tax revenues and administration. Among the key drivers of this performance are continued improved macroeconomic management, fairer prices of export commodities, and some infusion of external assistance. But also, adherence to the principles of "good governance" has been a major contributing factor to this change. We are encouraged to see that governance is getting better across the continent, markedly different from the situation prevailing barely a decade ago. In country after country, the political space is being liberalized, and civil societies operate relatively without retribution. Some African countries have also undertaken substantive constitutional reforms in recent years, strengthening the legitimacy of the political system and adherence to the rule of law, and political accountability of governments across the continent. Free and fair elections that guarantee universal suffrage, freedom from coercion and the principle of 'one person, one vote' are becoming the norm, rather than the exception. All of these actions of the capable state are helping to enhance growth, peace and stability.

[4] Delivered by Okey Onyejekwe Director, Development Policy and Management Division

There is a growing consensus on the dynamic relations between good governance and economic performance. Nowhere is this consensus more clearly articulated than in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which recognizes that sound economic and corporate governance, political governance, peace and security are a sine-qua-non for Africa's development. NEPAD constitutes a pledge by African leaders to be accountable to one another and to their own people, predicated on the principle 6f Africa owning its own development agenda.

A key fulcrum of NEPAD is the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). APRM is a bold and a unique mechanism. We must salute the' courage of our governments for putting this initiative in place to help keep their performance under close public scrutiny, and provide a basis for change of policies, standards and practices that lead to political inclusiveness, stability and growth. To date, over 50% of African countries have acceded to the APRM and I am indeed excited by the initial results being registered under this process. In this regard, I salute His Excellency President Paul Kagame for the unfettered commitment and support that his Government and the civil society in his country put-behind the APRM process in Rwanda. Rwanda is among the very first set of countries to embrace APRM and submit itself to the very rigorous and all-encompassing assessment of the national polity under the APRM. Today, APRM is not a pipe dream; it is a living reality, woven into the African governance agenda.

As you all know, the APRM is a complex and resource intensive process not only for the countries but also for the partners engaged in it. As more countries accede to the APRM, so is the demand for technical assistance to support the process increasing. As a strategic partner, ECA has been actively engaged in the process providing it extensive technical support through its active involvement in all aspects of the APRM ranging from the support missions to the review missions. As a truly collective undertaking, several leading institutions in the UN system and
in Africa represented in this Forum have also given the process all the support they can muster to contribute to its success.

But the APRM faces a number of challenges that need to be addressed:
First, from experience, a number of partners and observers of he APRM consider the process to be too long to complete, from prolonged support missions to the finalization of the Country Review Report. Naturally, the APRM trajectory is lengthy because it has required and benefited from an extensive process of planning and consultations among multiple stakeholders.. While this is crucial for the credibility and success of the APRM, we hope that we can leave this meeting with some recommendations to simplify and improve upon the methodology and the duration.

Second, there have been a number of new instruments and normative frameworks that equally seek to raise the standards of democracy, human rights and good governance in Africa. I am here referring to the draft African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Good Governance; the AU/NEPAD Framework of Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development and the draft road map for a Continental Early Warning System. It is

important that the APRM process takes into consideration these new initiatives in order to harmonize the indicators under each of the normative frameworks.

But more significantly, as an agent of change and not an end in itself, the APRM's biggest challenge is that countries are able to muster the resources and capacity required to implement the recommendations and the national programs of action emanating from it and monitor progress of achievement. As the completed Ghana experience has shown, the end of the APRM should mark the beginning of efforts required to face up squarely to the post-APRM implementation challenges. To this end, partnership support both from within and outside Africa is absolutely critical to ensure that the true test of the APRM is ultimately its ability to transform visions into visible improvements in the country's political and economic governance, poverty situation, trade competitiveness,- and indeed MDG-related indicators.

It is therefore my hope that discussions at this meeting would come up with concrete suggestions on the implementation process and the necessary partnerships and collaborative frameworks needed to ensure that there is continued monitoring and periodic assessment of progress in the implementation of agreed national plans of action. We in ECA, in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders, will continue to contribute to the success of the APRM as a credible tool for self-assessment and self-correction on governance deficiencies in Africa. In deed, as partners, we must all maximize our comparative advantages to scale up our support to the APRM.
Distinguished participants,

Allow me at this juncture to say a few words about ECA's African Governance Report as an instrument for supporting the analytical underpinnings of the APRM and governance in Africa. Most of you may have read the report, which documents public perceptions of the state of governance analyzed through national surveys reflecting the views of a wide cross-section of the society in 28 African countries. What was significant about the process was that we sought to engage national institutions and stakeholders in the conduct of the public opinion surveys in each of the pilot countries, with a view to ensuring that there was national and public ownership of the exercise.

Some very interesting findings emerged from the study. I earlier mentioned that we are seeing increasing political and economic progress on the continent. However, despite the advancements on governance in Africa, the study showed that a number of our countries continue to face tremendous challenges in wiping out" corruption, improving the efficiency of government services, decentralizing government structures, ensuring transparency and accountability of the civil service and the independence and efficacy of the judicial systems.

Much more needs to be done to provide an environment in which people feel secured, in which civil society is able to flourish, and in which governments are able to provide and improve core public services, respect human rights and the rule of law, foster economic growth, promote the equitable distribution of the fruits of that growth, and provide an enabling setting for the private sector to generate jobs and incomes. We must also

promote measures to ensure equitable access to political power by all citizens, fair and equitable treatment of all strata of society in all matters of public concern, equal access to economic opportunities, and appropriate decentralization of the functions and authorities of the state, and devolution of power to lower levels of government. The implementation of these tasks is at the core of good governance and the APRM.

We are currently in the process of distributing the report to member States, African institutions and other stakeholders. We are also making available copies of the report for participants of this Forum. You may obtain a copy at a special ECA display booth set up in the hallways of this conference center. My colleagues and I at the ECA hope to see our work on governance generate wider acceptance and application, adding value to the work of other
1cies to help support the APRM process and build a well-governed, peaceful progressive Africa.

I thank you for your attention and wish you a successful Forum.

6: STATEMENT BY MR. GILBERT HOUNGBO, UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL AND UNDP REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA AT THE DIALOGUE WITH THE HEADS OF STATE

This is a historic day for the African Peer Review Mechanism and for the cause of good governance through democratic dialogue in Africa. Since the launch of the APRM two years ago, there has not been an opportunity such as this one, where African leaders have been able to interact with stakeholders to discuss the Mechanism. Leaders have often spoken amongst themselves within the African Peer Review Forum. Likewise, stakeholders have discussed amongst themselves at the country level and at several conferences on the APRM. Today, we have been able to bridge that gap of interaction and information exchange.

In the course of the last two days, we have learnt from each other about the opportunities we see in the APRM to strengthen the mechanisms and systems of good governance in our countries. We have also learnt of the challenges it presents in its implementation, in terms of instruments, institutions, processes, advocacy and awareness building, as well as carrying out National Programmes of Action, building partnerships and mobilizing resources required.

What emerged out of the deliberation is a resounding reaffirmation of the centrality of good governance in achieving development in Africa and the critical role APRM can play in this regard. It was equally clearly articulated that while the opportunities created by the mechanism to promote good governance are immense, particularly in strengthening a culture of political dialogue and popular participation, many challenges need to be addressed in order to secure its effective implementation. I wish in this regard, to recapitulate a few that permitted discussion and which this dialogue could further be deliberated on.

First, the APRM process needs to move faster within the countries that have already joined - also as part of advocating for its expansion with new membership. For this to happen, however, it is clear that political will is required to give the Mechanism the space and resources to function. Likewise, the processes and instruments of the Mechanism need to be constantly adjusted and simplified sufficiently to permit speedy implementation. This should be done taking into account local specificities and innovation without at the same time prejudicing the comparability of experiences and lessons among countries.

Secondly, APRM needs to be rooted in the realities of countries. It must be implemented in a manner that promotes and deepens country ownership through greater decentralization and its efforts to be an agent of change, making a real difference in people's political and economic lives. Underlying this, is the imperative of ensuring its transparency and inclusiveness drawing upon all key resources and people of our nations including Civil Society, Youth and Women, in particular. It is only through such inclusiveness and real participation that the Mechanism can build its credibility and be

able to respond to the needs of strengthening good governance and development in Africa.

Thirdly, APRM needs to be mainstreamed into the development strategies of our countries so as to avoid duplication, secure greater coherence and better use the available resources. Failure to do so will create parallelism particularly in the implementation of the National Programmes of Action, and stands to undermine the Mechanism. I am glad to note that Ghana and Rwanda have already taken measures to ensure this alignment as they start implementation.

Fourthly, the implementation of APRM requires partnerships and resources both within countries and with partners. While partnerships are critical, it is clear that credibility and sustainability of APRM hinge on national ownership. This means that countries must be prepared to shoulder the burdens of APRM with the full recognition that outside resources may not always be readily forthcoming or may do so on conditionalities that defeat the very objectives of the Mechanism. It must also be clearly understood that Africa embarked on APRM because it fundamentally believes that the mechanism is good for Africa.
There is clear need to deepen our understanding of APRM and the challenges our countries face individually or collectively in its implementation. Better advocacy and communication will deepen knowledge and understanding of APRM as well as ownership, especially among our people. It will also address and answer the skeptics who see the initial challenges, including speed of implementation as failures and inefficacy of the Mechanism. Above all, however, the need to deepen interaction and promote mutual learning among the APRM countries and people can not be over emphasized. This forum, and particularly this historic dialogue with APRM Heads of State, will provide a good beginning. It needs to be built upon, and create a framework that will continue to facilitate similar dialogue, experience exchange and mutual learning among the countries and with partners.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the APRM countries for the honor and privilege they have given to UNDP in allowing it to be a strategic partner as the Mechanism moves forward. As I pointed out in my statement at the opening of the forum, we, in UNDP, believe that the objectives of development including meeting the. Millennium Development Goals, can best and sustainability be served by good governance. We will continue to render our modest contribution in accompaniment of the herculian efforts being expended by countries to meet the challenges of governance.

Thank you.

7: STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT BLAISE COMPAORE, PRESIDENT OF BURKINA FASO AT THE DIALOGUE WITH THE HEADS OF STATE

DISCOURS DE Son Excellence Monsieur
BLAISE COMPAORE, PRESIDENT DU FASO
A L'OCCASION DU SIXIEME FORUM AFRICAIN SUR LA GOUVERNANCE
Kigali, le 11 mai 2006

Excellence Monsieur le Président de la République du Rwanda,
Monsieur le Directeur régional du PNUD pour l'Afrique,
Monsieur le Président du Groupe des personnalités éminentes du Mécanisme Africain d'Evaluation par les Pairs,
Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs les Chefs de missions diplomatiques,
Mesdames et Messieurs les représentants des organisations internationales et interafricaines,
Mesdames, Messieurs,

C'est pour moi un motif de fierté de prendre part au sixième forum africain sur la gouvernance.

J'adresse mes cordiales salutations à tous les participants à cette importante rencontre consacrée à la « mise en œuvre du Mécanisme Africain d'Evaluation par les Pairs : défis et opportunités ».

J'exprime également ma haute considération à tous les grands hommes d'Etats et aux éminents spécialistes venus partager leurs expériences sur les voies et moyens de gérer avec efficience les sociétés africaines.

Je voudrais rendre un hommage particulier à mon frère et ami, le Président Paul KAGAME, pour les étapes décisives franchies dans la reconstruction du Rwanda et son engagement personnel en faveur d'une Afrique libre, forte et solidaire.

Le grand peuple rwandais qui est en train de relever un défi historique de bâtir la paix et le développement, mérite notre admiration et tout notre soutien.

Mesdames, Messieurs,
Au centre de la gouvernance, se trouve un défi d'imagination et d'innovation.
Pour parvenir à gérer la vie collective et améliorer le bien-être des citoyens, les sociétés africaines doivent faire preuve d'inventivité afin que la lisibilité, l'évaluation et l'appropriation déterminent constamment l'action publique.

Cette vision implique l'organisation du débat sur une démarche qui aille au-delà de la simple gestion en s'efforçant de stimuler l'intelligence collective et partagée pour des actions publiques génératrices de bien-être et de cohésion sociale.

Mesdames, Messieurs,
De par le passé, la mobilisation et la participation insuffisantes des populations africaines autour des programmes de développement ont souvent constitué des raisons majeures d'échecs des initiatives du continent dans sa quête du mieux être.

Au demeurant, c'est en raison de cela que les dirigeants africains ont initié le NEPAD et le MAEP.

Plus qu'un programme de développement, le NEPAD représente une vision. Il valorise le partenariat autour duquel doit se construire le progrès continu de l'Afrique.

Le Burkina Faso a engagé un ensemble de mesures garantissant la bonne gouvernance politique, institutionnelle et économique.

De notre point de vue, cette pratique d'une gestion performante ne peut s'obtenir que sur la base d'une confiance entre les différents acteurs de la société et l'élargissement de la culture démocratique.

C'est pourquoi, dans mon programme quinquennal de gouvernement 2005-2010, intitulé le progrès continu pour une société d'espérance, la valorisation du capital humain et le raffermissement de la gouvernance occupent une place prépondérante.

La création d'une structure nationale de coordination de la bonne gouvernance présidée par le Premier Ministre, participe de cette dynamique.

En ce qui concerne la mise en application du MAEP, un Conseil national, rattaché à la Présidence du Faso, s'atèle actuellement à le rendre opérationnel.

Mesdames, Messieurs,
Pour répondre à cette quête de la participation de tous les acteurs sociaux de l'Afrique à sa construction, le MAEP est apparu comme un instrument de promotion et de mesure de la bonne gouvernance.

Il invite à engager un dialogue constant et constructif en vue du renforcement des capacités institutionnelles de nos Etats mais aussi de l'évaluation de nos performances nationales.

Le MAEP est un mécanisme original et novateur sur lequel les africains peuvent fonder, dans la diversité des situations, des contraintes économiques et des particularités culturelles, leur appartenance à la modernité.

Il instaure une relation dialectique entre la spécificité et l'universalité de la gouvernance, et sa mise en œuvre exige un besoin continu de perfectionnement à travers l'apprentissage de sa pratique.

Mesdames, Messieurs,
Les africains ont identifié une voie pour organiser sur le continent le développement durable avec l'appui des partenaires internationaux à qui nous exprimons notre sincère reconnaissance.

Puissent les recommandations issues de ce Forum contribuer à l'enracinement de la démocratie et de la bonne gouvernance en Afrique.

Je vous remercie.

Appendix 2

AGF-VI Programme

SIXTH AFRICA GOVERNENCE FORUM:

THEME "IMPLEMENTING THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM; CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES"

9 – 11 May 2006: KIGALI-RWANDA:

Agenda and Programme of Work

Monday 8 May 2006

8:30AM – 6:00PM	Arrival and Registration
	Parallel Meetings:
8:30 AM - 5:30 PM	-- APR Panel Meeting (closed)
8:30 AM - 6:00 PM	-- AGI/APRM Focal Points Technical Workshop

Tuesday 9 May 2006

8:30AM – 10:00AM	*Opening Session*: **Chair: The Host Minister-Rwanda** • Welcome remarks by the Chairperson of the APR Panel • Statement by the UNDP Regional Director for Africa • Statement by the President of the African Development Bank • Statement by the Executive Secretary-ECA • Opening Statement by H.E. President Paul Kagame
10:00 AM – 10:30AM	***Coffee Break***
10:30AM – 12:00PM	*Session Two*: Setting the Background: Presentation of AGF-VI: **Chair: Ghana** Meeting the Governance Challenge in Africa: • Role of the African Peer Review Mechanism and status report on Implementation of the APRM- APR Panel • Methodology and Overview of the AGFVI National Preparatory Workshops –APRM Panel/UNDP • Discussion

12.00 noon. -- 1.00pm	*Session Three*: Presentation of country reports **Chair: President of the African Development Bank**
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	***Lunch***
2:30PM– 4:00PM	Session three cont'd: Presentation of country reports
4:00PM - 4:15PM	***Coffee break***
4:15PM - 6:30PM	*Session Four*: **Chair: Regional Director, UNDP Regional Brueau for Africa** Presentation of a synthesis report on AGF VI National Consultations -- UNDP - Tim Bandora -Discussion
7:00PM-8:30PM	Reception jointly organized by the Government of Rwanda, APR Panel and UNDP
Wednesday 10 May 2006:	
8.30AM -- 10:00AM	*Session Five*: Support to APRM implementation: A view from Partners: **Chair: Chairperson of APR Panel.** • Joint presentations by the Strategic Partners-UNDP, ECA and ADB (ECA to present) • Presentation by a bilateral partner (UK) Discussion
10.00am-10.30a.m	***Coffee break***
10.30 a.m.-1.00 p.m.	*Session Six*: Break out Group Discussion **Group 1: Chair: Rwanda** **Facilitator: Dr. Ayodele Aderinwale** Topic: Instruments-MOU, Questionnaire, Standards, Criteria and Methodology **Group 2: Chair: Kenya** **Facilitator: UNDP - Prof.Ahmed Mohiddin and Ms. Zemenay Lakew** Topic: Institutions and Processes: Regional (APR Forum, APR Panel, APRM Secretariat, Panel Reports and Peer Review) and National Structures, Participation, Self-assessment, Country Review Teams