

ECA, AFDB to collaborate on youth employment and other projects in Southern Africa

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Addis Ababa, 27 September 2012 (ECA) - The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Southern Africa Office (ECA) held talks with the Africa Development Bank, Zambia Country Office (AFDB) to discuss increased collaboration and a harmonized approach to policy and project implementation between the two offices.

ECA, Southern Africa Director Ms Beatrice Kiraso said that Zambia and the sub-region stands to benefit if the two organisations combine their expertise and resources to undertake joint projects aimed at socio-economic development. "A harmonized approach through joint collaboration on common projects will have a significant impact on our efforts to support Zambia and other member States to meet their development goals".

She said that although the two institutions have a very strong partnership at a continental level, including running a joint secretariat of the African Economic Community with the African Union Commission, there was need for a systematic interaction at national and regional level to counter the fragmented and ad-hoc approach to collaboration.

AFDB, Zambia Country Office Director, Dr Kwesiga, reiterated the need for a systematic collaboration, and challenged the two organisations to take concrete actions and identify areas of collaboration. "We need collaboration quick and fast, our agendas are the same and we should ride on eachothers comparative advantages" said Dr Kwesiga

Meanwhile, Dr Kwesiga said the AFDB Zambia Country Office was reviewing its country strategy to reflect the evolving external environment. "We are looking to address new priorities such as youth employment, graduate empowerment, infrastructure and high capital investment which were not reflected in our 2010 strategy paper."

The ECA and AFDB identified and discussed possible areas of collaboration including youth employment, irrigation schemes, trade facilitation and trans-boundary projects between Zambia and Congo, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The high level talks which were held at AFDB offices will be preceded by a joint technical meeting between the two

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