

Fourth Africa Development Forum

"Governance for a Progressing Africa"

STATEMENT BY
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AT THE OPENING OF THE FOURTH AFRICA DEVELOPMENT FORUM
11 OCTOBER, 2004

Addis Ababa

Excellency Mr. K. Y Amoako, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express how pleased I am to have this opportunity to welcome you all to this Fourth African development Forum. I wish in particular to welcome to Addis Ababa all those who have come from outside Ethiopia to take part in what has now become the leading Forum for serious and intellectually rigorous discussion of and exchange of views on critical issues related to the development challenges of Africa.

I would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to all those who have made this Forum such an important annual occasion for deliberation on key issues related to Africa's development. I wish to commend the Economic Commission for Africa, and its Executive Secretary, Mr. K. Y Amoako, for the lead they have taken in this regard. I would also like to commend both the African Development Bank and the Commission of the African Union for their contribution in making the ADF such an important Forum for consensus building on a variety of issues affecting Africa's development.

Excellencies,

Dear Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The three previous Forums on Information and Communication, HIV / AIDS, and Regional Integration in Africa have been indeed very useful. The theme of ADF IV is "Governance For a Progressing Africa." This is a very important topic with enormously significant implications for Africa's development.

No doubt, good governance is one of the most critical conditions for development. Without good governance and the full respect of the democratic rights of citizens and all sectors of society, it would be impossible to put in place conditions for durable peace and stability. Obviously, without durable peace and stability there can be no development to speak of. There is no better evidence for this than the political history of our continent. I know that this and related themes will be dealt with in the course of your conference.

I am pleased to know also that, among others, the need for effective and capable states in Africa both as instruments for development and for ensuring accountable institutions will

be given due attention in the course for the deliberation on " governance issues at this Forum.

The thesis that weak states are good neither for development nor for putting in place accountable institutions is not a thesis which is accepted widely. In fact, those who subscribe to this thesis have had an uphill struggle to defend that conviction. The organizers of this forum should be commended for having decided to highlight this aspect of the governance problematic. We look forward to see the results of the deliberations on this issue as well as on a number of issues in the course of this conference ranging from matters related the NEPAD's African Peer Review Mechanism and to traditional systems of governance and their place within the modern state system.

I believe that the organizers of this Forum should be commended for having been innovative and for having included as many of the critical stakeholder as possible for the exchange of views on and for in-depth analysis of the major theme of this conference and related matters such as the issue of corruption, the judiciary, and the role of political parties.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I have no doubt that what you do at this conference is critical for the effort we are all making to address our development challenges.

It is therefore with full appreciation of how important your task is at this conference that I wish you all a successful deliberation and, to those who have come from outside Ethiopia, an enjoyable brief stay in Addis Ababa.

I thank you