

ECA's forthcoming flagship underscores role of the State in governing development

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Addis Ababa, 28 December 2010 (ECA) - The forthcoming 2011 edition of the Economic Report on Africa (ERA), the annual flagship publication of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Union, will examine the role of the state in governing development, triggering economic transformation, and as a catalyst for sustainable development, according to a statement from ECA's Economic Development and NEPAD Division (EDND).

The statement says the anticipated report will also provide an opportunity for examining the record of the state in promoting development in Africa, share concrete success stories in Africa and elsewhere as well as recommend concrete actions for sustaining development and promoting economic transformation on the continent.

It says the ultimate goal of the report, on the theme "The role of the state in economic transformation", is to provide evidence-based and policy-oriented framework for enhancing the role of the state in performing the key tasks necessary for economic transformation in Africa: planning of the development process and the formulation and implementation of relevant development plans and policies.

Evidence from Asia and the West provides the basis for this thematic focus on the role of the state in governing development, said Emmanuel Nnadozie, the Director of EDND, which is anchoring the preparation of the report in collaboration with the African Union.

Nnadozie said the spectacular transformation of China into a global economic power, a resurgent India and recent interventionist policies of Western governments in addressing the impact of the global crisis have refocused attention on the role of the state in development.

"It is now well-known that the state has played and continues to play a key role in the Chinese economic miracle and even those of Japan, Taiwan and South Korea before it", he said.

Nnadozie said there was ample evidence to show that East Asia governments used incentives, controls, and mechanisms to spread risk to enable them guide the market processes of resource allocation and achieve different outcomes than would have occurred with either free market or simulated free market policies, including strategic industrial development.

A draft of the report was recently reviewed in Addis Ababa by experts drawn from reputable institutions worldwide. Speaking on behalf of the African Union Commission during the review, Ms. Victoria Egbetayo, AU's Policy Officer, noted that while Africa had been growing steadily, economic growth is not enough and that what is required is a wholesale transformation of the continent's societies.

She said the State's role needs to be enhanced to foster much needed economic and social transformation, correct market imbalances and distortions as well as improve domestic resource mobilization and promoting environmental sustainability.

Egbetayo called on the reviewers to help in shaping the report into a robust analytical and policy instrument with feasible recommendations that can be implemented and speak to the realities of the ordinary African people.

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