



African Peer Review Mechanism

PRESS RELEASE ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE APRM IN KENYA AND THE CONTINENTAL PROCESS

Our attention has been drawn to recent articles in the international, continental and national, print, audio and visual media relating to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) which have created the perception that the AU/NEPAD/APR Process for the Republic of Kenya has been suspended or halted. Furthermore, the reports contain information with factual and substantive errors on the continental process. In particular, an article in the Kenya Daily Nation of Friday 22nd July 2005 quotes a representative from Kenya as saying that the APRM report for Mauritius had been rejected because of (Mauritius government) interference. The said representative is further noted as stating that Rwanda's report had been accepted and it was likely to receive billions of shillings for development, while Ghana was about to present its report.

The APRM Secretariat would like to make the following clarifications:

Firstly, the APR Panel has finalized reviews for **both** Ghana and Rwanda. The Country Review Reports for these two countries were presented to the Committee of Participating Heads of State and Government (APR Forum) at their last meeting that held on the 19th June 2005 in Abuja Nigeria. These reports were scheduled for further discussion by the Heads of State and Government (Peer Review) at their next meeting. During this meeting, it is expected that the countries subject to Peer Review (Ghana and Rwanda) will present in detail the steps they intend to take to address the shortcomings and capacity gaps identified.

Secondly, the insinuation, that Rwanda is bound to receive billions of shillings due to its successful participation in the APRM is a misinterpretation of the purpose of the APRM. The APRM is a voluntary process acceded to by African countries with a view to enhancing progress in key governance and socio-economic development areas. Being a peer learning and experience sharing process, it should not be interpreted as a score card of pass or fail or, a conditionality for donor assistance. It may be that some donors and development partners could use the results of the APRM assessments or reviews to make decisions on aid and development assistance, but this is not the primary purpose of the APRM nor its intention.

Thirdly, the APRM would like to emphasize that the report for Mauritius has never been rejected by the Panel or the Forum. Indeed, the mandates of both the APR Panel and Forum are to consider all the reports presented before them and make recommendations on how to address any shortcomings therein, including those relating to the conduct of the national process. The review process for Mauritius is still ongoing. An update has been received from Mauritius following the recent elections in the country and indications are that the self-assessment report and draft national programme of action from the country are expected soon.

Fourthly, the APRM underscores that neither the APR Panel nor the APR Forum has taken any steps to halt the review process in Kenya as has been implied in sections of the media. Review is in progress in the country, in particular the independent technical institutions are out in the field executing the national survey. Kenya's self-assessment report and draft programme of action are expected in the next couple of months. In this regard, Dr. Graca Machel, who is a member of the Panel of Eminent Persons and Leader of the Kenya review process, visited Kenya from the 13th-15th of July 2005 to assess the progress in the implementation of the APRM and the degree of advancement of the self-assessment process.

Finally, the APRM emphasizes that in all reviews, the core principles of the APRM will be upheld. National ownership and leadership by the participating country are essential factors underpinning the effectiveness of the APRM. This includes leadership in establishing its national structures and institutions for the APRM and organizing its national process. It also entails developing a national programme of action that reflects the country's needs as expressed by all stakeholders and is consistent with existing national efforts, projects and programmes. It further includes leadership in facilitating and coordinating the alignment of international support behind this national Programme of Action and in the country's efforts to address capacity constraints in an integrated manner including the capacity building, technical assistance and financial assistance offered by development partners.

Furthermore, the APR process is designed to be open and participatory. Countries are encouraged to engage all key stakeholders (and not limited to a small group of stakeholders) to facilitate exchange of information and national dialogue on good governance and socio-economic development programmes, thereby increasing the transparency of the decision-making processes, and building trust in the pursuit of national development goals.

The APRM is also guided by the principles of transparency, accountability, technical competence, credibility and freedom from manipulation. To ensure that this is achieved, rules and procedures have been developed and approved to guide the conduct of all stakeholders.

For more information about the APRM or to obtain copies of the APRM Base Documents which outline the process in more detail, please contact

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