

**THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM) SUPPORT MISSION TO
NIGERIA 21ST to 24th March 2005**

COMMUNIQUE

1. From 21st to the 24th of March 2005, Amb. Bethuel Kiplagat, Eminent Member and Vice-Chairperson of the APR Panel led a Country Support Mission to Nigeria.
2. The Team comprised the following: from the APR Secretariat, Dr. Bernard Kouassi, Executive Director, and Ms. Evelynne Change, APRM Coordinator for Corporate Governance; experts from the Strategic Partner Institutions, Mr. Michael Mah'moud, Senior Financial Sector Advisor, NEPAD Support Unit, African Development Bank (AfDB); Ms. Zemenay Lakew, Senior Programme Coordinator, AU-NEPAD Support Unit, UNDP Africa; Dr. Emile Ahohe, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); and Dr. Kojo Busia, Development Management Officer (UNECA).
3. Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, the Eminent Panel Member who is based in Nigeria, also participated in the mission.
4. The purpose of the Support Mission was to assess the processes and mechanisms put in place by Nigeria to undertake its self-assessment and subsequently draft its Programme of Action. The Support Mission was also to conclude negotiations and sign the Memorandum of Understanding on the Technical Assessment Missions and the Country Review Visit.

Briefing Session with the National Focal Point

5. The Team held a briefing session with Chief Ufot J. Ekaette, CFR, mni, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, the Focal Point for APRM matters in Nigeria.
6. The Team was informed of the structures and processes put in place to prepare for the Support Mission. He underscored the commitment of His Excellency, President Olusegun Obasanjo, to implement NEPAD and the APRM at country level, Nigeria being one of the architects of the said initiatives. In addition to the National Focal Point, Nigeria had a national APRM Coordinator, Amb. Isaac Aluko-Olokun. Furthermore, a National Working Group (comprising key stakeholder groups, equivalent to the National Commission, prescribed in the APRM core documents) and a Steering Committee have also been put in place. Additionally, a fully equipped and functional Secretariat to provide logistical backstopping to national level APRM activities was in existence. Efforts had also been made to sensitize stakeholders through workshops, media sensitization and other modes of information dissemination, including the launching of a website for the APRM in Nigeria.
7. In response, Amb. Kiplagat expressed appreciation for the welcome extended to his delegation and noted the comprehensiveness of the support mission programme which was unprecedented. He acknowledged the frontline role of Nigeria in the establishment

and evolution of NEPAD and the APRM. Amb. Kiplagat underscored that the APRM is a voluntary mechanism and should not be seen as a score card or aid conditionality for countries. He reiterated the principles of national ownership and broad based participation for the successful implementation of the APRM.

8. Following discussions, both sides agreed that:
 - The National Working group shall be expanded to include more civil society groups:
 - A non-state functionary should be appointed as Chairperson of this group.
9. Thereafter, a working session was held with the ten Technical Research Institutes (TRIs) spanning the six geopolitical zones in the country which have been selected to spearhead the self-assessment exercise. The Institutes cover each of the four APRM thematic areas as follows: Democracy and Good Political Governance (Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) Ota, Center for Democratic Research and Training (CDRT), Kano, Institute for Governance and Social Research (IGSR), Jos); Economic Governance and Management (Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan (in collaboration with the Centre for Social and Economic Research, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria); Corporate Governance (National Economic Summit Group (in collaboration with Centre for Public-Private Cooperation, Ibadan); and Socio-economic Development (Nigerian Institute for International Affairs, Victoria Island, (NIIA) Lagos, Center for Advanced Social Studies (CASS), Port Harcourt, and Shehu Shagari Institute, Sokoto).
10. At the working session, it was agreed that:
 - The research should not be treated as an academic exercise but should be policy or programme oriented.
 - It was important to ensure objectivity and technical soundness of the self-assessment report.
 - Time was of essence and the methodology would be fine-tuned to ensure timely results.

Interactions with Stakeholder Groups

11. The mission had separate interactive sessions with various stakeholder groups including: Anti-Corruption Agencies in Nigeria; the Judiciary; House of Representatives, the Civil Service, and the Business Community. The Leader of the delegation outlined the APR process and emphasized that it was an inclusive process with key roles to be played by every stakeholder.
12. The Anti-Corruption Agencies included the Code of Conduct Bureau, the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit of the Presidency and the Nigeria Police. The Federal Ministry of Justice was also represented. The Agencies outlined their respective mandates and the policies, institutions and legislative framework in place to tackle corruption. Note was made of the progress made in the anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria, in particular regarding the efficient management of public resources. Nigeria had received international acclaim for being the first African country to sign on to the

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. In addition, the Agencies highlighted the challenges faced in the fight against corruption.

13. During the courtesy call on the Chief Justice of Nigeria, His Lordship expressed the commitment of the Judiciary to the APRM and improving standards of governance.
14. The Mission met with the Chairman and members of the House Committee on Cooperation and Integration in Africa. The members were drawn from diverse political parties including All Nigeria People's Party, Alliance for Democracy and People's Democratic Party, the ruling party. There was consensus that economic development and empowerment were crucial to make progress. In this context, the parliamentarians called for concerted efforts to resolve the matter of the Africa debt burden. Participants at the session agreed that:
 - There was need for sensitization and information dissemination on the APRM to all stakeholders.
 - Parliamentarians should be fully integrated in the process.
 - There is need for legislation to institutionalize the APRM.
 - There is need to ensure ownership of the APRM through budgetary support and resource allocation.
 - Parliament should receive the draft self assessment report for validation before its submission to the APR Secretariat.
15. The meeting with top Government Officials was preceded by a courtesy call on the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation. The Mission was informed of the ongoing public service reforms in the country focusing on: corruption; ethics and transparency; professionalization; training and retraining of public officers. These measures are aimed at achieving efficient and effective service delivery and curbing waste of resources.
16. The Business Community emphasized the importance of improved governance for economic growth and development, in particular with regard to attracting investment flows. The issues raised include: the effect of policy reversals on capital inflows; the need for formalization and institutionalization of public-private sector partnerships; importance of incentives, sanctions and adequate enforcement for improvement of governance; and the need for gender empowerment and mainstreaming.

Open Forum

17. An Open Forum bringing together about two hundred participants from the civil service, civil society groups, the private sector, media, academia and the diplomatic community, was held on the 23rd of March 2005.
18. Presentations were made by the National Focal Point, the Leader of the Country Support Mission and a representative of the Executive Director of the APR Secretariat. The presentations provided an overview of the progress made in the APRM both at country and continental levels. The concepts of national ownership and broad based participation for the successful implementation of the APRM were reiterated.

19. Stakeholders expressed their appreciation that the Government of Nigeria had signed up for the APRM and welcomed the onset of the review process in the country. There was consensus on the:
- Need for information dissemination and educating the public on NEPAD and APRM.
 - Necessity for funding the APRM, by African countries, to reinforce the concept of ownership.
 - Sustainability and continuity in the implementation of NEPAD and the APRM, through, *inter alia*, appropriate legislation.

Courtesy Call on the President

20. The Support Mission paid a courtesy call on His Excellency, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.
21. The President welcomed the Team and reiterated his country's commitment to the effective implementation of the APRM. He observed that the APRM was not new to African leaders, but rather a way of formalizing the informal peer review exercised amongst Heads of State and Government from time to time. APRM, being an uncharted terrain presents various contours that should be navigated cautiously and patiently. Nonetheless, the President emphasized the need to push forward with determination.
22. Nigeria understood the key principles of the APRM, including leadership and commitment at highest levels, inclusivity and broad based participation. For this reason, he had designated as National Focal Point, a high level government official who reports directly to him. A National Working Group and a Steering Committee with diverse representation from the government, private sector, media and civil society were also in place. Nigeria was however willing to take corrective measures where necessary, based on the guidance received from the Mission. In this regard, the President had agreed to the appointment a non-state functionary to preside over the National Working Group.
23. Amb. Kiplagat hailed the interest and commitment the President attributed to the process both nationally and continentally. He observed that a great sense of ownership had been demonstrated by the country. Nigeria had great human and technical capacity which could benefit the entire process. He commended the President's role in the resolution of the recent crisis in Togo, which is in the spirit of the APRM.
24. Responding, the President highlighted some key changes in the African political landscape which provide impetus to move in the right direction. He observed that in the past ten months, at least six African countries had held successful elections. Elections were also forthcoming in Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia in which there was need for democratic success.

Signature of MOU

25. The Memorandum of Understanding on the Technical Assessment Missions and the Country Review Visit was signed on the 24th of March 2005 between Amb. Bethuel Kiplagat, Eminent Member of the APR Panel, on behalf of the APR Forum, and Chief U. J Ekaette, CFR, mni on behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Closure and Press Conference

26. A wrap-up session between the Support Mission and the National Focal Point was held on the 24th of March 2005. Also in attendance were members of the Steering Committee and officials from the national APR Secretariat. There was consensus that the Mission had been a successful one. The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria reiterated its commitment to the continued implementation of the APRM and the engagement of all stakeholders including development partners in this regard. The Leader of the Delegation commended Nigeria’s commitment to improved governance, in particular the fight against corruption. This was followed by a press conference, which provided an opportunity to inform stakeholders of the outcome of the Support Mission and further sensitization on the APRM.

Appreciation:

27. The Government of Federal Republic of Nigeria expressed gratitude to the Support Mission for its contribution to the launching of the national APR process. Amb. Kiplagat, on behalf of the Team, expressed his profound appreciation to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the warm hospitality and the enthusiasm with which Nigeria had embraced the APR process. He also commended the hard work done by the Team, the National Focal Point and Secretariat and the country-level stakeholders.

SIGNED AT ABUJA THIS 24TH DAY OF MARCH 2005

Name: AMB. BETHUEL KIPLAGAT Name: CHIEF UFOT J. EKAETTE CFR, mni

Signature:.....

Signature:.....

**Designation:
VICE-CHAIR PERSON OF THE
OF THE APR PANEL**

**Designation:
SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE FEDERATION**

**LEADER OF THE COUNTRY
APRM SUPPORT MISSION
TO NIGERIA**

**NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**