

DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

79. It is generally acknowledged that development is impossible in the absence of true democracy, respect for human rights, peace and good governance. With the *New Partnership for Africa's Development*, Africa undertakes to respect the global standards of democracy, the core components of which include political pluralism, allowing for the existence of several political parties and workers' unions, and fair, open and democratic elections periodically organised to enable people to choose their leaders freely.

80. The purpose of the Democracy and Political Governance Initiative is to contribute to strengthening the political and administrative framework of participating countries, in line with the principles of democracy, transparency, accountability, integrity, respect for human rights and promotion of the rule of law. It is strengthened by and supports the Economic Governance Initiative, with which it shares key features. Taken together, these initiatives will contribute to harnessing the energies of the continent towards development and the eradication of poverty.

81. The Initiative consists of the following elements:

- A series of commitments by participating countries to create or consolidate basic governance processes and practices;
- An undertaking by participating countries to take the lead in supporting initiatives that foster good governance;
- The institutionalisation of commitments through the leadership of the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* to ensure that the core values of the initiative are abided by.

82. The states involved in the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* will also undertake a series of commitments towards meeting basic standards of good governance and democratic behaviour while, at the same time, giving support to each other. Participating states will be supported in undertaking such desired institutional reforms where required. Within six months of its institutionalisation, the leadership of the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* will identify recommendations on appropriate diagnostic and assessment tools, in support of compliance with the shared goals of good governance, as well as identify institutional weaknesses and seek resources and expertise for addressing these weaknesses.

83. In order to strengthen political governance and build capacity to meet these commitments, the leadership of the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* will undertake a process of targeted capacity-building initiatives. These institutional reforms will focus on:

- Administrative and civil services;
- Strengthening parliamentary oversight;
- Promoting participatory decision-making;
- Adopting effective measures to combat corruption and embezzlement;
- Undertaking judicial reforms.

84. Countries participating in the initiative will take the lead in supporting and building institutions and initiatives that protect these commitments. They will dedicate their efforts towards creating and strengthening national, subregional and continental structures that support good governance.

85. The Heads of State Forum on the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* will serve as a mechanism through which the leadership of the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* will periodically monitor and assess the progress made by African countries in meeting their commitment towards achieving good governance and social reforms. The Forum will also provide a platform for countries to share experiences with a view to fostering good governance and democratic practices.