

## 17<sup>th</sup> AFRICA PARTNERSHIP FORUM, 16 NOVEMBER 2011, ADDIS ABABA: JOINT STATEMENT

1. The 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Africa Partnership Forum (APF) was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 16 November 2011. The meeting was attended by personal representatives of Heads of State and Government of Africa and its principal development partners, and of the Heads of regional and international organisations, and by representatives of the private sector. It was co-chaired by Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Finland and France.

2. The overall theme of the meeting was 'Promoting Economic Growth'. Within this framework, the meeting focussed on how to promote increased domestic and foreign investment, and on how to meet Africa's infrastructure needs. It was also briefed by France on the outcome of the G20 Summit, by South Africa on the preparations for the forthcoming COP 17 meeting in Durban, and by Korea and NEPAD on the preparations for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. The APF welcomed the outcomes of the G8 Deauville Summit, in particular the G8/Africa Joint Declaration, while also welcoming the G20's engagement with development.

### Key messages

3. The meeting emphasised:

**(i) Africa's achievements and its potential:** Africa has turned its economic performance around since 2000, with the support of NEPAD as the flagship development program of the African Union. Africa achieved considerable economic growth before the global financial and economic crisis; Africa's growth is now being partly restored, but not with adequate inclusiveness. It is a growing market, which is ready to take advantage of the new opportunities generated by globalisation and could play its part as a new pole for global growth and rebalancing. Some progress has been achieved regarding domestic resource mobilization but several challenges remain to be solved. There is also a need to continue strengthening regional economic integration:

**(ii) The key role of the domestic and foreign private sector:** this is increasingly given importance by African governments, which have introduced a series of reforms to improve the business environment and competitiveness. Although there is still more to do, Africa is increasingly open and ready for business. Its leaders recognise that stimulating increased investment is key to making faster progress towards meeting Africa's priorities on infrastructure and agriculture. But it is also essential to focus on the quality of investment, and on how to maximise the economic and social benefits which investment can generate, in particular job creation and the empowerment of women;

**(iii) The central importance of infrastructure:** tackling infrastructure constraints - transport, energy, water and ICT - is key both to improving competitiveness and sustaining growth, and to accelerating social progress. Africa has identified its priorities, including through the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), which need to be addressed on a regional basis, with international support. Infrastructure development needs to be inclusive, taking into account appropriate citizen engagement, and should address the needs both of rural areas and the growing urban population. The forum welcomes the work undertaken by different initiatives, including the NEPAD-OECD Africa Investment Initiative, on strengthening the enabling environment for infrastructure development;

**(iv) The need to accord Africa greater significance on the international development agenda:** the international development landscape is being transformed by the increasing engagement of the G20 on development issues. Africa welcomes this, particularly the recent work of the G20 High Level Panel on Infrastructure and the Multilateral Development Banks' Action Plan. Strong, sustainable and inclusive growth throughout Africa is necessary for the continent to achieve lasting development. Development issues today are global. At the same time, whilst Africa has made encouraging progress, it still has more to do than other regions to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Addressing Africa's needs must be a core objective of the evolving international development agenda, within the G20 and more broadly;

**(v) The need to address climate change:** achieving sustainable development over the coming decades will be inseparable from tackling climate change. Africa's contribution to the problem is marginal; Africa has limited capacity to address it, but is severely affected by its impact. However, it can contribute to the solution through its vast potential renewable energy resources. It will be essential to integrate climate change into development policies and strategies.

#### Next steps

4. The meeting requested the Co-chairs to arrange for the key messages from the meeting to be conveyed to forthcoming multilateral events including the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, and the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 17) in Durban.

5. The meeting expressed its appreciation to the Government of Ethiopia and to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) for their hospitality and the excellent practical arrangements. It welcomed the private sector preparatory meeting and the participation of private sector representatives in the APF. It requested that similar private sector preparatory meetings be arranged whenever the agenda justified this.

6. The 18<sup>th</sup> session of the APF will be held in the first half of 2012, at a date and venue to be determined.