



NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency
Agence de Planification et de Coordination du NEPAD

Mixed reactions greet Africa Day celebration

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (PANA) - Participants at an international workshop on African Science Technology and Innovation Indicators Initiative (ASTII), have reacted differently to the celebration of this year's Africa Day, marked annually 25 May across the continent

While some said Africa had every cause to celebrate, others expressed the belief that the continent's inability to transform its huge potentials to improve living standards for the people did not call for any celebration.

"We have a lot to celebrate, no matter what others might say. Today all African countries are fully independent from colonial rule," a participant from Nigeria, Rasak Sanusi, told PANA. "Most African countries are fully democratised and the change of governments through the ballots box has gained ground as against forceful takeover of power."

Another participant, Angela Msosa from Malawi, agrees, saying: "From my perspective, I think marking the day is okay. I am here in Addis Ababa for the ASTII workshop. This meeting is bringing together twenty one countries, with the goal of strategising on improving Science and Technology."

Africa Day commemorates the founding of the defunct Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, which became the African Union in July 2002.

"Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development" is the theme for this year's celebration.

The youth remained the greatest untapped resources in Africa, where 70 percent of the population is under 30. The young people face major difficulties getting decent jobs.

"We are not really poor, because we have every thing, but the problem is that we are not in a position to exploit our resources. While we celebrate, we must also reflect on how we can improve our economy, as well as the living conditions of the people," said Rogers Mfaye from Tanzania.

Other participants stressed the need to promote accountability in public and private life, good governance, economic integration, and fight corruption.

“There are big lessons that African political leaders and African people have to reflect on. Governance wise, we have to be careful, because the youths we are dealing with are not reflecting on the consequences of colonialism, as an excuse,” NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency's Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, told journalists in Addis Abba.

"So as Africans we should not be poor and if we are poor it is a question of governance," he added.

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