



AFRICITIES 4

18 – 24 September 2006

Nairobi – Kenya

Special Session: “African Cities Driving the NEPAD Initiative”

Lead partners: NEPAD Cities Network and UCLG-A in collaboration with UN-HABITAT

Focus:

The launch of the NEPAD Cities Programme Report in Vancouver on 22 June 2006 raised the expectations of the Habitat Agenda and MDGs Partners in achieving more tangible results in search for a sustainable development in Africa. The launch was a real success, given the rate of attendance, the focus of the discussions and the quality of exchange of views between African Mayors and their networks.

The Special Session to be organized as a follow up event in September in conjunction with the upcoming AFRICITIES Summit should help the organizers to capitalize on the Vancouver momentum. It will be devoted to the crucial theme of: “*African Cities Driving the NEPAD Initiative*”.

The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) was conceived to address the current challenges facing the African continent. Issues such as the escalating poverty levels, underdevelopment and the continued marginalisation of Africa needed a new radical intervention, spearheaded by African leaders, to develop a new Vision that would guarantee Africa’s Renewal. However, it has become self-evident that for NEPAD to succeed, it cannot afford to ignore the rapid rate of urbanization of Africa, and its impact on the quality of life of the urban poor.

Over the recent years, UN-HABITAT has embarked on a lobbying campaign at all levels to promote this idea laying a particular emphasis on the role of African Mayors in this context. The NEPAD Cities Programme of UN-HABITAT is a major component of this campaign aiming to address the NEPAD objectives from a different perspective. It was formulated as a means of achieving a quick- win for the NEPAD and ground its ideals to the community level through the municipalities and urban centres.

Within the framework of this Programme, a "NEPAD City" has been described as an African City that is "fit" to deliver on the MDGs. How can African cities be made "fit" without the involvement of African Mayors and local leaders? What does it take to ensure such an involvement and how can it be made sustainable? Can decentralization play a role in this process? What kind of decentralization? Which collaboration should be developed between UN-HABITAT, as the "Cities Agency" of the United Nations and the African Mayors and local leaders in order to ensure ownership of the NEPAD goals at the municipal and local levels?

The Session should provide all stakeholders with a unique opportunity to give some thoughts to these challenges and explore together the concrete answers that can be given to the very relevant question of the role of African Mayors in addressing the NEPAD goals towards an effective delivery of the MDGs.

Chair: Minister Musikari Kombo, (Proposed Chair - TbC)

Guest of Honor: Under-Secretary General Dr. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT (TbC)

Panelists:

Father Smangaliso Mkhatswa, President, UCLGA (TbC)

Mayor Obed Mlaba, Durban, President of the NEPAD Cities Award (TbC)

Mayor Dick Wathika, Mayor of Nairobi (TbC)

Ms. Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, NEPAD Secretariat (TbC)

Mr. Alioune Badiane, UN-HABITAT

Notice: additional names to be added at a later stage, as consultations are ongoing.

Recommended Background documentation:

- Report of the NEPAD Cities Programme, UN-HABITAT, 2006
- Report of the Secretary General on the UN Support to NEPAD, UNGA, 2006
- State of the World Cities Report, UN-HABITAT, 2006/07

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- The contacts of the relevant focal points among the NEPAD Cities Partners will be provided, once the programme has been finalized.

(*) To be confirmed