

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH SUMMIT OF THE
COMMITTEE OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATING IN
THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM [APR FORUM]**

28TH JANUARY 2012, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

1. The 16th Summit of the Committee of Heads of State and Government Participating in the African Peer Review Mechanism [APR Forum] was held on 28 January 2012 at the African Union Commission Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Summit was chaired by H.E. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the APR Forum.

2. The following Heads of State and Government attended the Summit:

- (i) H.E. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Chairperson of the APR Forum;
- (ii) H.E. Ahmed Ouyahia, Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria;
- (iii) H.E. Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin;
- (iv) H.E. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo;
- (v) H.E. Armando Guebuza, President of the Republic of Mozambique;
- (vi) H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (vii) H.E. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone; and
- (viii) H.E. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa.

3. The following countries were represented at the Summit by Focal Points of the APRM, Ministers, Officials and Heads of Delegations: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

4. The members of the African Peer Review Mechanism Panel of Eminent Persons (APR Panel) present were Professor Mohammed Séghir Babès (Chairperson), Professor Amos Sawyer, Barrister Akere Tabeng Muna and Barrister Julienne Ondziel Gnelenga.

5. The Chief Executive Officer a.i., Mr. Assefa Shifa, and other Officials from the APR Secretariat were also in attendance.

6. The Opening Ceremony of the Summit was eventually punctuated by two statements. His Excellency Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the APRM Forum, welcomed his peers and presented the major items on the Agenda: *Administrative Issues of the APRM – Vacancy for New APR Panel Members, Draft Operating Procedures for the APRM, and the Peer Review of Zambia and Sierra Leone, as well as the consideration of Progress Reports on the Implementation of the National Programmes of Action (NPoA) of Algeria and Nigeria.*

7. As regards membership of the APRM, the Chairperson of the APR Forum announced that the Heads of State of Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea and Niger were expected to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for Accession to the APRM at the 16th Summit. He noted that this development would bring the number of APRM Member Countries to 33, once the Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the three countries.

8. Following the postponement of the peer review of Kenya, as requested by the Government of Kenya, and in the absence of the Presidents of Uganda and Zambia, the Forum decided to peer-review Zambia and Kenya and consider Progress Reports on the Implementation of the National Programmes of Action (NPoA) of Algeria, Nigeria, Uganda and Mali at the next Summit.

9. The Agenda of the Summit was consequently amended and adopted.

10. Professor Mohamed Séghir Babès, Chairperson of the APR Panel, presented a Progress Report featuring commendable achievements in the Country Review Processes since the 15th Summit, notably, the Country Review Missions of Zambia, Sierra Leone and Kenya, as well as the completion of work on the APRM Master Questionnaire.

11. With regard to the APRM Host Country Agreement, the Chairperson of the APR Panel recalled the principal recommendation emanating from the Panel's October 2011 Retreat with the African Union Commission and Strategic Partners of the APRM.

12. He urged the Forum to consider issuing a declaration on the legal status of the APRM as an "autonomous" Specialized Agency of the African Union, to enable the Government of South Africa to host the Secretariat and grant full diplomatic immunity and privileges to its staff, in conformity with the provisions of the Conventions and other International Instruments in force.

13. The Chairperson of the APR Panel announced the end of his tenure. He thanked the APR Forum and the other Structures of the Mechanism for the support they provided him during his tenure and reiterated his commitment to remain at the service of Africa.

14. As a result of time constraints, the Heads of State and Government of the APRM Member Countries covered three Agenda Items in a Closed Session: Administrative Issues (*Vacancy for New Panel Members, the Draft Operating Procedures of the APRM*) and *the Peer Review of Sierra Leone*).

Vacancy for New Panel Members

15. The APR Forum appointed five new Panel Members from Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa on the basis of criteria such as *gender balance* and *geographical distribution* of the membership. The APR Panel of Eminent Persons currently comprises:

- 1) Professor Amos Sawyer (Liberia)
- 2) Barrister Julienne Ondziel Gnelenga (Congo)
- 3) Barrister Akere Tabeng Muna (Cameroon)
- 4) Ambassador Professor Okon Edet Uya (Nigeria)
- 5) Ms. Baleka Mbete (South Africa)
- 6) Ambassador Ashraf Gamal (Egypt)
- 7) Dr. Mekideche Mustapha (Algeria), and
- 8) Ambassador Fatuma Ntangiza Nyirakobwa (Rwanda).

16. The ninth Panel member will be appointed at the next Summit of the APR Forum.

17. The APR Forum also appointed Professor Amos Sawyer as the new Chairperson of the APR Panel for one year.

Operating Procedures for the APRM

18. The Forum considered and adopted the consensual version of the Operating Procedures for the APRM presented by the APRM Focal Point for South Africa. The Draft Document was prepared at a meeting held on 27 January 2012 in Addis Ababa between the APR Panel and a Select Committee of APRM Focal Points.

19. The Structure of the APRM Operating Procedures consists of a Policy/Administrative Component and a Specialized Component.

20. The Policy/Administrative Component comprises:

- a) The Assembly of Participating Heads of State and Government (APR Forum), in whom the overall responsibility of the APRM is vested;
- b) The APR Committee of Focal Points; and
- c) The APR Secretariat.

21. The APR Committee of Focal Points, made up of Personal Representatives of Heads of State and Government participating in the APRM, serves as an intermediary between the APR Forum and the APR Secretariat. The Committee deals with:

- a) Budgetary Process;
- b) Resource mobilization through Member States, Partners and Donors;
- c) Continuous interaction between the Secretariat, Focal Points and Partners; and
- d) APRM Trust Fund and Audit.

22. In the context of their oversight role over the APR Secretariat, the Focal Points are responsible for supervising the Secretariat to ensure the highest possible level of professionalism, transparency, efficiency and accountability of all Secretariat activities. In this regard, the Focal Points discharge the following responsibilities:

- Proposing and recommending to the APR Forum the structure and staffing requirements of the APR Secretariat;
- Recommending to the APR Forum the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer of the Secretariat;
- Assessing succession planning for the APR Secretariat's key management issues and organizational changes; and
- Assessing and recommending to the APR Forum the Work Programme and the Annual Budget of the APR Secretariat.

23. The APR Secretariat offers Technical and Administrative Support Services to all the Structures of the Mechanism as a whole.

24. The Specialized Component comprises the APR Panel, the body that now has the responsibility of ensuring the independence, professionalism and credibility of the Country Review Process, and is directly responsible to the APR Forum.

Peer Review of Sierra Leone

25. As part of the Peer Review of Sierra Leone, the 16th Summit of the APR Forum considered the Report on the Country Review Mission conducted in Sierra Leone from 21 May to 6 June 2011, after the presentation of the highlights by Barrister Akere Tabeng Muna, Lead Panel Member in charge of the Sierra Leone Review Process.

26. The Forum took note of the following commendable practices in Sierra Leone as outlined in the Country Review Report:

- The Ward Committees set up in each Local Council Area, to mobilize residents for self-help and community development projects;
- The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) established in 2002 to prosecute corruption-related case;
- Reforms in the public procurement process;
- Policy hearings conducted at the broad sectoral level as part of the development of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF);
- The Memorandum of Understanding between the Sierra Leone Indigenous Business Association and the Anti-Corruption Commission, allowing for consultation and collaboration in advocating for a business-friendly and corruption-free business environment; and
- The key actions Sierra Leone has taken in promoting gender equity nationwide.

27. President Koroma commended the APR Panel, the Country Review Team and the APR Secretariat for their efforts in producing the Country Review Report of Sierra Leone and acknowledged that the recommendations of the Report would provide a basis for further action by his Government. He also assured the Forum that the Government of Sierra Leone would undertake a critical examination of the recommendations of the Report and develop a road map for the implementation of the accompanying National Programme of Action (NPOA).

28. President Koroma reiterated his Government's commitment to gender equity and disclosed that efforts are being made to ensure at least 30 per cent women participation in public office in Sierra Leone.

29. President Boni Yayi from Benin commended President Koroma and his Government for the efforts being made to reduce poverty and fight corruption in Sierra Leone and stressed the importance of ensuring that the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) operates as an independent entity. He elaborated on the Mining Sector in Sierra Leone and emphasized the need to curb the prevailing unemployment among the Youth in Sierra Leone, as well as the high interest rates that impact negatively on the agricultural sector.

30. President Boni Yayi also commended Sierra Leone for the 30 per cent threshold set for women's participation in public office, which had been achieved in Benin, and encouraged Sierra Leone to implement its plans in this regard.

31. The 16th Summit of the APRM Forum was preceded by the 53rd Meeting of the APR Panel (25-26 January), the 5th Meeting between the APRM and its Strategic Partners (UNDP, UNECA and AfDB) and the Pre-Summit Meeting between the APR Panel and the National Focal Points of the APRM (27 January).

32. The APR Forum decided to hold its 17th Summit at a venue and on a date to be communicated subsequently.

Appreciation

33. The APR Forum thanked the Heads of State and Government who attended the 16th Summit in Addis Ababa and expressed its appreciation to the Government and People of Ethiopia for their hospitality and for the excellent arrangements they made to ensure the success of the Summit.

ISSUED ON 28 JANUARY 2012 IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA