



**WELCOME REMARKS BY PROFESSOR WISEMAN NKUHLU AT THE  
AFRICA RECRUIT EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCE  
SHARING/EXCHANGE SEMINAR – ENGAGING WITH THE AFRICAN  
DIASPORA**

**London, United Kingdom, 10 March 2005**

It is with great pleasure that I join the Mayor of London and the African Recruit leadership in welcoming you all to this very important seminar. I welcome all the human resource practitioners, employers, business leaders, policy makers, consultants and all our guests. We appreciate your interest and support.

I extend a special word of welcome to all the young professionals, scientists and entrepreneurs of African decent, who are attending this seminar in order to obtain information about opportunities to participate in the African renaissance project.

As the messenger of the African leaders championing the New Partnership for Africa's development (NEPAD), I have had the honour to participate in many forums across the African continent. I have listened and interacted with youth organisations, women's groups, farmers associations, African researchers, entrepreneurs, politicians, etc. What I have learnt from these processes is that the mood is changing. Anger and disillusionment is being replaced by a growing sense of hope and determination.

It is therefore with a deep sense of conviction that I say Africa is changing. African countries and the African people are taking charge of their destiny. The NEPAD policy framework provides a vision and detailed indicative sectoral programmes for a comprehensive socio-economic renewal movement. An increasing number of African countries are choosing democracy, good governance, transparency, people-centred development and partnerships.

It is these reforming countries and their leaders who are determining Africa's Agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Evidence of renewal is very strong. The African Union is becoming strong in preventing and reversing unconstitutional changes of government. Progress is being made with the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) which is an instrument for monitoring progress with the adoption and adherence to standards of good governance and implementation of NEPAD programmes. Macro economic management is also improving across the continent.

Of course there are conflicts in a few African countries that must be resolved. There are also cases of bad governance and corruption. Yes there is HIV and AIDS but this is not the whole story about Africa. The progress we have described earlier is also part of the story that must be told. In actual fact it is these positive developments that will ultimately extricate the continent from conflicts, diseases and poverty.

It is these developments that the African leaders are nurturing and consolidating through NEPAD. To succeed we need first and foremost strong political will and courage to forge ahead with the reforms and implement comprehensive people centred development programmes. NEPAD's main thrust is the strengthening of political leadership through dialogue and enhancement of the effectiveness of continental and regional institutions.

The second critical determinant of success is scientific, technical and managerial capacity. Experience in other countries of the world shows that good policies are a necessary but not a sufficient condition for successful development. Good policies must be accompanied by investment in the development of skills. This has been highlighted in many studies.

Of course the solution in the long term will come from increased investment in scientific research education and training. However, it takes fifteen or more years to produce a university graduate. Given the urgency of the situation, Africa cannot wait. High level skills are required now. Hence the Africa Recruit initiative.

Africa needs teachers, nurses, agricultural extension officers, university professors, medical doctors, IT specialists, etc. Otherwise we will not meet the MDGs and we will not be able to reduce food insecurity and the burden of diseases.

Our hope is that through the Africa Recruit initiative we will be able to increase sharing of information about opportunities in Africa, also work together in addressing policies and regulations that discourage Africans in the Diaspora from taking up employment in African countries.

One of the objectives of this seminar is to strengthen partnerships and collaboration and to extend support for the Africa Recruit initiative. Therefore we look forward to gaining new friends and sponsors during the two days.

Finally, I bring to you greetings from President Obasanjo, Chairman of NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implimentation Committee and from the President of my country, T Mbeki.

They are fully behind this initiative and are committed to doing their best to ensure that the African renaissance takes off during their term of leadership and that it becomes irreversible.

Thank you.