

**FIFTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR STAFFORD NEIL
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON

"NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT"

IN THE 58TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Mr. President,

Our delegation welcomes the Report of the Secretary General on Implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development in document A/58/254. The Report shows that a positive start has been made and that NEPAD is beginning to register some progress in important areas. At the same time the Report draws attention to the major challenges and constraints. There are severe problems but they can be overcome; they arise from continued difficulties associated with unresolved conflicts, the ravages of the HIV pandemic and the economic challenges of globalization. To develop and sustain a momentum for NEPAD requires two things: a collective effort in Africa towards internal stabilization and a commitment for delivery of resources from the donor community. It matters to all of us that through our combined effort NEPAD can succeed. For our delegation this is a special priority for Africa has always been close to the hearts of the Jamaican people.

Mr. President, in reviewing the progress made so far, there is reason for some cautious optimism. We note an increasing level of ODA, in recent years, reversing the steady decline of the 1990's, but the level still remains substantially below that of 1990 despite the overall growth in the world economy. We therefore place great reliance on fulfilment of the pledges of the Monterrey and Johannesburg Conferences, as well as those made by the Group of 8 at the Evian Summit. The expected increase in quantum of ODA should be combined with further improvements in aid effectiveness by removal of procurement requirements, excessive bureaucratic procedures and the conditionalities which restrict delivery of development cooperation.

With regard to debt relief, we are encouraged that there is some movement under the HIPIC initiative but we are still worried by the reported complexities of the process. The qualification standards and complicated requirements may still be hindering delivery of benefits promised under the programme.

The trade and investment pattern shows a mixed picture. Investment flows are not promising and although there are some special arrangements to stimulate exports they are still not enough to bring significant change. To generate investment flows some special promotional programme is needed beyond mere liberalization of investment regimes. In this regard, we applaud the initiative of two EU States for providing a fund for guarantees for particular areas of investment. With reference to trade, if the DOHA agenda is to help Africa, it is not just a matter of removal of subsidies and opening new markets. There is need for some stabilization of commodity prices. All of this has to be combined with the building of productive capacity. This requires huge investment in development of physical

infrastructure and technological innovation in all sectors. In agriculture, there is need for innovation not only for expansion of agricultural exports but also to break the recurring cycle of crop failures to improve food security. As regards industrialization, there is a long way to go but this must be an important part of an economic strategy for diversification to achieve higher levels of economic growth, to reduce vulnerability and to increase employment opportunities.

In all of this, there is an important role for the State to manage and stimulate the development of these important sectors. This goes beyond ensuring conditions of peace and stability and developing sound governance principles and practices. The building of institutional capacity and a social and legal framework is an important foundation for the development process. Education and public health are important priorities of the moment in the building of the social infrastructure. But the Public Sector also needs to contribute to promote enterprise development and production facilities. Africa needs help in all of these areas which should be provided in a way which is tailored to African needs and the African cultural environment. We are greatly encouraged by the determination manifested in the African Union to make their own arrangements in relation to monitoring of governance issues and to be engaged in the resolution of conflicts and the promotion of peace and stability. Of special importance is the evolution of regional mechanisms under the aegis of the African Union with respect to conflict prevention and reduction. We also look forward to the establishment of a Pan-African Parliament to promote development and integration and also the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

With regard to the role of the United Nations, we can see that there is movement within the system towards collaboration. The coordination of the various agencies is being oriented to achieve the priorities of NEPAD and working with the appropriate African regional and sub-regional organizations. We welcome the establishment of the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa within the Secretariat which is playing a strategic role in this effort. We can only hope that the coordination is not overladen with too much bureaucracy to stifle creative efforts and the implementation of development projects. What we want to see are concrete results flowing from the organizational improvements in the system.

Mr. President, I mentioned earlier the importance of building productive capacity. In this age of globalization competitiveness and efficiency are of paramount importance. There is obviously a need to work closely with civil society to strengthen the private sector and to ensure that African entrepreneurship and indigenous capability are encouraged and developed to take advantage of economic opportunities in the global system. These are

things which cannot be left to chance and require special attention on the part of the directing agencies of each country working in cooperation with bilateral and multilateral agencies. The international community should be careful to avoid the imposition on Africa of economic models and development policies which bear no relationship to the country's social, political and economic realities. If doctrinaire prescriptions are applied or are required by international cooperation it will not help Africa. We therefore continue to stress, Mr. President, the African ownership of NEPAD and the African priorities are defined by themselves. The role of the international community is a supportive one. The spirit of partnership and solidarity should be driven by a sense of responsibility, to lend support and not to dictate what is to be done.

The people of the Caribbean Community have a special linkage and kinship with Africa and we fully support the provision of substantial international support for Africa. As indicated by the representative of Guyana this morning, we are making our own modest contribution, particularly in the area of capacity building and we have the intention to explore all avenues to give concrete support for African development initiatives.

Mr President, it is not needful at this time to stir the passions of historical grievance but we should remember that Africa has suffered from plunder and exploitation. NEPAD provides the framework and also the opportunity for redressing the balance and reversing the neglect of previous decades. We look forward to making this the beginning of a brighter future.

Thank you Mr. President.