

## **African leaders call for critical paradigm shift to a broader Public-Private Partnership development strategy to uplift lives**

*(Johannesburg November 24, 2014) Attended by the Prime Minister of Lesotho, H.E. Mr. Thomas Motsoahae Thabane, Ministers, heads and representatives of several UN Agencies, the High-Level Forum on South-South Cooperation for Sustainable Development, organized by South-South Steering Committee for Sustainable Development (SS-SCSD), International Organization for South-South Cooperation (IOSSC), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and other UN agencies, was held in Sandton last week, and witnesses many pledges to a united effort in forging greater ties with public-private partnerships.*

The High-Level Forum convened last week under the theme, "the Role of ICT, Food Security and Sustainable Urbanization in the Post 2015 Development Agenda", Ambassador Francis Lorenzo, President of SS-SCSD and IOSSC brought to the attention of the attending delegates the surmounting challenges confronting developing nations, and highlighted the use of ICT to springboard development and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technology to support the attainment of developmental targets. A key focus for the recent Forum was food security, and the need for the development of new strategies to address malnutrition in least developed countries to ensure the availability of food for present and future generations.

H.E. Mr. Thomas Motsoahae Thabane, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, discussed challenges facing land-locked nations, and Lesotho's aim to discover strategic niches to be competitive and a focus to generate sustainable development of the economy, its social structures and the environment. Acknowledging the benefits of ICT in facilitating more efficient communications, the Prime Minister also warned that it can be misused to fuel conflicts and urged for more communication between stake-holders.

Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining of the Republic of

Malawi, H.E. Mr. Austin Atupele Muluzi warned delegates about the reduction of water levels and the impact of population migration from rural areas to urban cities. Minister added that such migration raised further concerns as it puts immense pressure on water supplies, electricity demands and decent shelter and that urbanisation may be sustainable only when enough food is produced.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Senior Trade Economist, Mr. Suffyan Koroma, reported that global food demand is at its all-time high. To meet the increasing demand, the FAO is implementing programs with South-South Cooperation to facilitate mutual learning, technical and knowledge adaptation to localize agriculture strategies through the promotion of partnerships and resource mobilizations. Food supply is also affected by the volatile fuel market. In addition negative effects on food supply comes from the fact that three quarters of the world's food supplied is generated by small scale farmers, who lack optimization, coupled with the fact that large numbers of youths are moving to the cities, leaving skill shortages on the farms.

Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro, Chief, e-Government Branch, Division for Public Administration and Development, UNPAN, encouraged the use of ICT for participative engagement between stake-holders to overcome difficult challenges facing developing countries.

H.E. Dr. Mwaba P. Kasese-Bota, Chair of the Bureau of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations, cited that out of the 32 land-locked countries, 16 are in Africa of which six are in southern Africa. These land-locked nations are faced with a different set of challenges to create a sustainable and conducive environment for their peoples. To improve trade and economic growth, H.E. Kaese-Bota highlighted the need for public-private partnerships to provide countries with the much required resources and technical knowhow.

H.E. Ambassador Ms. Menissa Rambally, Vice-President of the 69<sup>th</sup> session of United Nations General Assembly and Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia to the United Nations, commented on the efforts of South-South Steering Committee for Sustainable Development (SS-SCSD) in tabling such issues to the Forum of the

Global South to enable the public and private sectors to meet face-to-face and have productive dialogues to ensure that the needs and abilities are appropriately matched.

Minister of Trade and Industry, Cooperation and Marketing from the Kingdom of Lesotho, H.E. Mr. S'Khulumi Ntsoaole joined the Permanent Representatives from Tanzania, Uganda and Mozambique to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Tuvako Nathaniel Manongi, H.E. Mr. Richard Nghuhuura and H.E. Mr. Antonio Gumende, and made several suggestions and observations regarding ICT and food security at the Forum.

H.E. Ambassador Mr. Alexandru Cujba, Director-General of IOSSC and Secretary-General of SS-SCSD emphasised that South-South Cooperation has the economic and technical capabilities to support development in the Global South. Amb. Cujba commented that cultural exchanges and sharing of similar developmental experiences is crucial. Amb. Cujba also noted that the launch of the IOSSC Africa Representative Office will facilitate a working relationship with the various countries and contribute towards the successful attainment of the MDGs and Post-2015 Development Agenda.

H.E. Dr. John William Ashe, President of the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly and Chairman of SS-SCSD, raised new challenges causing developing nations to be perpetually on a catching up program. Am. Ashe stated “the in order for the world to move forward as a global society, there is an urgent need to remove inequality. Governments are elected by their people, but they cannot work alone. Private sector capabilities need to be garnered to support sustainable development.

Furthermore, South countries cannot be in a perpetual charity crisis, and the business community needs profits to sustain its involvement. There is a therefore a great need for a joint and concerted effort to address the sustainable development of social, economic and environmental targets.”

The Forum culminated in a Gala Dinner where more than 300 guests from the diplomatic and business communities gathered to witness the official launch of the IOSSC Africa Representative Office and the appointment of South African entrepreneur Mr. George HP Zhang as the IOSSC's Chief Representative for Africa.

Mr. Ndaba Ntsele, Chairman from the Presidency Business Council, South Africa, expressed his happiness and pride that IOSSC has selected to launch the IOSSC Africa Representative Office in South Africa. Ntsele commended the passion of the IOSSC Africa Representative Office to work for the social and economic development for the entire African continent. Ntsele expressed concerns over Africa's failure to create enough entrepreneurs and urged for the development of sustainable medium sized companies to ensure an all-inclusive cooperation to spur development. Another voice from Africa came from Lesotho's Minister of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing, H.E. Mr. Sekhulum Ntsoaole commenting on South-South Cooperation's to find the best way of developing our cities and rural areas to achieve a high level of sustainable development, and challenged Africa to aspire to becoming an economic giant like China within the next ten years.