APARC Communiqué: Summer 2005

Boston University African Presidential Center

Boston University

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Boston University
ROUNDTABLE 2005
A Transcontinental Success

On April 7-13, 2005, the African Presidential Archives and Research Center (APARC) convened eleven former African heads of state along with a distinguished group of public and private sector leaders from around the world to discuss Africa’s image in the American media and the recently released Commission for Africa Report.

Accountability was the collective challenge from the eleven elder statesmen attending the transcontinental summit at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa and Boston University in Boston, Massachusetts.

“We acknowledge the need for African leadership to be accountable relative to matters like good governance, peace and stability, and transparency in our economies,” said Sir Q. Ketumile Masire, former president of Botswana and current APARC Balfour African President-in-Residence, at the closing Boston press conference of the African Presidential Roundtable 2005.

“If initiatives like the UN Millennium Development Goals, the Commission for Africa Report and the Millennium Challenge Account are going to be worth more than the paper they are written on then the West is also going to need to be accountable relative to its commitments to partner with Africa.”

“Global policies regarding Africa reinforce that Africa has never been more primed to take its place in the global economy and global cooperation is needed for this to happen,” Masire continued. “Africa’s image in the American media has a profound relevance to the world considering Africa as a worthy investment venue and viewing Africa as a valuable trading partner. Africa’s importance to global commerce and development is unquestionable. The issue is will Africa ever benefit from its contribution to the global economy as much as the world benefits from Africa. Africa’s turn is long overdue!”

Former President Masire was joined by H.E. Nicéphore D. Soglo of Benin; H.E. Pierre Buyoya of Burundi; H.E. António Mascarenhas Monteiro of Cape Verde; H.E. Aristides Maria Pereira of Cape Verde; H.E. Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings of Ghana; H.E. Daniel arap Moi of Kenya; H.E. Karl Auguste Offmann of Mauritius; H.E. Joaquim Alberto Chissano of Mozambique; H.E. Ali Hassan Mwinyi of Tanzania; and H.E. Dr. Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia.

“The Roundtable is an opportunity for these former heads of state, each with tremendous stature in their respective country, to engage key private and public sector leaders on subjects of importance to Africa,” said APARC director Amb. Charles Stith. “They are creatively and constructively engaged outside of office, in much the same way Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton and other U.S. presidents have used their stature to continue to affect policies around the world.”

Among the 125 participants in the closed-door Roundtable were South African Finance Minister Trevor Manuel, Anglo American CEO Lazarus Zim, Boeing Africa Director Rudolph Louw, and CNN Johannesburg Bureau Chief Charlayne Hunter-Gault.
Thursday, April 7, 2005

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM  
African Presidential Roundtable 2005 Welcome Reception  
Hosted by Hon. David Dunn, U.S. Consul General to Johannesburg  
Residence of the U.S. Consul General

Friday, April 8, 2005

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM  
Former Heads of State presented at African Union’s Pan-African Parliament  
Hosted by H.E. Gertrude Mongella, President of AU Pan-African Parliament  
Gallagher Estate

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
SESSION I - BLAIR COMMISSION FOR AFRICA REPORT  
Discussant:  
Hon. Trevor Manuel, Finance Minister, the Republic of South Africa  
University of the Witwatersrand

12:00 PM - 1:15 PM  
Working Lunch

1:15 PM - 3:30 PM  
SESSION II - PERCEPTION AND COVERAGE OF AFRICA IN THE MEDIA  
Discussant:  
University of the Witwatersrand

3:30 PM - 4:45 PM  
Press Conference  
University of the Witwatersrand

8:00 PM  
African Presidential Roundtable 2005 Dinner  
Hosted by Hon. Amos Masando, Executive Mayor of Johannesburg &  
Prof. Loyiso Nongxa, Vice Chancellor & Principal, University of the Witwatersrand  
Metropolitan Centre

Saturday, April 9, 2005

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
African Presidential Roundtable 2005 Breakfast  
Hosted by H.E. Jendayi Frazer, U.S. Ambassador to South Africa  
Residence of the U.S. Ambassador
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<th><strong>Monday, April 11, 2005</strong></th>
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| **American-African Universities Collaborative Luncheon** | Hosted by **Sir Q. Ketumile Masire**, Former President of Botswana and Balfour African President-in-Residence  
Residence of the **Balfour African President-in-Residence** |
| **6:00 PM - 7:30 PM** | **Dinner**  
Hosted by the APARC Advisory Board  
The Castle at Boston University |
| **7:30 PM - 8:30 PM** | **Interview of Former Heads of State**  
WHDH-TV (NBC Affiliate) |

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<th><strong>Tuesday, April 12, 2005</strong></th>
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<td><strong>SESSION I - MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS</strong></td>
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**Discussant:**  
**Prof. Adil Najam**, Associate Prof., the Fletcher School at Tufts University  
Boston University |
| **1:30 PM - 4:30 PM** | **SESSION II - PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES AND ISSUES IN AFRICA**  
**Discussants:**  
Mr. **Anthony Carroll**, Merck AIDS Consultant for Africa  
Mr. **Luddy Hayden**, Chevron Corporation  
Mr. **Alan Patricof**, Apax Partners |
| **6:00 PM - 7:30 PM** | **African Presidential Roundtable Public Forum:**  
“African Perspectives: Integrating Africa into the Global Economy”  
**Moderator:** **Ms. Liz Walker**, Host & Executive Producer of “Sunday with Liz Walker,” CBS 4  
Boston University |
| **8:00 PM - 10:00 PM** | **Dinner**  
Hosted by **Dr. Aram V. Chobanian**, President of Boston University  
Boston University |

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<th><strong>Wednesday, April 13, 2005</strong></th>
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<td><strong>SESSION III - NEPAD</strong></td>
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**Discussant:**  
**Amb. Joseph Diatta**, Former Ambassador of Niger to the U.S. and ECOWAS Ambassadors Group’s Chairman |
| **12:00 PM - 1:00 PM** | **Working Lunch** |
| **1:00 PM - 2:30 PM** | **Press Conference**  
Boston University |
| **4:00 PM - 5:00 PM** | **Private meeting with Hon. Paul Applegarth, CEO of the Millennium Challenge Account**  
Four Seasons Hotel |
| **7:00 PM - 9:30 PM** | **African Presidential Dinner 2005 honoring the Former African Heads of State**  
John F. Kennedy Museum and Library |
This has been an enormously productive transcontinental initiative. As President Rawlings stated, we started in Johannesburg, where the focus of our deliberations was the Commission for Africa Report and discussions about Africa’s image in the American media. Both are matters of critical importance to Africa’s continued growth and development.

In Boston, we looked at the compatibility of initiatives like the UN Millennium Development Goals and the Commission for Africa Report with NEPAD, which is Africa’s own vision. If our deliberations were to be summarized in a word, that word would be — accountability.

We acknowledge the need for African leadership to be accountable relative to matters like good governance, peace and stability, and transparency in our economies. The good news, according to the briefing we received on NEPAD:

“Africa is making significant and important strides in these very areas. African leadership is more accountable.”

If initiatives like the UN Millennium Development Goals, the Commission for Africa Report and the Millennium Challenge Account are going to be worth more than the paper they are written on then the West is also going to need to be accountable relative to its commitments to partner with Africa.

Accountability by the West, in the partnership to improve Africa’s condition, means a couple of things. Beyond the right words and mix of policies, the urgent question, at the end of the day is: “Where does the money come from to advance recommendations like those contained in the various reports?” The nations of the G8 must step up to the plate. It is the responsible and right thing to do. It is the responsible thing to do because Africa continues to lag behind the rest of the world in terms of development. It is the right thing to do because Africa has driven the growth and development of the rest of the world for centuries.

Historically, Africa has been central to the global economy — from providing the slave labor that developed the new world and enriched the old world to providing Col-Tan, the essential mineral in making the computer chips necessary to drive this 21st century high tech global economy. Africa’s importance to global commerce and development is unquestionable, the issue is, will Africa ever benefit from its contribution to the global economy as much as the world benefits. Africa’s turn is long overdue!

The other focus of our deliberations was Africa’s image in the American media. This has profound relevance to everything — including the world considering Africa as a worthy investment venue and a valuable trading partner.

Today, we call on the media to be more fair and balanced in its coverage of Africa. We spent a good part of the day examining the record of coverage of some of America’s most distinguished publications, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, and US News & World Report. We reviewed their coverage of the continent over a 10-year period — from 1994 to 2004. We found their coverage of the continent to be anything but fair and balanced.

For example, in South Africa (under the leadership of the present government and that led by Nelson Mandela) the
country has had the longest period of sustained economic growth in its history. That story has yet to be told in the same detail in which South Africa’s problems are covered.

The record of coverage of other parts of the continent is equally abysmal. One of the more notable areas of progress on the continent over the last ten years has been in education. Yet, it was the smallest category covered with only twenty articles.

APARC’s State of Africa Report 2004 highlighted some of the noteworthy achievements in education: a literacy rate in Botswana of 90 percent, the enrollment of an additional 1.7 million children in primary education in Kenya, the rise of persons in teachers training colleges in Ghana to 8,500 from a low of 6,000 in the year 2000, and the construction of more than 600 new classrooms over the past year in Malawi.

These, or similar gains from 1994 to 2004, were not reported in the more than 2,700 articles surveyed from The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, or US News & World Report.

The findings of this (and other) surveys indicate that coverage of Africa by the leading sources of American media is, at best, dismissive of the continent’s progress and potential, and thus leading to continued “exotification” and marginalization of the African continent. At worst, coverage disregards recent trends toward democratization, thus betraying an almost contemptuous lack of interest in the progress and potential being achieved on the continent.

Underneath the present major American media coverage are buried stories of untold and unpublished growth, reform and sustainability. While this survey was not intended to establish a causal relationship between perceptions of Africa and the preponderance of negative coverage of the continent’s democracies, it is logical and reasonable to conclude that there is such a correlation between negative coverage and negative perceptions. Furthermore, it is reasonable to posit that negative perceptions lead to negative outcomes, namely, lower levels of aid and lower levels of investment.

This area is so important I would like to highlight three recommendations resulting from our deliberations:

**Recommendation 1:**
African countries and institutions like the African Union need to develop a set of strategies to counter the negative media portrayal of Africa. Among the initiatives that should be considered are:

- developing alternative mediums through which to tell Africa’s story;
- developing a multimedia campaign to counter Africa’s negative image in the western press; and
- developing a strategy for engaging major media outlets, like those identified in the survey we reviewed, in order to encourage more fair and balanced coverage of the continent.

**Recommendation 2:**
A plan should be devised to encourage more American NGOs and non-commercial media forums to create new paradigms for training Western and African journalists covering emerging African democracies.

**Recommendation 3:**
A strategy must be developed to encourage leading American schools of journalism and journalism organizations to develop specific tracks for covering emerging economies and developing democracies, particularly in Africa.

We raise this concern about how Africa is covered not because we don’t appreciate the need for a critical and skeptical press as a guarantor of democracy. Our complaint is the skeptical and critical coverage does not have to be cynical. Our point is simple, tell Africa’s whole story. The problems in African countries deserve to be brought under the light of public scrutiny; but the continent’s progress and potential also deserve to see the light of day.
THE FORMER AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE

HIS EXCELLENCY NICÉPHORE D. SOGLO, Republic of Benin, served as president from 1991 to 1996. From the historic National Conference of February 1990 until he assumed the presidency, Soglo served as the prime minister, chief of government and minister of defense of the transitional government of the Republic of Benin. Soglo served as deputy executive director of the World Bank from 1979 to 1982. From 1983 to 1986, he served as the executive director of the Directors of the World Bank in Washington, D.C., representing twenty-four African States at the Board. In his capacity as executive director, he participated in the implementation of studies on the development issues of sub-Saharan Africa. Following his presidency, he took a year’s sabbatical and wrote Democratic Change and Economic Reforms in Africa: The Case of Benin.

HIS EXCELLENCY SIR Q. KETUMILE J. MASIRE, Republic of Botswana, served as president from 1980 to 1998. Masire co-founded the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) in 1962 along with Seretse Khama and in 1965 was made deputy prime minister. After Botswana’s independence in 1966, he became vice president. Upon Khama’s death in 1980, he became president, and continued a policy of nonalignment. A centrist, he helped Botswana become one of the most stable states in Africa. Masire was a journalist before entering politics. He sat on the Bangwaketse tribal council and then the legislative council before co-founding the BDP. Before becoming president, Masire trained as a teacher at Tiger Kloof, the Former British Bechuanaland. Later he founded the Seepapitso Secondary School in Kanye. Masire retired in March 1998 and was succeeded by President Festus Mogae of the BDP. He is currently the Lloyd G. Balfour African President-in-Residence at the African Presidential Archives and Research Center (APARC).

HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR PIERRE BUYOYA, Republic of Burundi, served two terms as president of Burundi, the first from 1987-1993 and the second from 1996-2003. In the interim between his presidential terms, he created and served as head of the Foundation for Unity, Peace, and Democracy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to studying the institutional judicial and security systems of Burundi and issues related to peace and reconciliation in Burundi. Additionally, Buyoya served as a member and advisor of the Council for Africa, which studies African development at the World Bank. Moreover, he was an Organization for African Unity (OAU) observer of the first democratic elections in South Africa. Buyoya is the author of Mission Possible (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1998). Buyoya has been appointed visiting senior fellow at the Watson Institute of Brown University until December 2005.

HIS EXCELLENCY ANTONIO MASCARENHAS MONTEIRO, Republic of Cape Verde, was born on February 16, 1944 in Santiago Island, Cape Verde. Monteiro received his law degree from Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium and founded the Cape Verdean Bar Association. From 1980 to 1990, Monteiro served as president of the Supreme Court. Monteiro became the first democratically elected president of Cape Verde in 1991 and was re-elected for a second mandate in 1996, after receiving 80% of the vote. Since leaving the presidency, Monteiro remains very active in his home Republic and in encouraging democracy and good governance on the continent. In October 2003, he was invited to be a member of the Club of Madrid.

HIS EXCELLENCY ARISTIDES MARIA PEREIRA, Republic of Cape Verde, led Cape Verde in the transition from a colony to an independent nation. Pereira’s first major government job was chief of telecommunications in Guinea-Bissau. In 1956, Pereira co-founded the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC). From the late 1940s until Cape Verde’s independence, Pereira was heavily involved in the anti-colonial movement and rose through the hierarchy of his party. On July 6, 1975, he became Cape Verde’s first president, a position he held for three terms. He left the presidency in 1991. In addition to the critical role he played in Cape Verde’s independence, he also played a pivotal role in the founding of two other independent African nations: Guinea-Bissau and Namibia. In 1991, he led the movement to introduce multi-party elections in Cape Verde.

HIS EXCELLENCY FLIGHT LIEUTENANT JERRY JOHN RAWLINGS, Republic of Ghana, directed the destiny of Ghana for nearly twenty years. During that time, Ghana passed through momentous changes. In 1957, Ghana became the first sub-Saharan country to regain its independence. But, by the late 1970s, the economy was in catastrophic decline, corruption and inefficiency were rife and there was widespread disillusionment with the political system. In 1979, Jerry Rawlings entered national politics when he became the chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council. After holding power for a brief period the Council stepped aside and elections were held. However, the situation under the new civilian government showed no improvement. In the face of growing public discontent the civilian administration was replaced by the Provisional National Defense Council. Rawlings was its chairman. After eleven years, the country returned to democratic rule and Jerry Rawlings was elected the first president of the Fourth Republic. Rawlings was re-elected in December 1996. Throughout his presidency he retained his rank as flight lieutenant in the Ghanaian Armed Forces.
THE FORMER AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE

HIS EXCELLENCY DANIEL TOROTICH ARAP MOI, Republic of Kenya, was born on September 2, 1924 in the village of Kurieng’wo in Kenya. Moi trained as a teacher and lobbied for the creation of the Kenya National Union of Teachers which was formed and registered in 1957. Just before independence in 1961, Moi was appointed parliamentary secretary in the Ministry of Education and later served in the Ministry of Local Government in the coalition Government. In January 1967, Jomo Kenyatta appointed Moi as his vice president. Moi became president following the death of His Excellency Jomo Kenyatta on August 22, 1978. Moi served as Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for two consecutive terms. He has also been involved in mediation of various conflicts in Uganda, Congo, Somalia, Chad, Sudan, Mozambique, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Burundi, among others. On December 30, 2002, Moi handed over the reigns of power to Mwai Kibaki in a peaceful transition. Moi runs the Moi Africa Institute which addresses conflict resolution and management, AIDS, poverty and disease eradication in Africa.

HIS EXCELLENCY KARL AUGUSTE OFFMANN, Republic of Mauritius, born on November 25, 1940 served as president of the Republic of Mauritius from February 2002 until October 2003. Offmann began his political career in 1976 and served as minister of economic planning and development (August 1983), Minister of local government and co-operatives (1984-1986), minister of social security-national solidarity and reform institutions (January 1988-1991) and as Government Chief Whip (1998-1991). One of his first missions to Washington as minister of economic planning and development was to convince the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund not to press for drastic reductions in the civil service staff and to retain free education and free health services in Mauritius. His success in that mission had a decisive effect on the country’s progress and some ten years later on the “Mauritian Miracle”. Offmann went on to serve as president of the Movement Socialiste Militant party (MSM) from 1996 until 2000. Offmann has played a significant role in ensuring access to education, health care, and other social services. Offmann served as the Lloyd G. Balfour African President-in-Residence at the African Presidential Archives and Research Center (APARC) in 2004.

HIS EXCELLENCY JOAQUIM ALBERTO CHISSANO, Republic of Mozambique was born on October 22, 1939 in the village of Malehice in Gaza province of Mozambique. A strong student leader, he was appointed private secretary of President Eduardo Mondlane and his assistant in performing the duties of head of the department of education. As a result, he became a member of the Central Committee of the Front of Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO). On September 20, 1974, Chissano took office as prime minister of the transitional government that led Mozambique to its National Independence on June 25, 1975. He was later named minister of foreign affairs. With the tragic death of President Samora Machel in 1986, Chissano was elected president of the People’s Republic of Mozambique. In 1994, he won the first multiparty elections in the history of the country, and was re-elected president of the Republic in 1999. In July 2003, he was elected president of the African Union (AU). Chissano completed his term and stepped down as President of Mozambique in December 2004. As head of state, Chissano successfully led the deep socio-economic reforms in the country, mainly constituting the 1990 Constitution that led Mozambique to develop as a multiparty state with a free and open market.

HIS EXCELLENCY ALI HASSAN MWINYI, United Republic of Tanzania, was first elected president of Tanzania in November 1985 and was re-elected to a second five-year term in 1990. Born in Zanzibar, he trained as a teacher on the island and in Britain before returning to hold progressively important posts in education. Mwinyi joined the Ministry of Education and soon entered the government of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. Mwinyi held a variety of ministerial and ambassadorial posts until 1985. In 1990, he succeeded Mwalimu Nyerere as chairman of the ruling party, Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM). He initiated Tanzania’s political transition to a multiparty state. Following Tanzania’s first multiparty elections, Mwinyi completed his presidency in 1995 under the term limits of Tanzania’s constitution. In 2000, Mwinyi was appointed by Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa to head up the national effort in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Even in retirement, Mwinyi continues to play a vital role in the civic life of Tanzania as one of the nation’s most distinguished and beloved elder statesmen.

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA, Republic of Zambia, led Zambia to independence and served as the first president of the Republic. Kaunda held the office from 1964 to 1991. Formerly an educator, Dr. Kaunda began his political career as the founder and secretary of the Lubwa Branch of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1950. In 1958, Dr. Kaunda formed the Zambian African National Congress of which he became president. In 1960, Dr. Kaunda became president of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), a post he held until 1962, and again from 1995 to 2000. In addition to his efforts in Zambia, Dr. Kaunda was in the forefront of the efforts to liberate all of Africa and served as the president of the Pan African Freedom Movement for East, Central and Southern Africa (PAFMESCA) in 1962 and as chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) from 1970 to 1973. Dr. Kaunda also played key roles in the mitigation of territorial disputes between Kenya and Somalia and the liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. President Kaunda was the first Lloyd G. Balfour African President-in-Residence at the African Presidential Archives and Research Center (APARC) from September 2003 to November 2004.
A s defined in its executive summary, the Commission for Africa Report constitutes a coherent package for Africa, to be implemented with commitment, perseverance and speed in regards to Africa’s efforts to address poverty and development. Its components include suggestions for ways to promote economic strength and good governance across the continent. The report begins by highlighting a number of important elements and characteristics that constitute good governance, including capacity building, accountability, peace and security, and investment in the governed constituency. Its proposal for economic growth highlights the need to strengthen the investment climate throughout Africa by increasing spending on infrastructure, and implementing policies that promote economic development in agriculture and small enterprises.

The report concludes by exploring a critical question that is imperative if any of the report’s recommendations are to be implemented. That question is: Where will the money come from? In summary, the report acknowledges the need for a partnership between Africa and developed nations to facilitate improvement in economic growth and good governance on the continent.

The commission includes one serving president, two prime ministers, three finance ministers, one other minister, one former managing director of the International Monetary Fund, a few other luminaries, and one aging rock star. So, what is important about the report is that it has analyzed and presented a coherent set of arguments about the opportunities for the continent from a number of areas.

The report starts with a realization that if Millennium Development Goals (MDG) were all attained by 2015, Africa would still be way behind the rest of the regions of the world in developmental terms. The reality is that without an urgent and sizeable intervention, we will not attain the MDG by 2015. In fact, some analyses say that some of these targets will only be attained in 2169. Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region to have grown poorer in the world over the last thirty years. Thirty years ago, the per capita GDP in sub-Saharan Africa was about twice that of Southeast Asia. At the moment, our per capita GDP is half that of Southeast Asia. In 1980, Africa contributed about 6 percent to total world trade. Currently, we are down to 2 percent. In rough figures, every 1 percent accounts for something in the order of $70 billion. Unless there is a major intervention in the short term, that allows us to invest in development on the African continent, we’re going to be left further and further behind.

Also a very important point is that there have been a number of initiatives taken by Africans: the establishment of NEPAD, the birth of the African Union with a strong constitutive act, and the African peer review mechanism. These are African decisions that need to be valued by the rest of the world. Twenty-four of the fifty-three African states have signed up for the peer review mechanism and the fact of the matter is that 73 percent of Africa’s population is covered by the twenty-four countries that have signed up. So we’re in a very strong position.

The report also details success stories such as how the GDP per capita in Botswana has grown as aid has come down; how debt relief in Tanzania has positively impacted the educational system; and how debt relief has allowed for urban and rural investment in the people of Benin.

The report covers measurable change and what will trigger that change so the report should be received not just as a statement of beliefs but a set of proposals that can be practically implemented.

The African market is presently worth some $50 billion but it seems we prefer to trade with Europe and the United States versus with each other. There is untapped potential on the continent that we will have to unlock.

Macroeconomic performance has improved remarkably on the continent through tough structural adjustment. Macroeconomic stability is necessary but not sufficient to improve on the quality of life of people.

Examine the political geography of the African continent is extremely important. Almost every country that is successful has cities located on waterways yet we have so many landlocked countries on the African continent. This is the result of decisions taken in Berlin in 1886 about drawing the sovereign boundaries of the African continent. With so much landlocked sovereign territory in Africa, our development is going to be constrained and we have to deal
with this strategically.

The commission sought to understand trends. Among the most worrisome trend is the very rapid and untrammeled urbanization. Planning to receive people and to provide the necessary infrastructure that can improve the quality of life of the people is a big issue. In looking at this, we’ve tried to understand issues about capacity on the continent.

Another trend we discovered in our work is that there are more African engineers and scientists who live and work in the United States than on the continent itself. *We also discovered that we spend about $20 billion a year on hiring experts to do the work for which we have trained people, and they no longer are here to do it. So if we want to build the capability of states on the continent, then the way in which we relate to the Diaspora is very important.*

The commission understands that the productive sides of the economy must be enlarged in order to deliver education for all, meet the health requirements, combat disease and secure environmental sustainability.

The first of the broad objectives, governance and capacity building, revolves around the revitalization of African universities. We need to build our own capacity and invest in those great institutions of the African continent.

The commitments to accountability and transparency revolve around parliaments generally, the Pan African Parliament in particular, the media, and issues of corporate governance. All of these contribute to providing higher levels of transparency and accountability. The struggle against corruption is fundamental and exceedingly important. We also need other measures to prevent corruption on behalf of external and international parties. We ask companies, especially the oil companies, to publish what they pay and likewise governments to publish what they receive. If there are gaps, we would know immediately and money that is destined to help African development will not find its way into Swiss bank accounts, for instance.

Also we need to invest in developing information systems and building statistical capacity on the continent.

Infrastructure on the African continent is fundamental. It is limited and where it exists it tends to follow colonial patterns that are based on getting resources out at the first opportunity to add wealth somewhere else. Never has it been considered that we could and should be trading with each other and that our key markets are going to be on the African continent. So there is a big call for resources in this regard — $20 billion for infrastructure.

The issue of infrastructure is vital to unlocking the agricultural potential of the continent and is dealt with at some length in the report. We must try to diversify the agricultural base but this industry suffers due to lack of infrastructure. There are no roads, no irrigation, little access to fertilizers and over cultivated land that hinder one of Africa’s largest industries.

The report defines the causes of poverty according to political, structural, environmental and technological, human causes (like greed), and then the relationship with the developed world.

On the role of business, including the fostering of small business, there is a proposal to ensure that we have better support for small business and entrepreneurial development.

Environment and climate change, which are big issues because so much of Africa lies between the tropics, is covered in the report. We must have better early-warning systems because they relate to critical issues like food security.

The issue of peace and security is straight forward but there are some telling numbers. The price to bring the DRC to even keel was about $20 billion. Infrastructure destruction in one country, Rwanda, after the genocide of 1994 was $1 billion.

HIV and AIDS is touched on, but the focus of the report is that we actually need a health system that is capable of preventing cholera, that’s capable of dealing with malaria, that’s capable of dealing with gastrointestinal diseases and all manner of other diseases. We need all of that.

With respect to fair trade, the first thing we want to do is ensure that there is market access for that which we produce. The African Union’s regional economic communities have various trade arrangements and this is one of the obstacles to freeing up our economic potential because they can prevent a commonality of a market for us on this continent.

The issue of aid and debt relief — there’s $25 billion of aid flowing in at the moment, our debts on the African continent are $35 billion after HIPC. Every year we have to borrow to finance the debt service costs and every year we weaken our ability to deliver on the MDG. So the issues of debt relief are exceedingly important.

There’s a proposal led by the U.K. that we stop thinking of debt service costs as though we were high street bankers and start thinking from a developmental perspective. What improves the quality of life for people and where will that money come from? In October of last year the Paris Club wrote off more debt to Iraq than all HIPC debt relief here. So it can be done, if the political will is there.

Our big goal is an international financing facility; a front-loaded facility that is very clearly set up so that a resource for development on the African continent can be secured. If you can lock in tax law for all time, surely you can lock in commitment for development for all time. I am hoping that if an agreement can’t be struck in stone with the G8 heads of state meeting in July then at least those countries that are committed will demonstrate that it can be done.

There’s an ongoing struggle we have within the World Bank and the IMF regarding voice. For Africa, the World Bank and the IMF are the primary sources of finance, but we only have two of the twenty four chairs.

The word used repeatedly in the report, Your Excellencies, is a big push. It’s a risk-reward. It’s giving effect to what has been demonstrated by macroeconomics. It’s ability. It’s focusing on quality of life issues but also about strengthening our own multilateral institutions on the African continent. So, it’s taking our commitments to take partnership forward.

Seventy-five billion USD a year, we’re asking for the doubling from twenty-five to fifty by wealthy countries and then we have to marshal some $25 billion of Africa’s own resources. President Mbeki last Friday referred to a report that recalls the fact that in 1999 there was $107 billion of Nigerian private wealth invested in Europe. We looked at public pension funds and between just nine pension funds for state employees on the African continent there is a resource of about $120 billion.

We must deepen the African ownership of the report and we must together say to the rich world that the underdevelopment of Africa is a blot on your copybook. This generation will be judged for having failed to implement the decisions that its heads of state took at the Millennium Summit. This is the plan, entirely practical and well-documented.
I’d just like to say a couple of words about the international perception of Africa as opposed to what local journalists say about what happens within Africa itself.

I think we understand that one spin to the Commission for Africa Report that we heard about this morning is that Africa is needy. Africa is asking for debt relief. We’re asking for debt write-offs. We’re asking for help with AIDS.

These things are discussed in the media and the general public gets the message that Africa is always in trouble. All of these negative things give rise to negative perceptions in the media. These concerns are important, but the general public also needs to know about positive developments in Africa. There are many positive things that need to be propagated not only on the continent but in international media outlets, as well. For instance, South Africa has celebrated ten (going on eleven) years of democracy.

At the macro level, we really need to work harder helping Africa improve its international image while also focusing on the image of individual countries.

There is also a micro level and that is what the average individual citizen of a country does to help or hurt the image of their respective country. There are many South Africans, I speak as a South African, who are very negative about our country. They would like to leave. They ask their friends overseas, “help me get out of here”; and fall prey to the notion “the grass is greener on the other side”.

That sends a negative message. Nothing is more damning than Africans sending a negative message about Africa. I studied in the States. I chose to come back because I saw there was great hope and real momentum for Africa to improve itself. We need to encourage individual people — we need to show them that they need to send a positive message about their country and their continent because nobody else is going to do it for us.

One way to counter negative perceptions in the media is how we deal with tourists. Tourists should be embraced and treated well. They read the newspapers. The way that you treat your tourists is so much more powerful than an article they would read from a third party in the newspaper. If they come here and if they have a great time, trust me, they’re going to tell people that Africa is a wonderful place to live.

I have many international friends who come here and they love Africa. They love it. They might not live here but they have an extremely positive view about it and they spread the message. Engaging individuals through personal interaction is one of the most effective ways of improving the perception of this continent.
Established in 1993, the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) is at the forefront of strengthening and facilitating the commercial relationship between the United States and the African continent. CCA works closely with governments, multilateral groups and business to improve Africa’s trade and investment climate, and to raise the profile of Africa in the U.S. business community.

CCA members believe that Africa’s future success depends upon the ability of its entrepreneurs and business people to create and retain wealth through private enterprise. American corporations and private individuals can contribute most effectively by building partnerships and reaching out to the African private sector in the areas that America knows best: private enterprise, investment capital, technology transfer and management.

Since it’s founding, CCA has been the leading American nonprofit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to enhancing trade and investment ties between the United States and the 53 countries of Africa. The American companies that make up the Corporate Council on Africa represent nearly 85 percent of all U.S. private sector investment in Africa. There are 200 private sector firms-small, medium and large-that are members of CCA. Among them are DaimlerChrysler, Oracle, Merck, Chevron Texaco, GM, Caterpillar and Pfizer to name a few. Working groups include Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Angola and Southern Africa.

The CCA is currently planning trade missions to Libya, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mozambique and Gabon. CCA supports the passage and strengthening of AGOA and will be putting together the private sector component for The Fourth Annual AGOA Private Sector Forum which will be held in Senegal in July 2005. Likewise, CCA was called upon by the Blair Commission to offer private sector consultation to the Commission Members.

In June 2005, the CCA is hosting the bi-annual US-Africa Business Summit scheduled in Baltimore, Maryland, which is expected to be the largest event of its kind within the United States. The Summit strives to increase American investment throughout the African continent by increasing U.S. private sector awareness of the many commercial opportunities in Africa. It will also address specific policy issues that confront the U.S. private sector in the African marketplace. It is our aim that the U.S.-Africa Business Summit will help advance, in tangible terms, our common ambition of strengthening trade and investment ties between the United States and Africa.

One of the things that CCA focuses on in order to facilitate the development of economic partnerships is to look at factors that can contribute to or detract from this partnership like health, specifically AIDS and HIV.

CCA has a specific program with respect to HIV/AIDS that has been funded by the Gates Foundation. Additionally, one of CCA’s member companies, Merck, has chartered a very successful HIV and AIDS partnership with Botswana.

Merck is one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, a company that has a long history of research and development in important new medicines; but also a long and rich history in philanthropy including in Africa.

Merck collaborates with Indiana University and Moi University on the African Vaccine Training Initiative which is laying the foundation for the administration of HIV/AIDS vaccines for when they emerge, whether from Merck or other sources.

Another collaboration, the African Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnership (ACHAP) between Merck, the Gates Foundations and the Government of Botswana has existed for five years. The objectives of this partnership are to build institutional capacity for Botswana’s response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, thereby strengthening the Botswana health care system and expanding initiatives for education.

Merck is donating two of its top antiretroviral medicines and they’re freely available in Botswana. Botswana was chosen to serve as a national treatment model in Africa for a variety of reasons: prevalence of...
HIV/AIDS, manageable population size of 1.7 million people, an advanced infrastructure, a stable and transparent democratic government, political will from government officials, and the potential for sustainability.

Merck feels that public-private partnerships can catalyze the implementation of strategic interventions in Africa.

While the physical health of its people is critical to Africa’s renewal, so is the fiscal health of its private sector. Certainly the member institutions of CCA have a potential role to play in this regard. Support is critical from people outside the continent who have skills and experience. They could serve as mentors and perhaps provide capital, as well.

Despite improvements in the economic climate in developing countries around the world, there are difficulties and investors are discouraged. Given the potentially high return of investment in Africa, it is important to think about how to overcome these obstacles.

In Africa there is a particularly significant problem for the businesses, for entrepreneurs, the young people and the businesses they want to grow, and for investors. For people who make equity investments there are no exits because the public markets are not yet that developed. There are stock markets, but the only two that are sophisticated enough by global standards are in South Africa and Egypt. Others are growing but they’re not there for young growing companies.

It is unrealistic to expect these economies to attract the traditional kind of equity investors who invest around the world do today because they generally don’t deal with entities that do less than several million worth of business.

A new approach to investing is needed. Micro credit, when prevalent, builds businesses that may end up with five employees, or more on occasion. That is helpful to an extent but is not going to have the necessary multiplier effect in an economy or grow the economies of countries that we’re talking about. Local businesses — with capital sources that range anywhere from $100,000 to $3 million that would employ a lot of people and could grow if they had access to patient capital — is what is needed to develop the economies of sub-Saharan Africa.

We need to encourage and educate the donor organizations to understand that micro credit is not the only option. Patient capital, paired with technical assistance is important.

Angel investors are virtually unknown in Africa, or any of the developing world, but are desperately needed. Apple Computer was financed by Angel investors. America Online was financed by Angel investors. A good environment starts with the tone at the top.

Businesses cannot be built with only borrowed money on short terms with high interest and immediate repayment. Unfortunately, that’s the economic reality according to everybody I’ve met doing business in Africa.

Local governments that understand the issues and support their entrepreneurs are critical to growing Africa’s economies. It can be done and has been done in Egypt and Libya. They are not the same as sub-Saharan Africa but they have done it. In Egypt there is an investor’s one shop stop and the number of days to start a business is down from 100 to three. One can see every one of the thirty-two ministries on one floor and Arabic is readily translated. In short, private capital and capital-friendly environments are keys to growing Africa’s economies.

The following is a summary of the Millennium Challenge Corporation CEO Hon. Paul V. Applegarth’s presentation during a private meeting with the former African heads of state during the APARC African Presidential Roundtable 2005. A U.S. initiative, The Millenium Challenge Corporation’s (MCC) was established in January 2004 to administer the Millennium Challenge Account. U.S. Congress provided nearly $1 billion in initial funding for FY04 and $1.5 billion for FY05. An additional $3 billion has been requested for FY06 and a pledge to increase annual funding for the MCA to $5 billion in the future. Applegarth has had a distinguished career in the U.S. Government, the World Bank and the private sector and has consistently concentrated on development. He was confirmed as the first Chief Executive Officer of MCC on May 5, 2004.

It was a distinct honor and a privilege to participate in a roundtable discussion with this eminent group of African leaders. I used the occasion to speak broadly about international development and specifically about the work the Millenium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is undertaking in Africa. The conversation thus focused on the lessons of development, aid effectiveness in Africa, and how MCC is partnering with countries that have demonstrated a commitment to good governance, economic freedom and to investing in their people. I also used this opportunity to gather feedback from some of Africa’s leading spokesmen.

The Millenium Challenge Account was built on the lessons of development, and it has been consciously designed to be more flexible than traditional bilateral assistance. In addition to providing 100% grant funding, there are virtually no limitations on the types of programs that we can support as long as they contribute to poverty reduction through economic growth and emerge from a national consultative process.

The core principles of MCC were formed from three lessons of past development experience: 1) Aid is most effective when it reinforces sound political, economic and social policies — which are key to encouraging the inflow of private capital and increased trade — the real engines of economic growth; 2) Countries themselves must have greater ownership of the development process; and 3) Development programs must be result-focused.

Indeed, the development community has learned the hard way, from decades of often poorly performing development initiatives, that real sustainable poverty reduction and economic growth can take root only in countries that adopt and maintain good policies. Poverty reduction and growth have to be built from within; MCC can help to encourage that process. Toward this end, MCC rewards...
The world is not doing very well in meeting the challenge of Africa and the Millennium Development Goals; and we need to do better. The larger trends we see in the world give us the hope that the trajectory has the potential of coming to a turning point for the better in the next ten to twenty years.

If you will indulge me, let me ask you to partake in a little thought experiment. Imagine that the Earth is not multiple countries. I imagine that if the world were one country, it would be an extremely divided country; there are the few who have plenty and there are the many who have next to nothing. It would be an extremely poor country and an extremely degraded country in terms of the environment. The world, if it were one country, would be an extremely insecure country. There would be voter insecurity and energy insecurity. There would not simply be clashes, but ethnic violence, sectarian violence, and class violence.

If the world was a country, we would call it what we now call a Third World country. Therefore when we look at world problems, especially through the lens of the MDG, it is useful to think of the world as a single Third World country because then we can easily see that as a planet we have actually not done well. We as a species have actually not done well.

The MDG have been a ray of hope for many people not because they have achieved much, but because they brought the leaders of the world together to commit to doing something more about this planet of ours.

At the turn of the millennium, the world’s leaders met and decided that it was a shame that our generation which has been blessed with more than any other generation has done such a poor job. The leaders set for themselves a number of targets and goals and those are what are called the millennium development goals.

The first goal was on poverty and hunger, and the goal was that the world will halve the number of people who live on a dollar a day, in acute hunger and poverty, by 2020.

Goal number two covers primary education. The leaders pledged to each other that the world will ensure that by 2020 all girls and boys receive full primary education.

The third goal is that by 2020, the world will eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education.

The fourth goal concerns child mortality. The goal is that by 2020, the number of children who die before they reach age five, will be reduced by two thirds.

The fifth goal is about maternal health: by 2020, maternal mortality will be reduced by three quarters of what the rate was in 2000.

The sixth goal is that by 2020 the world will have halted or reduced the incidence of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.

The seventh goal is about environmental sustainability. In this case, there are not very clear targets, but simply that the world will integrate sustainable development principles. It was added at the World Summit of Sustainable Development, largely at the behest of the African Union, that a goal would be added about halving the number of people without safe drinking water.

These seven goals are actions that developing countries must take themselves. The rest of the world can help, but these are goals that can only be met by developing countries themselves. The only goal that applied in some ways to the industrialized world was goal number eight which can drive all the other goals — the goal of global partnerships.

In some ways, this meeting today is a manifestation of that sort of activity. Global partnerships in the MDG particularly mean open trade by 2020.

It is not that poverty is new; it is not that hunger is new; it is not that water has always been clean. What is new is that our generation is the first with the ability to do something about it. Otherwise future historians 500 years from now will look back at our generation with shame. We have the means, we have the technology, and we have the resources. We have a world with foodstuff surplus. Yet we have a world in which 700 million people do not get adequate food. The real challenge of the MDG is responding to the fact that we as a species have not lived up to our potential.

If we achieved all of the MDG, the world would still have one billion people living hungry and malnourished because our goal was that we would halve the number. We would still have 500 million people living with AIDS, more than we have today, even if the goal was achieved. We would still have 800 million people without safe drinking water. We would still have 800 million people living on a dollar a day.

What I’m trying to say here is that the challenge is large and we have to imagine even greater solutions.

How is Africa doing on the MDG? In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of people living on less than $1 a day has actually increased, and at this point does not seem to be decreasing.
On the primary education completion rate: Since accepting the MDG, an additional ten percent of boys and girls have actually gone into primary school. The ratio of girls to boys was supposed to become equal, and since accepting the goals the ratio has gone up by 20 percent. But time is running out.

In regards to mortality, the decrease has been essentially minimal: less than 2 percent. Maternal mortality has not changed. Therefore, we need to think seriously about what might be required so we can move toward the achievement of those goals.

There is in fact a great royal hope going through Africa that comes from three specific things. First, it comes from the fact that for the first time in the last fifty years, Africa is the subject of global attention and concern. One example of this is the Blair Commission report, a very thoughtful and thought-provoking document.

Another example is the recent meetings of the G-7 and the G-8 that have repeatedly taken on Africa and the concerns of African leaders. Discussions are going on now for the creation of a G-20, a leaders’ summit and the inclusion of a number of African countries.

The rest of the world is figuring out the importance of Africa, not just as an aid issue, but as a global development issue. The fact is in a globalized world, you cannot have large chunks of land and people who do not benefit from what is happening on the other front.

The second source of hope is in terms of the regional coming together of Africa. The sight of eleven African presidents, former presidents, from various countries sitting right here next to each other, talking about these things, is not a sight that we in South Asia, for example, are very used to. The activities that are happening within the African Union, African leaders taking on political disputes, development issues, growth issues, and environmental issues, within Africa, is a sign of positive change. It is not the rest of the world coming and helping Africa, but strengthening, encouraging, and allowing Africa itself as a continent to come together, which I say is a piece of envy for us in South Asia.

The third, and most positive element, comes from a recent set of books I edited called Civic Entrepreneurship. We collected 500 stories of how real people at the grassroots level were actually changing their own lives and the largest set of stories in that book comes from Africa. There are stories of people taking their own destiny, their own future, and their own lives.

We found these wonderful examples of the Campfire Program in Zimbabwe and Zambia, which has been extremely influential in bringing back the elephant populations in those countries. We found this wonderful, and amazingly sophisticated barter network in Kenya where communities and villages bypassed the official monetary system because they couldn’t fully partake in that. They created a barter system of exchanging goods and services based on traditional principles and meeting people’s needs. We found wonderful community management programs, run by villagers themselves in Tanzania. The list goes on and there are signs of hope.

I’ve given you a rather sad picture on the MDG but a rather hopeful political picture of Africa. What is it that the world can do, and how is it that the world and Africa can work together? There are four challenges before us: the challenge of trade, the challenge of aid, the challenge of voice, and the challenge of space.

The most important is the challenge of trade. Trade is the real equalizer. The world needs to get out of the way. The single best thing that the world can do for the developing countries is to remove the subsidies and trade distortions that happen here in the U.S. and in the E.U. on agriculture and other products.

Aid, the second challenge is an important temporary solution. It behooves the world, with the resources and the wealth we have to increase the amount of aid being given. The world really ought to be ashamed for not even meeting the “.7 percent goal” that we have been setting for ourselves. However, the challenge of aid is not just how much is given but how it is used. This is a challenge for industrialized countries and developing countries alike. The world has not done a good job either of giving or receiving aid in the last 50 years.

The third challenge is of voice for developing countries and better representation in the international organizations like the World Trade Organization, the United Nations and the Security Council.

And finally, there is the challenge of space, and I mean global policy space. Global policies have a greater impact in a globalized world. Developing countries in general, African countries in particular, do not have the necessary resources to partake in those policy dialogues. It’s not a question of not wanting to. It’s a question of not being able to. I represented my country, Pakistan, at the 1992 Earth Summit, and I remember a colleague from a small African country telling me that the net cost of participation in the one meeting was higher than his annual salary. It is a capacity issue.

The meshing of environment and development produces sustainable development. Global partnerships have to be made by merging the realities of the poor in the developing world and the convictions of the affluent in the affluent world. This merger cannot be an either-or, an antagonism, or a debate but a joint endeavor. A joint endeavor that is mutually beneficial so that the person looking at our planet from space ten years from now no longer sees the planet as a Third World country.
The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) is a vision and strategic framework for Africa’s renewal. NEPAD is designed to address the current challenges facing the African continent. Issues such as escalating poverty levels, underdevelopment and the continued marginalization of Africa needed a new radical intervention, spearheaded by African leaders, to develop a new vision that would guarantee Africa’s Renewal. NEPAD’s vision is the eradication of poverty in Africa; sustainable growth in all African countries; Africa’s full integration into the global economy; and the empowerment of African women.

NEPAD’s key duties include operating the African Peer Review Mechanism, facilitating infrastructure, development programs, agricultural development and food security program, facilitating economic reforms and debt relief, and ensuring that the Millennium Development Goals in the areas of health and education are met.

The Commission for Africa initiatives represent a synergy with NEPAD in a number of ways, particularly to the extent that the two summarize the striking poverty that affects half of the African population. A second synergy between the two initiatives is that there is a particular emphasis placed on prioritizing infrastructure development in order to drive economic development in Africa.

One aspect that is very clearly emphasized in the Commission for Africa Report is the problem of debt cancellation. NEPAD has not made that a ranking priority although sooner or later that will happen. Debt cancellation is a very important aspect, and personally I have to say that I am enthused by the Commission’s suggestion for 100% debt cancellation for Africa. Debt payment strangles development in Africa. Africa needs to be able to release more resources in Africa and to make investments in priority areas outlined by NEPAD.

All the representatives of the private sector who spoke know that both the African leaders and civil society in Africa are concerned with the participation of the African private sector in NEPAD’s implementation. This is a fundamental element, and I think that African leaders will continue to work to mobilize the private sector constantly so that they can help to implement NEPAD. I think that on this point really there’s no doubt the private sector in Africa has its own role to play in implementing NEPAD. The private sector in Africa can help make NEPAD’s priorities real and NEPAD hopes to create a symbiotic relationship here. The NEPAD Secretary is taking steps to promote participation of the African private sector in all African countries. There is what we call, the African Businessmen Roundtable, which only includes businessmen from the private sector in Africa. It meets in order to promote private investment from Africans for Africa. There is also what we call the NEPAD businessmen’s group. It is also an institution which was founded in order to mobilize and motivate the African and international private sectors to help achieve the goals of NEPAD. If a respective country launches new initiatives to attract private investment, there is no reason why the international and African private sectors shouldn’t take steps to create businesses to take advantage of these opportunities and incentives.

There is an opportunity to make money in Africa and for this capital to be reinvested in Africa. NEPAD has been designed in order to further develop existing regions on the African continent. It is not an initiative that aims to promote development within our specific countries. We’re targeting the region as workspace and the concrete results with respect to the implementation of NEPAD can be seen at the level of our respective African regions. In West Africa for instance, we had to establish a short-term action plan which included changes to the border between Togo and Burkina Faso and improvement of roads between Mali and Senegal. This type of accomplishment indicates concrete results from the implementation of NEPAD. On the national level, it is difficult to notice any concrete results from the implementation of NEPAD. Another initiative, the peer assessment mechanism in Africa, emphasizes the integral approach of NEPAD. It is a very original idea and will enable us to strengthen democracy, good governance, and respect of human rights continent wide.

Communication indeed is one of the priorities defined by NEPAD. The accent was put on information technology but communication remains one of the priorities of NEPAD. In terms of media, African leaders must disseminate the message that NEPAD is imperative to the future of Africa. We have to disseminate this message, especially in Africa but also outside of Africa. Communication must remain a constant priority for the implementation of NEPAD.

African leaders and those in the public and private sector should support an awareness campaign. In-depth awareness has to be established about NEPAD. We need to understand and show that Africa is no longer this continent where there is only war and famine. Most newspapers in the United States and here still present Africa in this light. Africa is not only that anymore. Africa is a continent that’s moving. Each one of us has to assume responsibility and show that efforts are being made to get Africa out of its situation of underdevelopment. It is afflicted with many problems but the conflicts are being resolved. This is a great satisfaction to all the countries. President Chissano said “Is it possible that we could’ve imagined that one day Somalia could go to the African Parliament and elect a Head of State?” Somalia was in chaos but due to will, order has been established and today Somalia has become what it once was, a state.
countries that have taken the difficult steps to cultivate these policies on their own. Through this approach MCC hopes to fulfill its creed in Africa and around the world: “To reduce poverty through growth.”

At the roundtable I explained to the former heads of state that MCC chooses its partner countries by comparing the policies of the poorest countries in the world. We select countries that are actively fighting corruption, investing in health and education, and promoting economic freedom. The rankings we use are objective; they come from respected international institutions, such as Freedom House, Transparency International, the Heritage Foundation, and the World Bank.

MCC is a global program and to date a total of seventeen countries have been invited to submit a proposal for a Compact. Thirteen more have been asked to participate in MCC’s Threshold program, which is designed to improve specific weaknesses in states that narrowly miss qualifying for the larger pool of Compact funds. These 30 countries were selected from a field of 82 candidates. I noted to the group that more than half of the Compact countries are African: Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, and Senegal. Seven more, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi, Sao Tome & Principe, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia participate in the Threshold program.

In closing, I emphasized to the group how significant it is that 16 of 30 MCC’s potential partner eligible countries are African. There is a lot of good news coming out of Africa today, although it doesn’t necessarily get the publicity it deserves. I believe that the people and the governments of these countries should be commended for taking the sometimes difficult steps toward building a policy environment that provides the most benefits to all citizens.

Since the time of this meeting, MCC’s Board has approved over $600 million of Compact and pre-Compact funding for 8 countries: including, in Africa, Madagascar, Cape Verde, Ghana, Lesotho and Senegal. Madagascar and Cape Verde both have completed Compacts with MCC, each for nearly $110 million.