

**STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY THROUGH NEPAD:  
The Role of African Civil Society**



**Report of the conference held 26 – 27 May 2003  
Johannesburg, South Africa**

**The meeting was organized by the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa with funding from DANIDA and the New Zealand Official Development Assistance.**

# 1 Executive Summary

In view of the current development on the African continent with the advent of the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD) and the importance of citizen participation in the process, the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) has initiated an African civil society process of popularizing and engaging with the process. Through the financial support of DANIDA and New Zealand Official Development Assistance in South Africa, EISA hosted a three-day conference on the role of African civil society in strengthening democracy through NEPAD. The main recommendations emanating from the conference among others include: the establishment of a Pan-African Civil Society Network on Governance to be hosted by EISA, publicity and public debate on NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism; information sharing among civil society organizations on NEPAD and African Peer Review Mechanism; establishment of a working group to work with EISA and oversee the process; and establishment of regional nodes to improve coordination. A working group was established at the end of the conference.

This report provides a detailed account of the conference deliberations including the main resolutions and recommendations.

## 2 Introduction

The African continent has undergone momentous political change since the last decade. Throughout the whole continent, non-elected and authoritarian regimes of both civilian and military varieties are being replaced by elected and democratic regimes. Whereas the former drew their legitimacy and credibility from coercion (bullet), the latter draw theirs from persuasion (ballot). In this process of democratisation the role of civil society organizations is seen as crucial in ensuring broader participation of various stakeholders in the process. The key element of governance in Africa is obviously the extent to which the process is institutionalized effectively and sufficiently. Linked to this point, of course, is the extent to which civil society agencies get adequately involved and included in any existing institutional framework for governance such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

### 2.1 *Background*

The background to the conference centres around the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). NEPAD is the latest in a host of concerted efforts by African leaders to attempt to find both economic and political solutions to the continent's vexed problems of development since decolonisation in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The NEPAD

initiative is a hybrid of three main development strategies, namely the UNECA Compact for Africa, Millennium for Africa's Economic Recovery Programme and OMEGA Plan. This continental initiative, which was endorsed in 2001 Summit of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) in Lusaka, Zambia, was ultimately adopted wholesale during the inaugural summit of the African Union in Durban, South Africa in 2002. NEPAD identifies four major developmental areas for the continent. These are:

- the peace and security initiative;
- the democracy and political governance initiative;
- the economic management and corporate governance initiative; and
- the regional cooperation and integration initiative.

The NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) in its 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of June 2002 held in Rome, Italy approved the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance following the adoption of the African Peer Review Mechanism in its previous meeting of March. In respect of the Declaration, NEPAD commits African states to the following principles:

- to adopt clear codes, standards and indicators of good governance;
- to accountable, efficient and effective civil service;
- to ensure the effective functioning of parliaments and other accountability institutions;
- to the establishment and strengthening of parliamentary committees and anti-corruption bodies; and
- to ensure independence of the judiciary system is able to prevent abuse of power and corruption.

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) emanates directly from the above principles and its overall purpose is to allow African states monitor and observe each other on progress (or lack thereof) towards democratic governance. Its primary objective is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated continental and regional cooperation and integration. The APRM is planned to evolve through four stages namely:

- stage one involves a study of the political, economic and corporate governance and development environment in each country prepared by the APRM Secretariat;
- stage two involves country visits by the Review Team for purposes of carrying out wide-ranging consultations with key stakeholders including both state and non-state actors;
- stage three involves the preparation of country reports by the Review Team on the basis of both the preliminary studies and country-based

consultations and this will also allow responses to the report by governments concerned; and

- stage four involves the submission of the Review Team's report and responses from governments to the Heads of State and Government through the APRM Secretariat who are expected to consider and adopt the final report. On the face value, this seems a noble initiative and sounds fairly straightforward and easy to implement. However, controversy still dogs the implementation of the APRM.

Since the on-set of democratization in Africa which began in earnest during the early 1990s, the most glaring and vigorously debated aspect of this momentous development has been elections. The focus on elections in the democracy debate should not give the erroneous impression that elections *per se* are ipso facto synonymous with democracy. Put differently, elections do not amount to democracy even though they form an important component or ingredient of democratization as it were. An election, in and of itself, cannot provide a sufficient anchor upon which democracy could be predicated. A lot more ingredients are required for democracy to be nurtured and consolidated. However, the value of elections to a democracy is surely beyond any shadow of the doubt even among the strident cynics of multi-party democracy today. Elections play a valuable role to any democracy including:

- allowing the electorate to choose freely their national and local leaders;
- renewing or terminating the mandate of those leaders after a constitutionally determined tenure of office;
- according both central and local government national and international legitimacy and credibility;
- assuring the national and local leadership the moral title to rule on behalf of the electorate;
- ensuring accountability of leaders to the people, representation of the governed by the government, participation of the people in the governance process through ballot rather than bullet politics.

There is no doubt that the nurturing and consolidation of democracy in Africa requires concerted and collaborative efforts of various stakeholders including civil society. It is crucial that all parties including governments recognize and accept this stark reality. The governance process as well as the democratization project will not reach their logical conclusion and achieve desired results if these complex processes could be perceived as the sole purview or preserve of governments alone. A whole range of stakeholders should be included in both processes of governance and democratization in order to ensure inclusivity, representativity, accountability, transparency and legitimacy of responsible institutions and systems.

The Electoral Institute of Southern Africa, a not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to strengthen electoral processes, good governance, human rights and democratic values through research, capacity building, advocacy and other

targeted interventions organized a conference on *Strengthening Democracy Through NEPAD: The Role of African Civil Society*, from the 25 – 27 May 2003 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

## **2.2 Objectives**

The conference brought together from different regions across Africa, experts, opinion leaders and practitioners from within Civil Society to explore and share concrete problems, possible solutions and best practices in the context of *Strengthening Democracy through NEPAD*. The specific objectives of the conference were to:

- Identify the organisational needs of African civil society to engage with NEPAD and the APRM and recommend solutions to meet the needs; and
- Develop a plan of action for the effective participation of African civil society in NEPAD and the APRM processes.

### **3 Official Opening and Keynote Address: Mme Nthloi Motsamai**

Mme Speaker Nthloi Motsamai, *Speaker of the National Assembly of Lesotho & Chairperson of the SADC Parliamentary Forum*, delivered the keynote address focussing on the place of elections and the role of civil society in the democratisation process.

#### **3.1 Elections as key element of governance**

She started by positioning the role of elections in the democratisation process. She defined elections as procedures by which communities choose representatives who will hold the national office. They are a mechanism through which the will of people is expressed. They are a fulfillment of democracy, which in turn must be founded on an unwavering commitment to fundamental human rights. This is encapsulated in Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 as follows:

*"Everyone has the right to take part in the government of their countries, directly or indirectly, through freely chosen representatives. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government, this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures."*

She then pointed to the fact that good governance that NEPAD strives to achieve can not be achieved without successful elections. As such elections become a very important basic element of governance. Electoral process is therefore a national Barometer, that needs to be managed meticulously at all times, by all concerned. She stressed for the necessity of election process to enjoy public confidence and integrity. Referring to the SADC Parliamentary Forum, she said the SADC PF has as one of its priorities the establishment of a strong election monitoring machinery. This was identified as an integral part of the Forum's democracy and good governance programme that would guarantee a meaningful role in ensuring free and fair elections. As a result thereof a document known as the Norms and Standards for Election Observation in the SADC countries was developed. It provides the guidelines, which are used to assess whether the electoral process has been free and fair.

#### **3.2 The critical role of Civil Society**

Mme Nthloi Motsamai went on to emphasise that Civil society plays a critical role in strengthening democracy in that, it brings about the movement from a bureaucratic administration to a more representative administration. Civil society brings about active co-operation and an ongoing commitment in the process of

policy formulation and implementation between politicians, senior management, frontline workers, and citizens. Civil society encourages the divergence from the traditional regime-driven policy process to one where there is a multiplicity of negotiated determinants of the problem identification, formulation of policy principles, setting of objectives, development of options according to agreed criteria, and the formulation of an implementation strategy. The manner in which this is done and the contribution at various stages in the process characterize democracy. The dynamism of linkages underscored above ascribes to democracy as being about partnerships of all stakeholders in an endeavor to bring about synergies of efforts and resources.

She further argued that civil society strengthens democracy through fostering of complex relationships, not only among different institutions of state, but among all the stakeholders, from the most powerful titans to the poorest and most vulnerable people on society's margins. By strengthening democracy, civil society is indeed strengthening a key ingredient of the NEPAD initiative, subsequently this has a net effort of sustainable peace, security, stability, and development. It is therefore incumbent upon the members of the African civil society to take up the challenge tonight, use the next two days to seek ways and means of developing appropriate practical strategies and mechanisms for engagement in NEPAD and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), intended for monitoring of the observance or lack thereof of the rules of game among members. APRM is seen as yet another important factor in strengthening democracy in our respective countries. It should be recalled that democracy is universally recognized ideal as well as a goal. It is a basic citizen right to be exercised under conditions of freedom and equality. Therefore achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between women and men in the conduct of the affairs of society.

## **4 Summary of Panel Presentations and Plenary Discussions**

### **Session 1: The Democratization Process in Africa**

Chair: Professor Tom Lodge, South Africa

Dr. Khabele Matlosa of SAPES Trust presented a paper that examined democratic consolidation in Africa from the Southern African perspective. He argued that the democratization process in Africa should be judged not by the frequency of elections or changes in government, but by the improvement in economic well-being of the people. While important strides have been made toward establishing democratic governance in Africa generally, and in Southern Africa in particular, more work needs to be done to make African democratic systems more conducive to development.

An important task in evaluating democratic consolidation, therefore, is the link between democracy and poverty reduction. Beginning with a review of Africa's history of authoritarian governance since independence, Matlosa's paper moved on to a critique of the development model now dominant in Africa. He argued that NEPAD demonstrates the position of political elites in Africa today — they would like to pursue autonomous development paths, but in practice their policies are neo-liberal and dependent.

Dr. Tandeka Nkiwane in her paper scrutinizes the crucial role played as defenders of democracy by African election observers and its future role in strengthening and supporting electoral processes in Southern Africa. She argues that African civil society is responsive to the political circumstances of their states, thus are able to hold their states accountable to the substantive issues of democracy. Similarly, that African civil society as defenders of democracy has the responsibility and credibility to re-interrogate the crucial debate around the content of democratic practice within the context of local, regional, and international election observation because elections in Africa are often characterized by polarization of voices and interest. This provides the necessary precedence for civil society to critically re-examine the legal framework guiding elections in Africa, which often leads to impracticable and inefficient electoral management and administration practices. The challenge, therefore, she contends lies in civil society appropriating the space claimed by international state and non-state actors in judging electoral processes in Africa.

Mr. Daniel Pienaar from the Democracy and Governance program at the Human Sciences Research Council presented a paper prepared by himself and his colleague, Dr. Doreen Atkinson, entitled Thinking Globally and Acting Local: NEPAD and Local Government. The paper argued that the type of governance, and, specifically, service delivery envisaged by NEPAD, should start at the local level. The paper pointed to challenges at the local level and how they correspond with NEPADs 'sectoral priorities', including the delivery of infrastructure and social services, integrated development planning and service delivery, the devolution of functions to municipal government, intergovernmental fiscal flows, and promoting an effective customer interface.

During the subsequent discussion, Professor Tom Lodge who was the discussant, agreed with Dr. Matlosa that democratic progress should be judged by development criteria, and that there was a need to have an economic dimension to democratic progress. Countries that fail to do this remain vulnerable to democratic reversals. Unfortunately, Africa's decade of democratization shows little evidence of developmental democracy, Professor Lodge said. Poverty and economic inequality in many African countries is getting worse. Uganda has had some economic success, but Uganda in no way conforms to the liberal democracy prescribed to Africa. Professor Lodge criticized Dr. Khabele's paper reference to the Zimbabwean land reform program as an example of developmental democracy, noting that land reform can be carried out well or badly, and expressed doubt that Zimbabwe's land reform program will bring about a real reduction in poverty.

Other contributors commented further on the connection between politics and economics, and argued that it was important for civil society to engage in the economics of NEPAD. One contributor stressed the need for civil society to assess whether NEPAD can help bring ordinary people into integrated national and continental markets, and another argued that an important role for civil society will be to serve as a link between citizens and the corporate world. Another contributor stressed the centrality of accountability. Because successful development cannot be achieved with corrupt leadership, the essential link between democracy and development is the ability to hold representatives accountable. Others concentrated on the challenges Africa's economic problems present to the democratization that NEPAD promises. These challenges include the difficulty of building democracy in countries where the population consists of 85% peasants, and the difficulty of holding elected officials accountable when a majority of voters in Africa are illiterate. Civil society can help address some of these challenges through, for example, voter education.

Professor Lodge noted that Atkinson and Pienaar's paper presented an administrative picture of local government, one that focused on 'customer interface,' and risked seeing local government only as a vehicle for spreading the functions of the central government. He argued that this approach fails to address the idea that local government should be about local politics. He also noted, however, the fact that real local autonomy carries the risk that local elites will capture and abuse local resources. Several contributors joined with Professor Lodge in stressing the weaknesses of seeing local government only as an administrative function. Contributors noted, for example, a "technocratic obsession," and the fact that politics in South Africa, for example, have increasingly concentrated on presidential priorities. There was agreement that local elections should also be given priority.

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## **Session 2: The Institutional Framework for Civil Society's Inclusion in Governance**

Chair: Dr. Bulhan Hassen, Somaliland

Dr Rod Alence, from the Department of International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, presented a paper that considered the empirical relationship between democratization and the quality of governance. Recognizing that observers from both sides of the structural adjustment debate have agreed that poor governance in Africa harms development, the paper sought to identify how political institutions affect governance. Based on quantitative analysis of 73 developing countries, including 29 African countries, and controlling for income and region, he found that democratic political competition does tend to be associated with better governance. However, this correlation depends on an indirect relationship. Democratic political competition tends to increase the presence of institutional checks on executive authority, which are in turn

correlated with improved public service and reduced corruption. Controlling for the impact of institutional checks on executive authority, political competition has no independent effect on the quality of governance. The data demonstrated no evidence of 'African exceptionalism.' Instead, the relationships between political competition, checks on executive discretion, and good governance appear to be very similar in Africa and developing countries in other regions. These findings point to the conclusion that an important role for civil society in improving governance in Africa could be in helping to define the limits of executive discretion.

Mr. Noel Kututwa, Deputy Director of the Human Rights Trust of Southern Africa in Zimbabwe, presented an outline of civil society's participation in governance institutions. Defining civil society as the group of organizations whose members are engaged in non-state activities, he contrasted civil society with political society and economic society, but he observed that civil society draws its character from its interaction with these other spheres. He noted several ways that civil society can contribute to better governance, including strengthening institutions, ensuring government accountability, and creating partnerships to allow for the participation of all stakeholders. He cited several ways that civil society could achieve these objectives, including the creation of dialogue, training, and advocacy. He cited challenges to meeting these objectives, including the fact that civil society is often not taken seriously by government, the difficulty in acquiring sustained funding given the risk of donor fatigue, as well as the fact that civil society is sometimes preoccupied with criticizing the government, and that members of civil society organizations sometimes pursue their personal interests ahead of social interests. He noted that while it can serve democracy, civil society is not democratically elected.

During the discussion, several contributors joined with Dr Alence in stressing the importance of restraints on executive discretion, the diversity of political circumstances in Africa makes it difficult to draw general conclusions about the role of civil society in governance institutions across the continent. In some cases, formal political contestation exists, but this competition does not include all of the essential features of democracy.

Contributors from Somaliland and Swaziland highlighted the particular difficulties facing all social groupings, including civil society organizations, in political environments that are hostile to democracy. In Somalia, where a repressive and violent regime and eventual state collapse lead to the secession of Somaliland in 1991, political elites as a class were predatory. However, the subsequent history of Somaliland demonstrates that power is not impermeable, and that civil society can create its own space. In Swaziland, democratic freedoms are prohibited by law, although political organizations such as Pudemo are trying to open space for civil society to interact with the institutions of governance. While one contributor criticized Dr. Alence's reliance on literature that emphasizes the neo-patrimonial nature of African politics, Dr. Alence stressed that he considered his paper a critique of that literature, noting the lack of evidence for 'African exceptionalism.'

In response to Mr. Kututwa's presentation, contributors pointed out the need to sharpen the definition of civil society, highlighting the fact that civil society is neither homogeneous nor consensual. Because of its heterogeneous nature it is difficult to talk of civil society working coherently in the public interest, as different parts of civil society define the public interest differently. Several contributors disagreed with Mr. Kututwa's assertion that civil society is not democratic, stressing that leaders of civil society organizations do represent the membership of those organizations, and are democratic in that sense.

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### **Session Three: NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)**

Chair: Dr. Stephen Gelb, South Africa

This Session reviewed and assessed the political components of NEPAD and in particular assessed whether the African peer review mechanism can enhance democratic consolidation in Africa.

Dr. Chris Landsberg, Director of the Centre for Policy Studies, argued that the simple answer is no, and a more nuance answer is that this question is based on the wrong premise. If the APRM is intended to help consolidate democracy in Africa than it is based on the assumption that democracy is already established. The APRM, the paper asserted, is not intended to promote democratic consolidation, if anything the APRM was seen as a socializing tool to encourage best practices and to reward good behavior. It is not intended to be a punitive tool or measure; what it should do then is to encourage, help nurture and promote the further democratization of the continent.

He further stated that the APRM has created false expectations. There is an expectation that the APRM will replace conditionality and that it will become the agency to whip deviant states into line. This is not so, as the paper contended the APRM is designed as a socializing instrument, one that would encourage states to learn from, emulate each others good conduct, best practices and democratic behavior. The paper gave a brief overview of the kind of political agenda currently emerging from Africa. More recently, the presenter stated that the process of setting up the AU, establishment of NEPAD, the design of the peer review mechanism, restructuring process of SADC and ECOWAS are all attempts to break with the past; addressing the question of how Africans should be governed. He concluded by indicating that the Peer review Mechanism if properly handled and implemented can make important contributions in the area of Africa's governing elites, although it faces a number of risks at hand. On the one hand the presenter argued the APRM is seen as promising too much and on the other there is a real risk that some African leaders will see it as a legitimizing tool for all their old political and economic malpractices.

Dr Stephen Gelb, the Executive Director of the Edge Institute presented a paper on South Africa, Africa and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The paper argues that NEPAD, formerly known as the New African Initiative (NAI) can add most value in terms of enhancing prospects of development by focusing on multilateral governance processes. It represents an invaluable opportunity to civil society to enable it to contribute to the development trajectory. The paper indicated a number of reasons why NEPAD needed to focus on governance. These were that African states were weak and proved unable to implement development policies in the post colonial era. A number of challenges were pointed out by the presenter to explain why this may be the case for most African states. A number of problems with interstate relations were carried forward to the post colonial period which weakened the possibility of strong states emerging in Africa. These were further weakened by the policies and politics of Breton Woods' institutions. The presenter offered several recommendations/suggestions on how the APRM should be governed/instituted. The APRM's focus should not be on imposing conditionality, it should focus on government processes. It needs to involve institutions that encapsulate governance in society; institutions which enable transparency and accountability. He further pointed out that the APRM should be voluntary and not compulsory, but countries must be ready to pay a certain price for their involvement. This price could even be a partial cessation of sovereignty. He concluded by pointing to a number of challenges that NEPAD will face during its implementation. Firstly the presenter argued, that states in Africa are weak, and these are most likely to oppose NEPAD and its various quarters to promote good governance. This is a political conflict that will need to be addressed. Secondly there is the issue of competing priorities within NEPAD. The presenter emphasizes that the focus of NEPAD should be on good governance, although not all would agree. And lastly the G8 and the rest of the industrialized countries will need to play a crucial and ongoing role; however issues regarding coordination of aid, problems of aid delivery and debt relief processes will need to be addressed before their role can be determined.

In response to these papers the participants raised a number of questions and made some corresponding remarks to the issues raised in the presentations. A few questions were asked on whether there was anything comparable/similar to the APRM in Africa? A few participants remarked that they were uncertain if the APRM would demonstrate anything different to what is being understood now, they asked to know what the real incentive for undergoing the APRM was. Others also raised concerns on who owns NEPAD. There has been talk about African countries not fully subscribing to the principles of NEPAD.

Other contributors argued that the focus in NEPAD should be on political governance, and this happens to be the weakest area in NEPAD. The APRM does not provide space for civil society. The only chance NEPAD and the APRM had for being different from the past if they functioned outside the AU.

Some stated that it was important to revisit the thinking behind NEPAD. The pretension in something new lies in the fact that there is a new engagement

between partners. There is a subtle shift in position. Also NEPAD is predicated on building comparative advantage; there are some fundamental issues that need to be resolved, such as there has to be an amount of civil authority, there must be interference from the civil society. African civil society must hold leadership accountable and the APRM must be made punitive.

The participants finally concluded their remarks by asking the presenters to enlighten them more on the external factors to the NEPAD process. It has been said that there is a lot of involvement of the G8 in NEPAD, who are constantly liaising with the NEPAD secretariat in South Africa. Some of the participants needed clarification on the relationship between NEPAD's framework and the World Bank vision; and the similarities that might exist.

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## **Session 4: Electoral Practice and Democracy in Africa**

Chair: Ms. Katy Diop, Senegal

Festus Okoye, presented a paper entitled *"Civil Society and Democratization in Africa: The Nigerian Experience"*, in which he examines the development, role and limitations of Human Rights and Pro-democracy NGOs in Nigeria. He argued that the civil society, including labour movement and other professional association played a very critical role in bringing an end to military dictatorship in Nigeria. Although, most human rights and pro-democracy groups are structurally weak and lack the requisite capacity for deepening democratic governance, nevertheless, they continue to play a critical role in fostering democracy in Nigeria. The civil society groups through the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) formed a local election monitoring group to observe the election processes in Nigeria. TMG deployed a total of 10,000 monitors to observe the 2003 general election. It is critical that domestic observers defines clearly their own understanding of "free and fair elections," and develop a common set of criteria for assessing the outcome of elections.

Denis Kadima, presented a paper entitled *"Elections and Democracy in Africa: The Need for Common Standards for the African Peer Review Mechanism"*. Descriptive in nature, the paper highlights the problems facing electoral administration in Africa – structural and procedural. Kadima suggested a need for mainstreaming election norms and standards into the *Peer Review Mechanism* (APRM) as a tool for assessing electoral processes in Africa. The election norms and standards argue presented an avenue for civil society on the continent to participate in the formulation and implementation of APRM.

During the ensuing discussion participants expressed concerns over various issues related to the conduct of free and fair elections in Africa. Amongst are: voter apathy and appropriate level of voter turn out for elections; freedom of association; organizational weaknesses within political parties contesting election; need for political parties to abstain from elections that are considers

unfair; role of security forces in elections; and assess and regular update voters roll. Participants further postulate the need for conceptual clarity on the dichotomy between rural-urban civil society in African society and ways of incorporating community based agencies through popularizing APRM as an entry strategy into NEPAD processes.

The presenters generally agreed with the concerns expressed by the participants. Festus Okoye however noted the need for civil society to engage security forces in dialogue and in wide spread civic education on their role in elections as agents of peace and stability. Voters roll need to regularly update because people die everyday and minors become adult. One effective mechanism for cleaning voters roll is to have a national population bureau linked to electoral commission which would be responsible for issuing identity document and death certificate.

## 5 Main Resolutions and Recommendations of the Conference

### 5.1 Resolutions

The need to identify the organizational and networking constraints and strategies facing African Civil Society in order for them to engage in the APRM constituted the main finding of the conference.

Constraints identified:

- Lack of understanding of NEPAD and APRM propositions. Mostly because NEPAD was conceived and drafted exclusive of civil society
- Different levels of understanding of NEPAD, fragmented at continental, national and regional levels
- Lack of funding
- Lack of coordination with regards to civil society

Strategies proposed:

- Generate awareness consciousness
- Engage in ensuring publicity and information sharing between countries
- Generate reports on the state of democratic governance on the continent
- Identify NEPAD nodes in countries to be liaised with EISA in conjunction with the Initiative's objectives
- Identified a need for a mechanism to filter through the different stages of how civil society can operate
- Civil society needs to define and clarify the areas where they can partnership
- Lobby for the meaningful inclusion of civil society in the APRM team
- Identify existing expertise
- Submit names of experts on the issues involved
- Begin preparations of involvement for civil society on the team
- Develop own report to assess new recommendations or if its in agreement with the government
- Develop Action plan for implementing report
- Copy and disseminate report, make it available
- Simplify, translate and open up debate for report at the grass root level
- Lobby for inclusion in national plans, to be relevant in the areas various governments are interested in
- Having a line of communication and establishing links among civil society is usually a problem, therefore the following areas are needed:
  - Establish focus person/groups
  - EISA to plan to reach 2/3 umbrella organizations in each country
  - Create a data base for easy access

- Establish a programme to assess progress
- To be engaged in norms and standards of credible governance
- Engage in research
- Network among ourselves
- Continuously train and retrain
- Engage in civic education
- Resource mobilizations
- Lobby to be heard
- Monitoring and evaluation: Continuously ask ourselves where we are; are we strategizing; are we on track?
- Establish a mechanism for coordination at the national, regional and continental level, to guide civil society to a common understanding
- Need a data base to inform civil society of who is doing what
- Need partnerships with national parliaments
- Work with existing structures such as SADC PF
- Address the relationship between foreign and domestic observers to establish a similar documenting framework
- Recognize the need for a forum coordinated by EISA to link up with NEPAD secretariat and to come up with a declaration
- Ensure different strategies to work towards empowering civil society at all levels
- Include marginalized groups; the notion of inclusivity should apply at all levels

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The main recommendations emanating from the conference were:

- Establishment of a Pan-African Civil Society Network on NEPAD on Governance
- Establishment of a working group as some form of a steering committee to oversee the process;
- Publicity and public debate on NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism;
- Sharing of information among civil society organizations on NEPAD and African Peer Review Mechanism;
- Establishment of regional nodes to improve coordination; and
- Issue a Conference Communiqué to formalize the meeting

## **6 The Way Forward**

### **6.1 Conference communiqué**

The conference ended with a communiqué. The communiqué has already been circulated and can be accessed on the EISA web-site. The drafting team was constituted by

Khabele Matlosa  
David Obot  
Tim Hughes  
Hajia Rekiya Enemona Momoh-Abaji  
Mariem Shaba  
Claude Kabemba

### **6.2 Establishment of a Working group**

The conference also designated the name of the people to be part of the working group. The work of the group is to ensure that the recommendations of the conference are implemented.

West Africa:	Mr. K Guie (Cote D'Ivoire) and Ms. H.R.E. Momoh-Abaji (Nigeria)
East Africa:	Felix Owuor Odhiambo (Kenya), Dr. Hassen Bulhan (Somaliland)
South Africa:	Collins Magalasi/ Emmanuel Ted Nandolo (Malawi) and Ketlhomilwe Moletsane (Botswana)
Central Africa:	Yves Choula (Cameroon) and Xavier Bahaya (DRC)

The working group would be coordinated from EISA.

## **7 Closing Remarks**

The Executive Director of EISA, Mr. Denis Kadima, closed the conference by thanking all participants, presenters and other collaborators for making the conference a success. He also referred to the fact that the conference outcome exceeded all expectations. He was grateful to the participants for having conferred to EISA the responsibility of leading the process of putting together a Pan African Civil Society Network on Governance which reflects the confidence that everybody has in the organization and its staff.