

Summary Report of "Africa Update" Monday 27th 2013:

Executive Summary

The Australian National University held a one day Africa Update Monday 27 May 2013 at the Finkel Theatre at The Australian National University (ANU). The event was held as part of the celebration of 50th Anniversary of the founding of the OAU and celebrations of Africa Day in Canberra. It was co-hosted by Crawford School of Public Policy, the Australia Africa Business Council (ACT Chapter) and the African Heads of Mission in Canberra. Highlights of the proceedings and recommendations are as follows.

Growing Ties between Australia and Africa should be sustained

- Ties between Australia and Africa have grown considerably in recent times. This is reflected in The Australia-Africa Initiative which was a remarkable shift in foreign policy posture by Australia to pay more attention to Africa. The paradigm shift was borne out of realisation by Australia of the strategic and growing influence of Africa in world Affairs;
- Evidence of this growing close ties was Africa's support for Australia during the elections into the Security Council at the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in October 2012;

The African Renaissance, AusAID and presence of Australian Companies:

- The Update acknowledged that there has been continuing spread of democracy across Africa. This development has engendered good governance and sound economic policies, growth and development and has attracted Australian companies to many African countries.
- In line with increasing attention to Africa, Australia's development assistance to Africa, particularly through Ausaid has increased substantially in the past five years and has grown to about \$400 million
- AusAid development assistance is focused on achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; peace and security, sustainable development; water micro-finance and gender empowerment; capacity building of the public sector and sustainable management of mineral resources. This trend should continue.
- Declared intention of Australia to focus on its immediate region (Asia and Pacific) between now and 2025, Asia as reflected in the Australian in an Asian Century White Paper, is worthy of note; it should not however lead to

distraction of its attention to Africa even if there is a change of government. Australia-Africa ties should be seen as long term strategic affair and current momentum of engagement should be sustained.

Activities of Australian Mining companies in Africa's Mining sector

- As a result of the growing ties, about 650 Australian companies now operate in 42 African countries with total investment outlay of about \$50 billion;
- Activities and training programmes of the International Mining for Development Centre (IM4DC) located at the University of Western Australia Perth was acknowledged as helping to create the pool of African expertise in the field of Mining and Mining Administration and has trained over 400 officials from 32 African countries. This training scheme should be expanded to support the African Mining Vision and with adequate attention to gender to expand number of include women in mining.
- Corporate Social Responsibility is an important component of Mining projects and it must be included in mining and resources projects right from the planning stage. The activities of an Australian gold mining company, Centamin. Pty Ltd operating modern gold mining operation in the Egypt was cited as a case in point.

Organisations working in Africa and the African Partnership Facility

- The session examined the future of Australian Aid to Africa, Resources companies and economic Development. The African partnership Facility established by Australia to boost trade should be made more effective;

The Australian-Africa Network of Universities (AAUN) And African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP)

- The activities of the AAUN and AFSAAP were identified as having a lot of potentials to enhance cooperation between Australian and African Universities and scholars and should be supported. It would also open a new vista in the the field of education and research on Africa;

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)/Post 2015 Development Agenda

- Pursuit of the MDGs targets can receive a boost through Australian development aid and more attention should be paid to this.

Australian companies in Renewable Energies and Small Foundations

- Windlam PTY Ltd and Dye Sol technology are two Australian companies who have demonstrated the possibilities of cooperation between the company and energy companies in Africa. Their operations therefore deserve more attention by the government of Australia and African countries

Vaccines Poultry and the Poor:

- Operations KEEYAMA foundation and its activities by well known veterinary scientist and livestock development and specialist researcher on control of Newcastle Disease in Chickens, and 23 years of working experience in Africa, have demonstrated the potentials of poultry in providing smallholder farmers, usually women with a source of scarce animal protein, and income.
- Properly managed small poultry business can provide meat, eggs and high quality protein and cash income to purchases food and also support education of children. It deserves further support across Africa.

Roundtable on small foundation and Social Enterprises in Africa

- Small foundations and social enterprises in Africa have a lot of role to play in the development process in Africa, and efforts should be made to support the various small Australian foundations involved in projects and programmes in Africa.

Conclusion

The holding of the Africa Update was hailed as a resounding success, which called for a sequel in the coming years.
