MESSAGE – APRM DAY 2014

It is with an immense pleasure that I associate myself with the second commemoration of the APRM Day on 9th March 2014. As you may be aware, the 18th Summit of the Committee of the Heads of State and Government Participating in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Forum held in January 2013 declared 9 March as the APRM Day.

The APRM Day is an excellent opportunity to raise public awareness on the APRM, increase its visibility within the African Continent and beyond while we rejoice the Mechanism’s successes we need also to reflect on its future prospects. You would recall that the year 2013 was particularly eventful with the organization of activities at national level to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) which coincided with the golden jubilee celebration of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU).

At the very outset, let us take this exceptional opportunity to reflect on the history of the APRM which evolved successfully following the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) by the African Union Heads of State and Government Summit held in Lusaka, Zambia in July 2001. Under NEPAD they set out a new vision for Africa with the objectives to, inter-alia, eradicate poverty and promote sustainable economic growth. In order to fulfill such ambitious objectives, the African leaders adopted the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance which provided for the establishment of the Africa Peer Review Mechanism because they realized that good governance, democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights were a sine qua non for the achievement of the objectives of the African Union.

This self-monitoring mechanism, Africa Peer Review Mechanism was inaugurated in 2003. African Union Member States were encouraged to accede to the APRM with a view to achieving mutually agreed codes, standards and targets in matters of governance. Since its inception, the APRM has made substantial improvement in terms of membership and level of stakeholders’ participation. The future of the APRM is promising given that, so far, 34 countries, that is more than 60% of the African Union membership, have signed the Memorandum of Understanding acceding to the APRM.
The APRM has a remarkable potential to promote conformity as regards political, economic and corporate governance values, codes and standards among African countries. The APRM can create an enabling environment conducive to the attainment of peace, security and stability on the African Continent in view of its open, inclusive and broad-based participatory process.

Indeed, Mauritius is convinced that the APRM, a unique African-owned governance process, is the way forward if the Continent is to embark on democracy and rule of law. Mauritius strongly supports the objectives of the APRM and has always demonstrated its unwavering commitment to this process to which it acceded on 9 July 2003. Mauritius went willingly through the various stages of the peer review.

May I remind that after a successful Country Review Mission conducted by the panel in July 2009, the Mauritius Country Report was presented at the 13th APR Forum of Heads of State and Government in Kampala, Uganda on 24th July 2010. Mauritius was the 13th country to be peer-reviewed at the 13th APR Summit. The Mauritius Country report was handed over to the Government of Mauritius in December 2013. The report is now officially launched and may be accessed on the website of my Ministry.

Our next step now will be the setting up of a National Organizing Committee with a view to implementing the various recommendations made in the report. In short, Mauritius has made clear on numerous occasions in diverse fora its conviction that there can be no progress, freedom and prosperity without upholding the highest standards of good governance and democratic principles, as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

The APRM is therefore the ideal instrument for Africa to forge ahead. It is time for the Continent to live up to its expectations and fulfill its destiny, by taking matters into its hands. Progress is being made. Even if we still have a long path to tread, we have a cause for optimism.

It is therefore appropriate on this special day for each one of us on the Continent to celebrate the APRMs achievements to reflect on its ideals, challenges and prospects. The potential of Africa is enormous. We only have to roll our sleeves and put our hands together to build a brighter future for Africa.

Long Live APRM! Long Live Africa!

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