SUB-REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON
THE WEST AFRICAN CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE APRM
(WACAA):
A CASE FOR PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

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Abstract: A three-day sub-regional Conference on the establishment of WACAA opened in Accra, Ghana, from October 18 - 20, 2010. The conference was attended by participants drawn largely from West African countries, development partners, research institutions and civil society. The conference was under the theme *The West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM, A Case for Promoting Good Governance.* It sought to share varied experiences regarding the implementation of the APRM and initiate the building of a Regional Center for the advancement of the APRM in West Africa. It was hoped that at the end of the conference a better understanding of WACAA would be shared, a network of partners would be created, and the relations between the governance actors within the sub-region would be greatly enhanced.

*Keywords: APRM, Conference, Regional Center, West Africa

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A CASE FOR PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

Alisa Hotel, Accra, Ghana

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ACRONYMS

AfDB	African Development Bank
AfriMAP	Africa Gorvernance Monitoring and Advocay Project
AGA	African Governance Architecture
APR	African Peer Review
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
BoG	Board of Governors
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CRR	Country Review Report
CRM	Country Review Mission
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DOC	District Oversight Committees
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOC	Economic, Social and Cultural and Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPRS	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy
IDEG	Institute for Democratic Governance
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
LEAP	Livelihood Enhancement and Empowerment Programme
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPoA	National Programme of Action
PAC	Partnership Africa-Canada
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
SAIIA	South African Institute for International Affairs
TRI	Technical Research Institute
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission on Africa
UQAM	University of Quebec at Montreal
WAMI	West Africa Monetary Institute
WACAA	West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

i. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), widely heralded as the crown jewel of the New Partnership of African Development (NEPAD), is a mutually agreed instrument which members of the African Union (AU) voluntary accede to as part of an African self-monitoring mechanism. The primary purpose of the APRM is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that will lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration. This will be done through sharing experiences and reinforcing successful and best practice, including identifying deficiencies and assessing the needs of capacity building. The APRM is open to all member states of the AU. So far, twenty-nine (29) member countries, nine (9) of which are in West Africa, have voluntarily acceded to it.

ii. Being the first country to be reviewed, Ghana began sharing her experiences with other African countries such as Benin, South Africa, Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania and many others. It soon became obvious that in order to accelerate APRM implementation within the sub-region, it was necessary to institutionalize collaborations between countries in the sub-regional blocs on APRM. The establishment of a West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM (WACAA) was therefore mooted as a suitable institutional vehicle for achieving this end.

iii. A three-day sub-regional Conference on the establishment of WACAA opened in Accra, Ghana, from October 18 - 20, 2010. The conference was attended by participants drawn largely from West African countries, development partners, research institutions and civil society. The conference was under the theme *The West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM, A Case for Promoting Good Governance.* It sought to share varied experiences regarding the implementation of the APRM and initiate the building of a Regional Center for the advancement of the APRM in West Africa. It was hoped that at the end of the conference a better understanding of WACAA would be shared, a network of partners would be created, and the relations between the governance actors within the sub-region would be greatly enhanced.

iv.   The Conference was characterized by informative presentations by resource persons on a plethora of issues under APRM, followed by lively deliberations. The highlights of the deliberations are summarized below under various thematic areas.

v.   **The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)**
- The APRM is a fledgling process. This partially explains why challenges with the APR process – both political and technical – still exist.
- The challenges to the APRM are unique to different countries. In Benin, constituting the decentralized APRM Councils has been difficult on account of credibility, political neutrality and competence. Mali and Burkina point to difficulty in securing citizen participation in the APRM. Nigeria's progress in the APRM has suffered on account of political and religious setbacks. Securing sustainable funding for the National Programme of Action (NPoA) remains a challenge for the APRM in Ghana.
- Despite challenges, some notable achievements have been chalked with the APRM across the sub-region. Ghana can readily point to key social intervention programmes which have been implemented as well as important pieces of legislation which have been passed. In Burkina Faso, the APRM Country Review Report (CRR) has become a major reference document for all stakeholders.
- In order to accurately grasp the APRM's modest accomplishments, it must be assessed against the backdrop of Africa's rough political history.
- Attempts should be made to strip the APRM of its current complexity. This will make it more efficient. Additionally, the APR processes must be clearly situated within the AU processes for it to be effective and prevent the creation of parallel institutions.
- Citizen buy-in for the APRM can be improved by using the media to enhance sensitization and publicize its achievements.
- The APRM secretariat needs to be resourced to enable it respond adequately to emerging challenges. At the same time it must remain agile to enable it function effectively and efficiently.
- Finally, the APRM peer review process should be made more robust. It should cascade from the Executive to all levels of society. Thus there should be parliament to parliament reviews, community to community reviews, etc.

vi. **Civil Society**

- A standard definition of civil society is lacking. Similarly, the evolving nature of civil society organizations makes it difficult to define its character. Different countries have different perspectives on what constitutes civil society or civil society organizations.

- Civil society can and must play an active role in the advancement of APRM. To this end, civil society must fully understand the nature, principles, and processes of the APRM. Thus capacity building of CSOs is central to productive engagement of civil society.

- Beyond supporting the APRM, civil society can lead the pursuit of the core values of APRM and initiate programmes to advance the APRM.

- The integrity of civil society must be preserved from political sway, even where it derives funding from the state.

- Challenges for CSO participation with APRM are real. Waning political support and goodwill for the APRM in many countries has cascaded into a gradual reduction of spaces for engagement with CSOs in the APRM. Effective ways to incorporate the inputs of CSOs are yet to be found. Selecting CSOs with adequate specialization to meet the needs of APRM is a problem. The ever present risk of politicization of the CSO sector remains.

vii. **Parliamentarians**

- There is overemphasis on the role of the Executive arm of government in the APR process. Due recognition and space should be given to parliaments in the APR process as they are representatives of the people. There should be clear guidelines for engagement.

- Parliamentarians, on their part, need to demonstrate greater commitment to the APRM.

- Excessive partisanship within country parliaments impedes an objective discussion of the APRM.

- The Pan African Parliament (PAP) Parliament has to effectively exercise its oversight responsibilities by ensuring that APRM principles and standards are respected by the State. It has the duty to ensure that citizens' views are adequately represented in the APRM country review reports.

viii. **Research institutions, National and International experts**

- It would be useful to leverage the expertise of think tanks and other research institutions to add value to the APR process.

- Standardized research instruments being used at APRM countries have proven useful. These instruments make use of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

- Capacity building for African Technical Research Institutions (TRIs) is necessary to enhance their role in the APR process. This is especially important because research on the APRM is technical and requires sufficient technical expertise.

- TRIs working on the APRM should exhibit political neutrality and be sufficiently insulated from partisan political influences.

- TRIs are important in mapping and integrating the NPoA unto country specific development plans.

- Research on the APRM should be led by indigenous TRIs rather than external consultancies in order to ensure that the research agenda is not driven by external interests. Additionally, research findings and knowledge on the APRM should be protected from external groups which might use them to further their own ends.

- Donor funding of the TRIs should be carefully negotiated to guard against the pursuit of interests which are not identical with the core values and objectives of the APRM.

ix. **National Development Planning Commissions**

- National Development Planning Commissions must strive to avoid possible duplication of efforts, the creation of parallel institutions and high transaction costs in the implementation of the APRM NPoAs.

- Effective decentralization is vital in development planning. However, the experience in some countries shows that some guiding principles are needed from the top to guide the bottom in development planning.

x. **The West African Center for the Advancement of the APRM (WACAA)**

- The WACAA concept is home-grown. It is born out of the need to promote and enhance APRM implementation in West African countries through the management of a shared regional knowledge-based organization.

- The WACAA should not be a parallel institution to those already in existence. It should operate under the umbrella of ECOWAS and through it feed into the African Governance Architecture at the AU level.

- It is important for relationships between the WACAA, the APRM Secretariat and the National APRM Governing Councils to be clearly spelt out.

- There should be clear rules and guidelines on tenure and succession of the leadership of the WACAA in order to forestall conflict.

- Funding for the WACAA is crucial for several reasons: it hinges directly on the life and sustainability of the project; it is crucial for efficient functioning of the project; and the nature and source of funding may interfere with the integrity of the WACAA.

- The WACAA should align itself with strategic partnerships in terms of funding and it must look within itself to find funding.

xi. In a communiqué drafted at the end of the conference, participants affirmed that the APRM has become established as a powerful instrument for promoting good governance. They further endorsed the establishment of the WACAA to enhance the APRM implementation process in West Africa and promote good governance and democracy within the sub-region.

1.0   BACKGROUND OF THE CONFERENCE

1.1   INTRODUCTION

The APRM is a democratic instrument designed to change the fortunes of Africa from a period of bad governance to a new era of good governance. As an instrument, the APRM compels a government to voluntarily open up its political space, which has in the past been restricted to its civil society, to examine and advocate policy options aimed at remedying gaps and lapses in governance. So far, close to 30 African countries have subscribed to the APRM since its inception in 2003. Out of this number, nine (9) are from the West African sub-region. The mechanism was developed within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD. As a development initiative by the African Union in July 2001, it sought to resolve the current development challenges of the Africa.

As part of ongoing efforts to promote good governance within the sub-region, a consortium comprising Ghana, Benin and the University of Quebec at Montreal mooted the idea of a regional knowledge organization that would aid in a systematic exchange of information and good practice among APRM countries, and to improve collaboration between governance actors (civil society, private sector, public and research institutions).

A three-day sub-regional conference on the establishment of the West African Centre for the Advancement of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) opened at Alisa Hotel, Accra, Ghana, from October 18 - 20, 2010. The conference aimed to facilitate the sharing of national experiences regarding the implementation of the APRM and to initiate the establishment of a knowledge-based regional centre for the advancement of the APRM in West Africa.

1.2   THE CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE APRM IN WEST AFRICA

The West African Centre for Advancement of the APRM (WACAA) is a knowledge-based organization that seeks to improve good governance and democracy within West Africa. The WACAA is conceived as a process and a structure
.

As a process, WACAA seeks to promote and enhance civil society and grassroots participation in the implementation of the APRM in West Africa. Specifically it seeks to build a *Shared Regional Knowledge-based Organization* to promote good governance in West Africa within the framework of the APRM. More specifically, the WACAA as a process has the following objectives:

- To establish and manage a shared regional knowledge-based organization that would coordinate the production, dissemination and sharing of knowledge and information on the APRM in West Africa;
- To promote popular ownership, bottom-up development and civic education;
- To decentralize the APRM implementation process and introduce findings to enhance effective governance in local authorities;
- To mobilize national and international expertise to undertake research and to interrogate methodologies to improve on the APRM;
- To share lessons learned and best practices gained among the participating countries;
- To increase collaboration, networking and inter-country dialogue as well as strengthening capacities; and
- To foster standards, policies and programs that promote regional cooperation and integration

The WACAA process is initiated by Benin and Ghana, within the context of an international consortium. It is a follow-up of an initial joint Benin and Ghana Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that seeks to create collaboration and a common understanding on the need to derive substantial benefits from the implementation of the APRM among West African countries. While the genesis of WACAA can be traced to Benin and Ghana, the process is expected to grow to include other West African APRM countries.

In addition to being a process, WACAA is a structure. Thus WACAA will have a Regional coordinating Secretariat to provide institutional anchor and infrastructure to implement its processes. The Secretariat is to be located in Accra, Ghana.

Specific tasks of the Secretariat shall include:
- Establishment of a Shared Regional Knowledge-based Organization;
- Civic Education;
- Decentralization of the APRM;

- Scientific studies and research;
- Networking and capacity building;
- Communication and information, including training for the media;
- Regional co-operation and integration;
- Monitoring and Evaluation; and
- Professional Management;

The WACAA will seek to immediately achieve regional ownership through, among others, the organization of its activities throughout the participating West African APRM countries.

The Added Value of the WACAA relates to a number of unique features:
- It relies on the practical experiences of the participating countries at different levels of implementation of the APRM including capturing the voices of the grassroots;
- It breaks down linguistic barriers which have impeded the West African integration process;
- It confronts common problems and finds common solutions in the West African sub region through the sharing of experiences and practices; and
- It avoids the re-invention of a new wheel for new participating countries.

1.3 CONFERENCE THEME

The theme for the three-day continental conference was: *"The West African Center for the Advancement of the APRM, a Case for Promoting Good Governance".*

1.4 CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

The broad objective of the conference was to share the different experiences regarding the implementation of the APRM and initiate the building of a Regional Center for the advancement of the APRM in West Africa. Specifically, the conference sought to:

- collaborate, share experiences and lessons learned to foster regional integration through   APRM;
- discuss the role of civil society, parliamentarians, planning departments and research institutions in the APRM;

- elaborate on the management of the West African Center for the advancement of the APRM;
- define the roles and responsibilities of national APRM Councils/Commissions;
- reflect on the tools of communication between States; and
- agree on an action plan for the effective roll-out of the Centre.

1.5 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It was expected that at the end of the three-day conference:
- a better understanding of the project would be shared by National Commissions/Councils and the international partners to facilitate its funding;
- a network of partners for the Center would be created that will be effective after the conference;
- relations between the governance actors within the sub-region would be strengthened;
- a framework for exchange of information and best practices on decentralization and implication of civil society would be created; and
- a Memorandum of Understanding would be signed between the participating National Councils/Commissions on the structure, location and management of the Center, its components and activities.

1.6 CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

The Conference was attended by representatives from eleven (11) countries in the West African region – Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo – as well as from Uganda, Kenya and Mozambique. Also partaking in the conference were representatives of The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Economic Commission on Africa (UNECA), the African Development Bank, Parliaments, Development Planning Commissions and Departments, Research Institutions, and Civil Society Organizations.

2.0 CONFERENCE DELIBERATIONS

2.1   Opening Ceremony

The Conference began with an opening ceremony during which brief remarks were made to set the tone for the three-day programme. The opening ceremony was chaired by the Chairman of the National APRM Governing Council, Ghana, Reverend Professor S. K. Adjepong. The Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, gave the keynote address. The ceremony climaxed with a fifteen-minute cultural interlude during which participants were treated to traditional dances and rhythms.

Speakers
- S. K. Adjepong, Chair of APRM Governing Council, Ghana
- Ousmane Batoko, Vice Chair, APRM Commission, Benin
- Coté Rene, University of Quebec in Montreal
- Ms. Ruby Sandhu-Rojn, UNDP
- Kojo Busia, UNECA
- Patrick Agboma, African Development Bank
- His Execellency John Dramani Mahama, Vice-President of Ghana

Summary

In his welcome address**, Rev. Prof. S. K. Adjepong** expressed appreciation to the Government of Ghana and to the Vice-president for the keen interest and enthusiasm for the African Peer Review Mechanism. He noted that nine (9) out of the twenty-nine (29) countries that have acceded to the APRM are from West Africa. He said, in Ghana, the African Peer Review process has ensured the progressive opening up of governance space for the engagement of a lot more stakeholders, especially civil society. He thanked conference participants for their presence and expressed the hope that the deliberations would help to develop structures that would foster good governance on the continent.

Ousmane Batoko was optimistic that the conference would provide a fertile platform to share experiences on the APRM as well as generate new ideas to advance the mechanism. He thanked participants and wished them well.

René Côté said he owed his presence at the conference to four people, three of whom were absent from the programme. The three are Francis Appiah, Frank Elmar and Alain Grandbois. He praised the late Dr Francis Appiah for his tireless efforts at giving life to the APRM and said his death was a sad occasion for all. He acknowledged the work of Frank Elmar and apologized on his behalf for being unable to participate in the conference. René Côté paid homage to the crucial role played by Prof Grandbois in bringing the conference to fruition. It was he who laid the necessary groundwork including sourcing funding for the conference. He acknowledged Sophie D'Aoust for her hardwork and assistance to him. He thanked the Center for International Research and Development and Partnership Africa Canada for providing funding for the conference. Recommending UQAM as an important ally to the proposed WACAA, he mentioned that Alain Grandbois has been in contact with CIDA and the World Bank as regards funding for the Center. Both organizations have expressed interest in the WACAA. In closing he added that UQAM can also participate with African universities in training or dissemination of knowledge.

Ruby Sandhu-Rojn underscored the importance of the African Peer Review Mechanism in promoting good governance for sustainable development across the continent. She lauded Ghana for being the first country to submit to the review process. Ms. Ruby Sandhu-Rojn mentioned that the UNDP was proud of the part it is playing in the implementation of the APRM. She said the UNDP would continue to work within the United Nations system to help achieve the objectives of the APR process. Further, she emphasized that the APRM is not an end in itself but a significant step towards developing appropriate programmes and policies for development on the continent. Monitoring and review of the process by all stakeholders is critical to the successful implementation of the APRM. But ultimately, APRM success would hinge on the pragmatism of its recommendations.

Kojo Busia observed that the challenge to Africa in respect of the APRM is to develop its non-normative framework to advance good governance and development. That is why the West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM is so important in the implementation of the APRM. He indicated that UNECA has been facilitating peer learning since the inception of the APRM. Peer learning affords the sharing of best practices and helps to harness knowledge and experiences. Kojo Busia stressed that APRM is central to ensuring civic engagement in governance and public accountability.

APRM opens up avenues for citizens to be part of the governance process and citizens must build their capacity to participate effectively. He also noted that while the underlying philosophies of global development support are questionable, there are still opportunities in China and Russia for the resources Africa needs to develop.

Patrick Agboma congratulated African countries that have signed up to the APR process. He mentioned that the goal of the APRM is for accelerated development among African states through the sharing of knowledge and best practices. He indicated that the African Development Bank has been lending support to the APRM since 2004. Currently, the bank is providing financial support towards the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for the APRM. In addition, the Bank has supported NEPAD with over $1.5 million to promote good governance. Patrick Agboma noted that a sound banking infrastructure is critical in ensuring good governance.

In his keynote address, the Vice-President of Ghana**, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama,** acknowledged that the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) has been a bold and ambitious undertaking. It ensures that member countries adopt policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental integration. This is pursued through the sharing of experiences and enforcement of best practices.

The Vice-President stated that in Ghana, the APRM is managed along three main fronts, namely policy formulation, resource allocation and monitoring and evaluation. Through the country self-assessment and the formulation of the National Programme of Action, the citizens' role in the policy formulation process has been greatly enhanced. And this has had a direct bearing on the allocation of resources to priority areas. Government has allocated more resources to interventions aimed at reducing and eliminating poverty. As a result, Ghana is on course to meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving poverty.

According to the Vice-President, in order to improve accountability, Ghana has made the effort through the APRM to involve citizens in the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the National Programme of Action. District APRM Oversight Committees provide avenues for civil society perspectives to be captured. In addition, validated reports from District Governance Assessments by civil society are debated at the District Assemblies. Civil society now provides empirical data for local authorities to address governance and service delivery challenges.

His Excellency, John Dramani Mahama noted that regional integration has been the vision of African leaders since independence. However, African integration cannot be realised if issues of governance and leadership are not addressed. The APRM affords Africa the unique opportunity to move this vision further. While cautioning against the creation of parallel institutions, the Vice-President lauded the initiative to create a regional knowledge-based organisation that would coordinate the production, dissemination and sharing of knowledge and information on the APRM as well as decentralise the APRM implementation process. He wished participants at the conference fruitful deliberations.

2.2   DAY ONE SESSIONS

SESSION I: INTRODUCTION TO THE AFRICAN GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE (AGA)

Objective: To present the African Governance Architecture and the position of the APRM in this structure

Chair

- **S. K. Adjepong, Chair of National APRM Governing Council, Ghana**

Speakers

- **Kojo Busia, UNECA**
  Topic: The Evolving African Governance Architecture (AGA)
- **Dalmar Jama, APR Secretariat**
  Topic: The APRM implementation, monitoring and its relationship with other African processes and initiatives

Before the presentations by the speakers for the first session, conference participants observed a minute silence in honour of the late Dr. Francis Appiah of the Ghana APRM Secretariat.

Summary of Presentations

The Evolving African Governance Architecture (AGA)

Kojo Busia talked about the evolving African Governance Architecture (AGA). He said the AGA represents a paradigm shift from a club of leaders to a citizen-centred governance process. AGA is the primary political and institutional framework to strengthen the capacities of African Union (AU) organs and institutions to optimize their impact on the continent.

The objective of the AGA is to achieve good governance, democracy, human rights and a rights-based approach to development. To achieve these objectives, the AGA seeks to formalize, consolidate and promote closer cooperation between AU institutions and other stakeholders; establish a coordinating mechanism of regional and continental efforts for the internalization and implementation of the African Governance Agenda; and enhance the capacity of AU organs and institutions in the promotion, evaluation and monitoring of governance trends.

The African Governance Architecture is grounded on three main pillars:

- A vision
- Organs and institutions
- Interaction mechanisms and processes

The vision is the embodiment of shared governance values and norms among AU member states. These norms reflect the continent's commitment to confront its governance challenges through a concerted and comprehensive approach at both continental and regional levels. The AGA recognizes that democracy, governance and human rights is not an event but rather a process that needs to be monitored, evaluated, nurtured and strengthened taking into consideration the different dynamics and capacities of AU member states.

The AGA also represents an institutional approach to governance where strong and robust institutions and procedures are conceived as important to building and consolidating democracy, governance and human rights. Against this backdrop, the AGA could be conceived as a well-ordered and neatly assembled system of structures, institutions and mechanism to give operational expression to the Africa governance vision. The third pillar of the AGA is the African Governance Platform. This is meant to be the catalyst for improved coordination and complementarity among existing African governance institutions and initiatives. The platform offers an informal, flexible and dynamic mechanism to perform a set of inter-related functions:

- Foster a systematic exchange of information on governance across the continent;
- Improve dialogue between African governance actors;
- Facilitate the elaboration of shared governance agendas;
- Strengthen the capacity of the African continent to speak with one voice on governance matters in international fora and dialogue processes with partners; and
- Enhance effectiveness, efficiency and impact of governance efforts.

The African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the APRM

Kojo Busia pointed out that the APRM appears to be delinked from other governance institutions and mechanisms. There has not been a dynamic interaction among the APRM and other existing African institutions. This gap ought to be bridged. The APRM could foster greater information sharing with other African Union (AU) countries and

organs. It could open an avenue for dialogue and information sharing among African states. Further, the APRM should facilitate the building of joint agendas and the establishment of joint institutions among AU member states. Once the APRM has developed dynamic interactions with other institutions on the continent, African states will be able to speak with one voice on issues of governance and development.

The West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM (WACCA) would be instrumental in complementing the overall need for a governance platform in Africa. It would also expand avenues for citizen engagement with governance processes. The WACAA would be enormously useful as it would facilitate African shared values on democratic governance and development.

APRM Implementation, Monitoring and its relationship with other African Processes and Initiatives

Dalmar Jama started his presentation by giving a brief background to the implementation of the APRM. He said the APRM was created in 2003 as a self-introspection tool owned and driven by Africans themselves. Participation in the APRM is through voluntary accession. The APRM seeks to foster adoption of policies, standards and practices leading to political stability, high economic growth and sustainable development. The overarching goal of the APRM is to accelerate progress towards sub-regional and continental integration through sharing of experiences and best practice. The APRM is designed to be open, inclusive, participatory, transparent and broad-based.

The APRM aims to ensure that African leaders and all stakeholders in the governance process are held to account. It seeks to inject transparency into governance structures through collective, sustainable and equitable solutions. It is a gradual process that will build momentum towards better governance structures in Africa, announcing the birth of the highly desired African renaissance. The APRM is expected to lead to the eventual acceleration of technical cooperation throughout Africa. At present, twenty-nine (29) countries have acceded representing 74% of the African population.

In response to recommendations of the African Governance Forum held in 2006, the Continental APRM Secretariat, with the support of strategic partners (AfDB, UNECA, UNDP and Technical Research Institutes across Africa), is revising the base document in the mechanism under a project on streamlining and fast tracking the APRM. A new

questionnaire would be produced to guide the next set of reviews and validation workshops. There are initiatives to strengthen the secretariat and implement a new communication strategy.

The Secretariat has completed 13 peer reviews across Africa, many of which are in West Africa. A Best Practices Manual is being compiled to guide the dissemination of best practices across Africa. Country Review Missions will soon be dispatched to Zambia and Kenya. Support Missions will be sent to Senegal and Sierra Leone whilst Advance Missions are sent to Gabon, Djibouti, Malawi and Togo. The launch of the review reports for Mozambique, Lesotho and Mali will be held soon. The APRM secretariat is yet to complete the peer review of Ethiopia. But a stakeholder validation workshop has been planned as part of efforts to streamline the APRM.

Dalmar Jama announced that the APRM is moving from the diagnosis phase to implementation. He informed participants that Implementation and Monitoring of National Programmes of Action is rapidly gaining momentum. This is important to guarantee real progress. For example, country review reports highlighted the possibility of ethnic violence in Kenya as well as xenophobic attacks in South Africa. These were highlighted well before they happened.

Plenary Discussion

The Chair started the plenary discussions by underlying the need to arrive at a consensus that the WACAA would not become a parallel institution. Rather, WACAA should work through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to the African Union (AU). It is also necessary to work out modalities for WACAA to engage with the AU system. There should be platforms to dialogue and exchange ideas and best practices in order to improve the APRM process over time and reduce the time the process takes. The Chair requested that a template for monitoring and evaluation be completed to make it possible to compare notes on progress reports. The following issues were the focus of the plenary discussions:

- Link between Diagnosis and Implementation in the APRM;
- Sustainability of the APRM;
- Accession to the APRM and Political Leadership; and
- Quality of Peer Reviews.

- **Link between Diagnosis and Implementation in the APRM**

Participants were concerned about the apparent weak link between diagnosis and implementation in the APR process and how it impacts on governance in the sub-region. It was stressed that immediate measures should be taken to address this gap in the process. Dr Busia explained that the difficulties with APRM implementation can only be fully appreciated when viewed against the backdrop of the continent's turbulent political history. He said the APRM primarily promotes dialogue and offers recommendations for good governance. High-level political issues are often difficult to deal with, requiring enormous political will and commitment. Besides, APRM implementation demands heavy technical detail. That the APR process is able to diagnose and generate issues is in itself a good start for the APRM. Dalmar Jama indicated that though there are real challenges in implementing APRM recommendations, some countries have successfully incorporated their National Plan of Action (NPoA) in their development plans and national budgets.

- **Sustainability of the APRM**

Participants expressed anxiety over the sustainability of the APRM in the light of the apparent lack of capacity of the APRM secretariat and the insufficient interest of the PAP in the APRM. The capacity of the Secretariat appears to be severely limited as evidenced by its inability to send missions to countries that have signed up to the APRM.

The Pan African Parliament (PAP) has to date taken no action on Country Review Reports that have been tabled before it. Dalmar Jama informed participants that the APRM Secretariat was still addressing the human resource challenges it faces. He added that from the outset, the Secretariat was planned to function as a small but efficient institution that can move the review processes forward with speed rather than have a large bureaucracy. Dr Busia advised that Africa must learn to derive inspiration from the progress it has chalked rather than subject itself to hard self-scrutiny. He recalled that only a decade ago, organizations like the African Union (AU), Pan African Parliament (PAP) and the Economic, Social and Cultural and Council (ECOSOC) were non-existent. All young institutions like the APRM secretariat will need time to mature. There would be shortfalls associated with the process of institution building but over time these institutions will grow to deliver on their respective mandates.

- **Accession to the APRM and Political Leadership**

The issue of multiple entry accessions to the APRM came up for active discussion. Some participants were of the view that there should be alternative entry routes for country

accession to the process, particularly where political leadership is reluctant to sign up. Dr Busia pointed out that the APR process remains largely a political process. He conceded, however, that where political interest is lacking, it should be possible for citizens or civil society to lobby their leadership in order to facilitate accession.

The option of forced accession to the APRM was rejected as alien to the intrinsic principles of APRM. Participants and resource persons alike shared the view that voluntary accession makes APRM attractive and sustainable.

A participant lamented the palpable lack of commitment on the part of some African leaders to the APR process. This is evidenced by their regular absenteeism at the APRM Forum. Participants concluded that African leaders would have to change their attitude and demonstrate real commitment to the APRM. The practice where Heads of State emplane to their countries after the AU Summit and not participate in the APRM Forum must stop.

- **Quality of Peer Reviews**

There was consensus that the Peer Review has not been robust enough. It came to light that only four Heads of State were present to conduct the country review in Burkina Faso. Participants were of the view that this situation undermined the importance of the process. This reduced the extent of publicity and treatment the review received in the media.

While sharing participants' frustrations about the situation, Dr Busia indicated that peer reviews need not be restricted to the Forum of Heads of State. Rather, Civil Society and the Private sector should be able to conduct their own peer reviews within the APRM framework. The country review reports need to be internalized and debated at all major stakeholders' fora. Community-level discussions of the APRM and governance issues would also be extremely useful. He regretted the apparent lack of attention to even the modest assessments of APRM member states. Participants recommended that interaction between the APRM Panel and the APRM Forum be improved to strengthen the process.

It was agreed that in order for the APR process to succeed, civil society engagement needs to be stepped up. The process must be participatory and inclusive of all stakeholders on the continent. Participants also identified the difficulties with communication and information sharing in the light of the Anglophone and

Francophone divide. Poor countries eager to join the process but limited by funds were entreated to fall on the Trust Funds being created by the African Development Bank (AfDB).

SESSION II: OVERVIEW OF THE APR PROCESS IN 5 WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Objective: To present different cases of implementation of the APRM in West Africa

Chair
- **Ousmane Batoko, Vice Chair, APRM Commission, Benin**

Speakers
- **Konou Idohou Leontine -** APRM implementation in Benin
- **Losseni Cisse** - APRM implementation in Burkina Faso
- **Sam Cudjoe -** APRM implementation in Ghana
- **Nana Sanou -** APRM implementation in Mali
- **Alex Gboyega -** APRM implementation in Nigeria

Summary of Presentations

- **APRM Implementation in Benin**

Konou Idohou Leontine stated that in Benin, the president appointed a thirteen-member committee to oversee the implementation of the APRM. There was also a rapporteur for the core mission of the APR process. The APRM is regarded more as a development tool than a political process in Benin. Consequently, civil society is actively engaged and involved in the process.

She stressed that ownership of the process and the National Plan of Action by civil society was crucial to effective monitoring. Benin, therefore, has ensured that the APRM is community-led.

The APRM has been decentralized to the communities, districts and regions while a communication strategy has been put in place to provide the public with essential information on the APRM. Quarterly reports have been produced to disseminate

information on the process to stakeholders. However, there is currently the need to design principles and financial regulations to guide the process. Hitherto, a major implementation challenge for Benin had been financing. Fortunately the Ministry of Finance has taken steps to incorporate APRM funding into the national budget.

- **APRM Implementation in Burkina Faso**

Losseni Cisse indicated that Burkina Faso has sought to adopt a bottom-up approach to development since signing on to the APRM in March 2003. A permanent secretariat has been created and attached to the presidency to ensure political momentum. Communication channels have also been opened up to facilitate constructive dialogue on the APRM. Burkinabe civil society is actively involved in the APR process.

Further capacity development is required, however, to deepen civil society participation. So far, over one hundred and eighty (180) recommendations have been received from civil society organizations which are already in several stages of implementation. Losseni Cisse underlined the urgent need to implement national plans of action to derive maximum benefits from the APRM.

- **APRM Implementation in Ghana**

According to **Sam Cudjoe**, a National African Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council (NAPRM-GC) was inaugurated on March 18, 2004 to act as the focal point for the APRM in Ghana. The Governing Council has administrative and financial independence. Also, to ensure national ownership and participation by the people, there has been extensive dialogue and engagement with stakeholders from all over the country.

A Country Review Mission (CRM) visited the country to undertake an external audit of the Country Self-Assessment Report. Further, the APRM's NPoA has been mapped onto the country's Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) to exploit synergies and ensure more targeted use of scarce resources. The implementation strategy was carefully mapped out to ensure that the NPoA was not treated as an add-on to the national development agenda.

Mr Cudjoe said the APRM is contributing to opening up spaces for civil society engagement in national dialogue. Key laws have been passed. The APRM has contributed to the initiation of vital social intervention programmes: Free Maternal Health Care; Livelihood Enhancement and Empowerment Programme (LEAP); and Northern Development Fund/Savanna Accelerated Development Authority. Significantly, a constitution review process is underway and aid dependency has been reduced from a high of 47% of GDP to below 20% of GDP.

Challenges in the way of implementing the APRM have included difficulty in getting the populace to embrace the process. The National APRM Secretariat is actively engaged with only forty (40) out of one hundred and seventy (170) municipalities and districts. There are outstanding issues of aligning with existing M&E systems (timing of reporting and capacity of MDAs), tracking resource allocations (MDGs, APRM, etc.) and funding for Technical Institutions and Experts and monitoring by District Oversight Committees (DOC).

- **APRM Implementation in Mali**

Nana Sanou stated that Mali was the ninth (9th) country to accede to the APRM and has successfully completed the country review.

In order to encourage citizen participation at the grassroots, district and regional workshops and seminars have been organized to educate the people and popularize the APRM. Participation by civil society in the APRM has been facilitated by organizing focus group discussions and workshops. There have also been public debates on the National Plan of Action to enrich the process and get the citizenry on board. Nana Sanou emphasized the critical role of civil society in monitoring the implementation of NPoAs.

- **APRM Implementation in Nigeria**

Alex Gboyega
Alex Gboyega traced Nigeria's involvement in the APRM from 2003 when the APRM MOU was adopted in Abuja. The secretary to the government of the Federation was designated the focal point and a Senior Assistant to the President appointed to carry on day to day executive management of the APR process. A steering committee with a

membership of twenty-two (22) was initially constituted to oversee APRM implementation in Nigeria. Later, the steering committee was expanded into a National Working Group which had fifty (50) members, fourteen (14) of whom were appointed to act as the Executive Committee of the Group.

Nigeria's progress towards review stalled on account of political and religious setbacks. It was difficult to get national consensus that the APR was not a single party's political agenda. Worse still, a few states adopted Islam as state religion and introduced Shariah Law. This exacerbated religious tensions in the country. To compound the problems further, Nigeria faced the challenge of selecting competent lead Technical Research Institutes which mirrored the diversity of the country.

Unsuccessful national elections and its aftermath again stalled the progress of the APRM in Nigeria. The National Working Group had to be reconstituted and expanded to two hundred and fifty (250) members in order to make it more inclusive and ensure that people from those parts of the country who would otherwise be disaffected were embraced in its membership. The new composition also ensured that all the thirty-six (36) State Secretaries to the government were given a seat on the National Working Group. Additionally, women membership was increased while people living with disabilities were fairly represented in the National Working Group.

The newly constituted National Working Group had peculiar challenges. Government funding was erratic. Meetings of the 250-member group were expensive and came with constraints of logistics. Considerations of cost-effectiveness led to the scaling down of the membership to sixty (60), carefully drawn such that institutional representation was emphasized.

States were expected to ensure that they replicated the national structures of leadership of the APRM. Unfortunately, states have not all replicated the national governing structures because of party rivalry and residual feelings that the APR is a party programme rather than a national programme. In order to promote the APRM as a national programme, there has been a massive campaign of information, sensitization, and advocacy. Mass mobilization has also been undertaken to ensure that the APR process is fully embraced by the people.

States in Nigeria have voluntarily decided to carry out individual assessments under their own voluntarily accepted State Peer Review mechanism. A framework for that

peer review has been adopted, and it is hoped that before the end of the year a State Peer Review will commence in Nigeria. National Planning Authorities (NPAs) at the federal level have also been instructed to mainstream NPoA programmes and expenditure into their sector strategies and annual budgets.

Plenary Discussions

The country presentations were followed by active discussions. Issues raised by participants revolved around the following:

- Challenges countries have to confront in implementing the APRM;
- The impact of the APRM on the political and social landscape;
- Changes in political administration and support for APRM implementation;
- Securing sustainable funding for the implementation of the APRM;
- Representation and inclusion of parliaments in the APR process;
- Strategies to ensure citizen buy-in;
- Prioritization in implementing APR recommendations.

- **Challenges countries have to confront in implementing the APRM**

A participant pointed to the absence of any references to challenges attendant to APRM implementation in some of the presentations. He believed that identifying the challenges would be useful in locating appropriate solutions to tackle these challenges. Besides, it would be helpful in terms of providing lessons for those countries that are yet to implement the APRM. Benin conceded that there have been a number of difficulties with APRM implementation in the country. First, it has been difficult to secure legislative backing for the APRM Council and to sell the APRM to the intellectual community. Second, there has not been an APRM Council since the dissolution of the first council that undertook the country self-assessment. Third, constituting the decentralized APRM Councils has been fraught with difficulties. Credibility and political neutrality have been key criteria, in addition to competence. However, some unqualified people succeeded in infiltrating the system. Steps are being taken now to ensure that only the most suitable people are approved.

The challenges recounted by Mali included the need to secure citizen participation and ownership of the APR process. There is also the issue of stakeholders' lack of capacity to engage meaningfully with the process. The private sector, especially, seems unable to sufficiently appreciate the workings of governance institutions.

- **The impact of the APRM on the political and social landscape**

Some participants argued that one way to whip up public support for the APRM is to publicize the benefits of the APR process to the people. They were therefore interested in how the APRM has impacted the social and political environment of the countries implementing it. Sam Cudjoe indicated that in Ghana some impact has been achieved as the APRM is contributing to opening up space for civil society engagement in national dialogue. Important pieces of legislation have also been passed on account of the APRM. These include the Domestic Violence Act; Disability Act; Whistleblower Protection Act; Amendments to the Criminal Code; and the Human Trafficking Act. Social intervention programmes have also been implemented. There is now Free Maternal Health Care and a Livelihood Enhancement and Empowerment Programme (LEAP). A Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture to deal with chieftaincy issues has also been established, and the National Constitution is being reviewed to enhance governance.

Losseni Cisse added that in Burkina Faso, the APRM Country Review Report has become a major reference document for media practitioners, politicians and the public, especially as the November, 2010 elections approaches. He added, however, that the APRM has long term objectives and it would be difficult to give dramatic impact reports.

- **Changes in political administration and support for APRM implementation**

One participant enquired about how interest and political support for the APRM was sustained during the change in political leadership in Nigeria, considering the degree of partisanship surrounding the APRM. Prof. Alex Gboyega explained that due to the existence of a broad-based National APRM Council the change in government in Nigeria did not destabilize support for the APRM.

- **Securing sustainable funding for the implementation of the APRM**

The question of securing sustainable funding for implementing the APRM also came up for discussion. Mr Cudjoe conceded that funding for Ghana's NPoA was not provided for in the review process adding that it remains a major weakness in the country's APRM programme. Zemenay Lakew of the UNDP was of the view that funding for NPoAs could be sustained if APRM countries successfully integrated their action plans into their overall national development agendas. She stressed that dependence on donors should change because there are enormous resources on the continent. A paradigm shift and

more creative thinking should yield significant resources to implement the APRM. Begging for support is not sustainable. This is attested to by the many African initiatives that have started well but failed because donor funding dried up.

- **Representation and inclusion of parliaments in the APR process**

Participants also talked about the place of parliaments and parliamentarians in the APRM. A participant observed that parliamentarians had been left out of the presentations on the APRM implementation in the various countries. He wanted to know what role has been assigned parliamentarians in the APR process. In her reaction, Konou Idohou Leontine agreed that the inclusion of parliamentarians would be crucial to APRM success. She said Benin had taken the step by inviting a representative from parliament but the representative had persistently failed to turn up for meetings. Another request has been sent to the Speaker of the Benin Parliament for a representative from the Legislature. She added that in Benin, organs of government such as the parliament have been so badly politicized that for two years national budgets have been passed by decree. Prof Alex Gboyega also mentioned that Nigeria has provided seats for parliamentarians in the APRM Working Group, except that these seats are for purely representational purposes as the APRM seems to have no electoral value.

In Mali, parliamentarians are not represented on the APRM Governing Council. The Council only conducts periodic briefing sessions with Parliament to get MPs informed and engaged with the process. It came up that interactions between the National APRM Governing Council of Ghana and the national parliament has been poor because meetings with parliamentarians have turned out to be costly. The situation could be reversed if parliamentarians cut back on per diems and fuel allowances due them for attending APRM meetings. Losseni Cisse agreed that the involvement of parliament in the APR process would be most useful, especially with monitoring and evaluation. He said interaction between the National APRM Council and the Parliament of Burkina Faso is still evolving. But parliamentarians generally need thorough education on APRM to beef up their understanding of the process.

- **Strategies to ensure citizen buy-in**

Participants also discussed strategies aimed at arousing citizens' interest in APRM. Media role in country self-assessments to enhance publicity and harness public support came into sharp focus. In Ghana, the strategy has been to ride on the backs of the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) and other institutions that have national

reach to inform and educate the people on the APRM. The expectation is that people would accept and engage with the process once they thoroughly understand how the system works and their role in it. The media in Burkina Faso undertakes peer advocacy for citizen-led evaluation of the APR process. An ICT-led communication strategy advocated by a Communication Agency is also being implemented in Burkina Faso.

- **Prioritization in implementing APR Recommendations**

A participant believed that prioritization was necessary in implementing the NPoA since most African countries are poor and lack the resources needed to carry out all the activities in the NPoA at once.

2.3 DAY TWO SESSIONS

SESSION III: ROLES OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE APRM

Objective: To discuss the role of civil society actors in the APRM and knowledge-based organizations

Chair
• **Losseni Cisse, APRM, Burkina Faso**

Speakers
• **Assah Gustave , Social Watch Benin**
• **Ousmane Deme, Partnership Africa-Canada**
• **Emmanuel Akwetey – Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), Ghana**

Summary of Presentations

Assah Gustave began the session by pointing to some of the opportunities afforded by civil society engagement in governance processes. An example is the inclusion of marginalized groups in development policy formulation and effective participatory monitoring of public expenditure. Professor Gustave stressed that the APRM recognizes Civil Society and has developed a consultation framework for Civil Society engagement. In all the APRM member countries, civil society mobilization has been encouraged. To facilitate effective engagement with the APR process, workshops have been organized to develop the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs). Collaborative partnerships have also been encouraged among civil society organizations.

The practice has been for civil society to oppose political leaders who have been reluctant to accede to the APRM. But this should not always be the case. Confrontation and debates are part and parcel of the development dialogue process but they should be exercised in moderation.

A large number of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have to be involved in implementing the APRM at different levels. CSOs must create frameworks for dialogue and consultations on the APRM. But first, CSOs have to build their capacity and develop partnerships with other social actors, while specializing in particular aspects of the

APRM. Indeed, CSOs have expertise in many areas that would be useful to the APR process. But they would be more useful if they identify and opt for specific levels of participation since they cannot effectively participate in all aspects of the APRM.

Democratic processes must be deepened to allow citizens to fully participate in the APRM. For this reason, it would be important for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to tackle the perennial issues of transparency and credibility. Most of all, CSOs would have to strive to be representative of all segments of society so as to ensure real participation and inclusion. Information sharing within civil society should improve significantly so that people at the grassroots can have access to relevant information to make their participation meaningful. The APRM must be brought to the level of the people. The Africa-Canada Partnership (PAC) is doing a great job in this regard.

Strengthening Civil Society participation in the APRM would help bolster the independence of the APRM and lead to the promotion of best practices. Pooling of resources would be possible and multiplier effects would be achieved with Civil Society participation in the APRM. Participation of CSOs would also be critical to achieving policy transformation through the APRM.

Ousmane Deme gave an overview of the work that the Africa-Canada Partnership (PAC) has been doing. He stated that PAC has been working in several areas, including natural resources, the Kimberly Process and the certification of conflict diamonds. Lately, they have been working on the implementation of the APRM. Mr Deme acknowledged the peculiarity and complexity of the APRM. This complexity impacts on the role civil society plays within the APRM framework. He underscored the need for Civil Society to exercise leadership in implementing the APRM. Civil Society should not wait for the government. Civil Society could enhance internal dialogue processes and collaborate with other partners. In particular, Civil Society would have to secure a seat at the APRM Governing Councils which interact directly with the centres of power on the continent. In all the countries that APRM has been successful, it has been observed that civil society has been playing a very important role within the Governing Councils. A clear example is Ghana where Civil Society has been a strong player within the APRM.

The complexities of APRM implementation also means that Civil Society must of necessity prioritize. Everything cannot and need not be done at once. Civil society must therefore a more rigorous approach which would see it produce position papers on

pertinent issues in the APR process. Civil Society should not be content to simply participate in discussions without impacting the process.

Another important role for civil society would be to adopt a long term perspective to the APR process. It should not be enough to be involved only in the country self-evaluation. Civil Society would have to monitor the implementation of the National Plan of Action because that is a key benchmark of APRM success.

Further, Civil Society has a critical role to play in ensuring that the APRM is properly understood at the grassroots. CSOs could produce publications to educate stakeholders on the APRM. Partnership Africa-Canada has produced a number of such publications. For instance, case studies of the contribution of Civil Society in the APRM in Ghana, Mali and other countries have been published. Popular Guides on the APRM have also been produced. Besides, APRM questionnaires can always be adapted to suit local or national peculiarities. The challenge, however, lies in funding translation of these publications to make them accessible to the diverse people of Africa.

Emmanuel Akwetey spoke about the complex nature of the APRM, how Civil Society engagement in the past, and his views on the way forward. The APRM, he said, is probably the single most important institutional mechanism developed in Africa to advance democratic governance and democratic development. It is likely to become the standard practice of democratic governance and the basis for the accelerated integration of Africa.

The complexity of the APRM manifests in three ways. First, we have a multi-level process that is at once local, national, regional and continental. And indeed, it is also global in terms of the APRM being the trump card that was flagged to assure Western donors that Africa is serious about democratic governance and accountability. Second, the APRM is political and technical in character. Accession to the APRM requires Heads of State to sign on and to commit themselves and their countries to the process. Besides, the APRM is intensely technical and requires access to adequate, well-assessed and certified information across the four thematic areas. The third area of complexity is that the APRM is embedded in post-colonial Africa's complexities. There is the West, East, Central, South, North, Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone cultural orientations.

The APRM also has a popular dimension where participation by Civil Society is required. But the subject of Civil Society is equally complex. Who or what constitutes Civil Society? Ultimately, though, to be Civil Society, there should be clear articulation of autonomy from the State and an exhibition of the capacity to act independently either in dealing with the State or whoever must be engaged. Dr Akwetey illustrated his presentation with copious examples from Ghana. He stressed that Civil Society can participate actively and meaningfully in the APR process only if it fully understands the nature and complexities of the APRM. This would strengthen the capacity of Civil Society to participate in the whole exercise of getting citizens informed about the importance of the APRM, monitoring, conducting research, testing questionnaires and all the other activities the APR process entails.

According to Dr Akwetey, civil society participation should not only be seen as civil society looking up and participating in the review of the performance of governments. In an open space where several actors are engaged, freedom, accountability and participation are things that everyone should pursue. To this end, the APRM would have to explore the possibility of conducting peer reviews among civil society across countries, and at the national and local levels in just the same way governments are examined. It should also be possible to conduct peer reviews of private sector actors across countries and this might yield very interesting findings. Dr Akwetey argued that when all the three key sectors are included in the review process, the Peer Review Mechanism as laid out and maybe enhanced or modified, would be the tool to promote integration in all its facets on the continent. The proposed West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM (WACAA) must seriously look at the APRM as a tool that must be applied to all segments and actors in the governance process.

Plenary Discussions
The presentations sparked off interesting exchanges among participants as regards the nature and role of civil society in the APRM. Specific issues discussed included:

- What constitutes Civil Society;
- State funding of Civil Society Organisations;
- Collaboration between Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) and the State;
- CSO Leadership in the APRM;
- Challenges to CSO participation in the APRM; and
- Reducing the complexity of the APR process

- **What constitutes Civil Society**

Participants attempted to harmonize their understanding of Civil Society and the nature of Civil Society Organizations. It was alleged that politicians have succeeded in infiltrating the ranks of Civil Society Organisations and that has raised credibility issues for CSOs. Dr Akwetey explained that the term 'Civil Society' was formally used to refer to 'a space'. In modern times, however, it has come to be associated with a collection of organizations. A Civil Society Organization is any organization that is autonomous and not thought to be part of the State, irrespective of how and where these organisations source funding for their activities.

- **State funding of Civil Society Organisations**

Dr Akwetey advocated state funding of Civil Society Organisations. He believed that some African countries are chalking successes in respect of democratic governance and progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) because civil society groups are engaged. They mobilize and act independently of government. Today, there are Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), like Oxfam, which receive financial support from their home governments. But these CSOs have laws that protect their autonomy. He pointed to the West where governments fund CSOs whose objectives coincide with national interests. African CSOs should define their terms so they can also source funds from the State.

- **Collaboration between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the State**

Addressing what kind of collaboration should exist between CSOs and the State within the APRM, Professor Assah emphasized that as agents of development, any kind of constructive collaboration with the State would be useful. It could help CSOs overcome certain obstacles in the environment. What must be avoided is that kind of collaboration where CSOs are used as tools by external influence to validate certain processes. CSOs should also be careful not to be used as election fodder by governments in the name of collaboration. Partnership Africa-Canada, for instance, has become an instrument of collaboration to ensure public action, follow up on government policies and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Dr Akwetey believed that CSOs could conveniently combine constructive opposition with effective collaboration with the State.

Civil Society Organisations could also collaborate on alternative reports on the MDGs. This will enable CSOs to assess government data and make a case as to how the population views such results. In addition, CSOs could participate in thematic workshops

together with parastatal organisations that identify with CSOs. A concrete proof of CSO participation and collaboration is its involvement in the drafting and implementation of APRM programmes.

- **CSO Leadership in the APRM**

Mr Deme explained that CSOs leadership in the APRM should manifest in their willingness to initiate programmes and activities to advance the APRM even when state actors develop cold feet with regard to certain aspects of the process. For example, Civil Society in Mali did not wait for the government to sign on to the APRM before going ahead to organize their own regional and local level reviews within the APRM framework. CSOs should also be in the lead in the pursuit of the core values of the APRM, namely: freedom, participation and accountability.

- **Challenges to CSO participation in the APRM**

Participants identified a number of challenges to CSO participation in the APRM. First, there is the issue of waning political support and goodwill for the APRM in several countries that have signed on to the process. This has contributed to the gradual reduction of spaces for engagement with CSOs in the APRM. In Ethiopia, civil space has been shrinking and Civil Society Organisations have had to strategize to push back this threat. Second, there are no effective ways to ensure that input from CSOs are incorporated in the APR process. Whilst Civil Society could participate in the country self-assessments, CSOs could not be sure that the APR Reports would reflect their views. This situation is worsened by the fact that States have not been compelled to publish the country self-assessment reports. Third, it has been difficult to select CSOs with enough specialization to meet the needs of the APRM, especially as relates to governance. Creeping politicization of the CSO sector has aggravated the problem. Fourth, there is the ever-present challenge of low capacity which impacts on the quality of Civil Society participation.

- **Reducing the complexity of the APR process**

Some participants believed that implementation of the APRM would gain a lot of speed if the complexity of the process was reduced. In addition, there should be mechanisms to measure the impact or contribution of the APRM to democratic governance and development on the continent. Dr Akwetey asserted that that in Africa, several aspects of development must necessarily be executed concurrently and not sequentially as happened in the West. And this has partly contributed to the apparent complexity of the

APRM. However, continuous research would help improve APRM methodology and effectiveness.

SESSION IV: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE APRM

Objective: To discuss the roles and responsibilities of Parliamentarians in the APRM country and continental processes

Chair
• **Losseni Cisse, APRM, Burkina Faso**

Speakers
• **Hon. Mabiletsa Isaac Stephen, Pan African Parliament**
• **Hon. Alhaji Muntaka Mubarak Mohammed**

Summary of Presentations

Hon. Mabiletsa led the presentation on the role and responsibilities of parliamentarians in the APRM. He noted that accession to the APRM rests with the Executive arm of government. The Executive has all the tools of power at their disposal – resources of personnel, funds, etc. Parliamentarians are only effective as long as the principles of separation of powers and the rule of law operate well. With regard to the APRM, the role and responsibilities of the parliamentarian can be situated within the core functions of the Legislature. First, the representative role of parliament means that the parliamentarian has the duty to ensure that the views of the people are well represented in the APRM country reports. Second, the parliamentarian can exercise an oversight function by asking questions of the Executive on the performance of the state in regard to APRM principles and standards. Third, parliamentarians have the responsibility to cultivate links between the Citizenry, Civil Society and Parliament in order to enact appropriate laws to enhance social and political accountability.

The Parliamentarian must also monitor, through the Public Accounts Committee, the application of financial resources allocated for the implementation of APRM recommendations and programmes. Finally, parliamentarians would have to set up a

special Parliamentary Select Committee to interface with NEPAD/APRM Teams and other stakeholders in the execution of APRM principles and standards.

At the continental level, the Pan African Parliament (PAP) collaborates with AU organs and other strategic partners to execute APRM standards and principles. The PAP also exercises an oversight role in countries already committed to APRM principles and standards.

Hon. Muntaka Mohammed reinforced the presentation made by Hon. Mabiletsa but lamented the conspicuous omission of parliament in the APRM Memorandum of Understanding. He argued that there is overemphasis on the role of the Executive arm of government to the neglect of the representatives of the citizens who are envisaged to lead the APR process. Consequently, there are no clear guidelines for parliaments to engage with the ARP process. Worse still, accurate and relevant information is difficult to come by. And in the midst of all that, the parliament of Ghana, for example, seems to have no legal power to invite the National APRM Governing Council to answer questions and provide parliament with information.

In spite of the above challenges, there are still opportunities for parliament to influence the APR process. Parliamentarians can ensure that the APRM is always on government agenda. They could facilitate information dissemination on the APRM to their constituents. In addition, parliament could spearhead the enactment of an Act to guide the country review processes which would detail the roles of stakeholders, including parliament itself. Passing legislation would assist in achieving the tenets of the APR Process and the implementation of the NPoA. Besides, an Act would help insulate the APR process from instability due to changes in government. Finally, the CRR should be debated in National Parliaments and not only at the Pan African Parliament as stipulated in the MOU of the APRM.

Plenary Discussion
Following the informative presentations, participants discussed:
- Disparity in roles between the Executive and the Legislature in the APRM;
- Partisanship in national parliaments; and
- Involvement of the Speaker of Parliament in APRM.

- **Disparity in roles between the Executive and the Legislature in the APRM**

There was agreement among participants that parliamentarians have not been actively and adequately engaged in the APRM. Roles in the APRM have been skewed towards the Executive arm of government. It was however pointed out that attempts are being made to get parliamentarians on board the APR Process. In Ghana, national APRM progress reports are tabled in parliament whilst briefing sessions have been organized for the appropriate parliamentary select committee. These briefings have been infrequent because of high cost.

- **Partisanship in national parliaments**

It was also observed that there is excessive partisan rancour in most African parliaments which could work to derail the APRM. A participant argued that in a normal institutional environment where each arm of government played its role to advance the public interest, involving parliamentarians would have been a matter of course. In Benin, for instance, there appears to be permanent opposition and acrimony among political parties so that national budgets have had to be passed by decree. In such an environment, APRM issues cannot be debated objectively. The situation in Botswana is no different. Participants urged parliamentarians to subordinate partisan interests to national interest in order to promote good governance and development through the APRM.

- **Involvement of the Speaker of Parliament in APRM**

It was recommended that National APRM Governing Councils should engage Parliament at the level of the Speaker who would then table APRM reports in parliament before they are referred to the appropriate Parliamentary Select Committee. This way, APRM issues would find their way back to the floor of parliament for legislators to engage with the issues.

SESSION V: ROLES OF RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS IN THE APRM

Objectives: To discuss the role of research institutions, as well as experts in the promotion of the APRM

Chair
- **Alex Gboyega – APRM, Nigeria**

Speakers
- **Tsoeu Petlane** – South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA)
- **Kojo Busia** – United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Summary of Presentations

Tsoeu Petlane began his presentation by recounting the role the South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA) has played in the APRM. He said SAIIA has been one of the Technical Research Institutions (TRIs) of the APRM in South Africa. It has also built research alliances with other TRIs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in twenty (20) APRM countries. This alliance has entailed the provision of training and capacity building for submissions, research and lobbying in these countries. SAIIA has also provided resource persons to assist with the APRM in Lesotho, Zambia, Kenya and Uganda. The Institute produces books and documents on governance and the APRM. SAIIA publications include the APRM toolkit and manuals. Presentations have also been made to official APRM-AU Structures and the PAP. Currently, SAIIA is participating in the review of the APRM Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

Multiple challenges confront research institutions like SAIIA in their work. Governments have been hesitant because of fear of politicization of the process by the media, political opposition and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Governments also question how APRM critique relates to election mandate. Cost-benefit analysis and the intangibility of the value the process adds for various actors present a significant challenge. Moreover there is the challenge of country capacity – technical, human and financial resources. SAIIA has had to help some APRM countries devise ways to raise funds in support of the process.

In order for the APRM to succeed, it would be crucial to accept that politicization and misunderstandings are inevitable. Research coalitions, both local and international, would have to be built as countries persevere in the knowledge that the APR Process is a continuous learning curve. It is also necessary for countries to leverage strengths and deepen APRM traction. Achieving APRM buy-in by stakeholders and putting in place regional knowledge-based institutions such as the proposed West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM would be central to the successful implementation of the APRM.

Kojo Busia for his part laid out some of the criteria for selecting Technical Research Institutions to participate in the APRM. He further touched on emerging trends in the international development research arena, the role of international research institutions and the challenges to APRM Research in Africa. Dr Busia was categorical that the APRM has a precise methodology for conducting research on the APRM. And the role of Technical Research Institutions (TRIs) has been clearly defined in response to the concern that policymaking in Africa is not evidence-based.

First, Technical Research Institutions (TRIs) are expected to conduct scientific, evidence-based research to determine citizens' perceptions of governance structures and processes in APRM countries. Second, TRIs must have the institutional capacity to participate in research on the APRM. The emphasis is on institutional capacity building as part for the long term rather than have individual experts coming in as consultants. Third, TRIs are required to exhibit professionalism in their work – they should be insulated from political influence.

Dr Busia indicated that two categories of TRIs would be needed for the APRM. The first category would be expected to work upstream at the level of the Country Self-Assessment. The other category which could be said to be working downstream would be engaged at the level of NPoA implementation to gauge how far policies and recommendations have been carried out, as well as their impact. TRIs would also be engaged in mapping NPoA onto medium term development and expenditure frameworks of APRM countries. Monitoring and Evaluation would be an important part of research work.

Though international research institutions are now paying attention to APRM research, they are not mandated to participate in the national processes. However, Pan African Research Institutes are establishing themselves as premier TRIs on the APRM. In principle, the APRM should be open to research in the global arena. But the APRM is a unique process with a precise methodology that must be understood by the people engaged in the process. Otherwise the APRM would be misinterpreted. Besides, knowledge is not neutral. Knowledge is hegemonic and there is verifiable history of countries using knowledge to dominate others. Dominant institutions in the global political economy have systematically used certain paradigms to perpetuate their self-interests. African Research Institutions should exercise leadership in forging and framing

research agendas for the APRM and feeding the knowledge generated into the mechanism to foster growth and improvement of the APRM.

Dr Busia catalogued some of the challenges and constraints on research by indigenous African Technical Research Institutions. First, TRIs that work on the APRM tend to be trusteeship organisations and not constituency-based organisations. These are specialized knowledge-based organisations without political constituencies. Consequently, these TRIs are only able to document the state of specific knowledge but they lack the legitimacy to canvass for particular policy positions. Second, research funds are not readily available. This makes it difficult to ensure rigorous research that have all the flexibility to validate, test and analyze data before compiling the report. Such resource constraints can compromise the integrity of indigenous TRIs. The third constraint is commitment on the part of TRIs. The APRM is founded on values and it is imperative that TRIs demonstrate substantial commitment to APRM values and principles. The APRM has been fashioned with a clear methodology, process and a set of values and principles that must be respected.

Plenary Discussion

The presentations were followed by brief discussions of some pertinent issues:
- APRM Research coordination and feedback mechanisms;
- Leveraging the expertise of Research Institutions to add value to the APR Process;
- The most suitable research methods for the APRM.

- **APRM Research coordination and feedback mechanisms**
A participant asked a question regarding how to coordinate research on the APRM and feed research findings back into the process, especially at the level of the APRM Forum. Dr Busia responded that feedback into the APRM would occur at two levels. The first level is the country report which addresses country-specific issues. In this sense, the country report itself is feedback on what citizens think of the state of governance in the country. For instance, it was Uganda's Country Report that informed the Ugandan President that the people thought that presidential term limit was a major governance issue. The second source of feedback is research information on cross-cutting issues such as managing diversity, land governance, gender issues, and election-related violence. These generate a lot of information which could be fed back into the APRM at the level of the Forum.

- **Leveraging the expertise of Research Institutions to add value to the APR Process**

The point was made that think tanks and other research institutions provide additional perspectives to the APR Process which are quite different from what the country review reports provide. Additionally, the expertise of these think tanks could be leveraged to add value to the APR Process with regard to monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and information dissemination generally.

- **The most suitable research methods for the APRM.**

A participant wondered if qualitative research methods could be more useful to the APRM because the review would want to capture the voices and nuances of the people. Illiteracy levels are high in Africa and this seems to tilt in favour of qualitative research methods that would be able to gauge attitudes, behaviors and experiences other than quantitative methods. It was argued that within the context of the APRM, there is no preference for qualitative or quantitative methods. The questions put to individual citizens are qualitative. They measure their perceptions of governance. These surveys are then quantified into a data that gives an indication of where the country stands. Qualitative and quantitative research methods are all needed, as well as validation workshops which confirm some of these findings. There are standardized research instruments that are being used across APRM countries which have proved very effective. There is no need to reinvent the wheel.

SESSION VI: ROLES OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COMMISSIONS IN THE APRM

Objective: To discuss the role of Planning Commissions/Ministries and other public institutions in the implementation of the APRM

Chair
- **Alex Gboyega – APRM, Nigeria**

Speakers
- Kenneth Owusu – National Development Planning Commission, Ghana

- Sylvia Angey Ufoyuru – National Planning Authority, Uganda

Summary of Presentations

Kenneth Owusu talked about the role of the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) of Ghana in implementing the NPoA of the APRM. Mr Owusu underlined the necessity of a National Development Policy Framework. This affords the opportunity to integrate disparate national development agendas, including the APRM, and sectoral commitments into one comprehensive development policy framework. The role of the NDPC in the implementation of the NPoA was, first, to ensure that it is adequately captured in the national development policy framework. At the time Ghana prepared its NPoA in June, 2005, a medium term national development policy framework, GPRS II, had been prepared to guide government agenda. Consequently the NPoA was reviewed and mapped onto GPRS II.

Further, a number of processes were undertaken to ensure full integration of the NPoA into the GPRS II. The first step was to update the cost of the medium term development policy to include the cost of the APRM. Also, the indicators for measuring progress of implementation of the NPoA and the GPRS II were harmonized. Lastly, the NPoA was coded in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework to facilitate tracking of resource allocation to the APRM related activities on an annual basis.

Another role the NDPC played in implementing the NPoA was to ensure that national planning, monitoring and evaluation systems were used to guarantee greater success in operationalizing and domesticating the NPoA of the APRM even to the district level. Finally, the NDPC helped to reduce the possible duplication of efforts and high transaction cost associated with such programmes.

Sylvia Angey Ufoyuru began her presentation by providing a brief background to Uganda's National Planning Authority (NPA). She explained that the mandate of the NPA is to produce comprehensive and integrated development plans for Uganda, and to ensure coordination and harmonization of development planning in order to eliminate duplication of functions. It also monitors and evaluates the effectiveness and impact of development programmes and the performance of the Ugandan economy. In relation to the APRM, the National Planning Authority performs several functions. The NPA ensures that the APR Process is aligned with existing policy decisions and medium-term planning processes. It also coordinates the participation of all relevant line ministries in the APR

Process and consults with them to ensure implementation of recommendations arising from the review. Secretarial, technical and administrative support to the APR Process is provided by the National Planning Authority of Uganda.

With regard to the implementation of the APRM, the National Planning Authority (NPA) was designated the National Focal Point Institution to ensure that NEPAD and the APRM are integrated into the national development planning processes. A thirteen-member APRM National Governing Council was also appointed and mandated to independently monitor the implementation of the NPoA. The National Planning Authority (NPA) and the National Governing Council of the APRM then worked together to integrate the Programme of Action (POA) into a five-year National Development Plan (NDP). The APRM Country Review Report (CRR) and the POA were used as the base documents for the preparation of the National Development Plan (NDP). The POA has also been integrated into national budgets and are funded through the annual budgets of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA's) under the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework. Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA's) together with other non-state governance stakeholders have been engaged by the NPA to ensure coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the POA. Budget Call Circulars issued annually by the Ministry of Finance directs MDA's to integrate the POA into their programmes.

Plenary Discussions

There was limited discussion after the two presentations for two reasons. First, the two presentations seem to have provided very clear descriptions of the role national development planning agencies are playing in implementing the APRM. Second, the presentations followed hard on the heels of two preceding presentations on the role of research institutions in the APRM. This reduced the amount of time available for the plenary discussions. That notwithstanding, three issues came up for discussion:
- Representation of persons with disability in the APRM
- Decentralized development planning
- Selection of NPA Executive Board Members

- **Representation of persons with disability in the APRM**

It was observed that in the presentation by Uganda, the list of identified stakeholders of the APRM did not include persons with disability. Yet, Uganda is known to be a disability-friendly nation. But participants were informed that persons with disability are not excluded from the APR Process in Uganda. They are represented by the National Union of Disabled Persons.

- **Decentralized development planning**

A participant expressed concern that development planning in Uganda, and to some extent Ghana, is not adequately decentralized. In Botswana, a bottom-up approach ensures that development plans from villages and towns feed into a district development plan which is subsequently integrated into a national development plan. In addition, not much information was provided in terms of monitoring and evaluating how development plans are implemented. In her response, Sylvia Angey Ufoyuru mentioned that decentralization has been practised in Uganda since 1997 and could have helped with bottom-up planning. But the process of preparing the National development Plans has shown that some guiding principles were needed from the top to guide the bottom. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were also provided for in the development implementation strategy. There are quarterly and annual reviews. And there are plans to have a mid-term review and a final evaluation after the implementation period.

- **Selection of NPA Executive Board Members**

The Ugandan presentation also mentioned that there are a lot of ethnic groups in the country. This provoked a question from one of the participants who wanted to understand how the members of the Executive Board of the National Planning Authority are appointed. Participants were informed that Uganda has five major zones or regions. One representative from each of these five (5) zones constitutes the Executive Board. Even so, gender and religious considerations remain equally important.

SESSION VII: THE KNOWLEDGE-BASED APRM ORGANISATION FOR WEST AFRICA

Objective: To present the Objectives, Components, Structures and Management of WACAA

Chair
Zemenay Lakew – UNDP
Speakers
- S. K. B. Asante – APRM, Ghana
- Ousmane Batoko – Vice Chair, APRM, Benin

Summary of Presentation

S. K. B. Asante started his presentation by informing participants that rather than make two presentations, the Ghana National APRM Governing Council and the APRM Commission of Benin had agreed to present a common paper on the West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM (WACAA). He indicated that the WACAA Concept Paper drew on a proposal prepared by Professor Alain Grandbois of the University of Quebec at Montreal, Dr Francis Appiah of Ghana, Ambassador Assisi of Benin and himself, Professor S. K. B. Asante. It was prepared in April, 2009, at a retreat in Takoradi in Ghana.

The rationale for the WACAA could be located in the position Ghana found herself in the APRM implementation. By 2006, Ghana had become the trailblazer in APRM implementation in Africa, having been the first African country to be peer reviewed. Ghana then began sharing her experiences with other African countries such as Benin, South Africa, Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania and many others. In order to help accelerate the APRM implementation, Ghana felt the need to institutionalize collaborations she had had with Benin and other ECOWAS countries. In 2007, contact was made with Professor Alain Grandbois and the University of Quebec at Montreal, Canada, for North American institutional and financial support.

In June, 2008, the first APRM Conference was held in North America to discuss the establishment of a sub-regional knowledge-based organisation in West Africa. Conference attendees comprised Benin, Mali, Ghana, Burkina Faso and representatives of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canadian Development Research Agency (CDRA) and Partnership Africa-Canada (PAC). In April, 2009, a roundtable conference was held in Ghana on the Project. It was the conference that actually named the project as the West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM (WACAA).

S. K. B. Asante emphasized that the main goal of the WACAA is to promote good governance and democracy in the West African region. This is one of the major thematic areas of the APRM. But the general objective is to promote and enhance APRM implementation in West African countries through the management of a shared regional knowledge-based organization. Specifically, the Centre will:

- Establish and manage a shared regional knowledge-based organisation that would coordinate the production, dissemination and sharing of knowledge and information on the APRM in West Africa;
- Promote civil society participation, popular ownership and bottom-up development strategy through civic education;
- Promote sensitization, awareness creation and public education using communication and information strategies including the media;
- Decentralize the APRM implementation process to enable it to engage civil society participants at the district and rural levels to foster ownership and decentralized management;
- Mobilize national and international expertise to undertake joint participatory action research as an overall strategy on the APRM to enhance national capacities and to interrogate and create new knowledge to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of the APRM;
- Share lessons learned and best practices to increase collaboration and networking, as well as strengthening capacities among the APRM participating countries in west Africa;
- Foster policies and programmes that promote intra-country and inter-country dialogue through the APRM to promote regional cooperation and integration. This is particularly important because regional integration has been a key element in West African development strategy right from independence.

WACAA is unique in a number of ways. First, it brings together experiences of countries like Ghana and Benin who are in the post-assessment phase. It also brings together countries that have acceded to the APRM and are just about to go through the process. Capturing the different levels of APRM implementation among the different countries would enable the effective monitoring and evaluation of the process at the grassroots. Second, WACAA brings together French-speaking, English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries. This will help explore novel ways for collaboration among civil society across national and linguistic boundaries. Third, the WACAA Project will add

value to research and enhance its potential as an instrument for promoting good governance in Africa.

S. K. B. Asante enumerated some of the benefits of the WACAA:

- The regional approach has the potential to be cost-effective in generating and disseminating knowledge and information about the APRM;
- WACAA will help manage the perennial constraints of capacity among APRM countries;
- WACAA will mobilize expertise across countries and make this available to all partners. This will provide the much needed sense of African ownership for sustainable development;
- The WACAA will facilitate the building of common and shared standards, benchmarks and policies. This will enhance the promotion of good governance and provide criteria for best practices and ultimately foster transparency, credibility and integrity of the process;
- As a common regional platform, WACAA can facilitate the coordination of efforts at promoting efficiency as well as provide grounds for developing a common framework for interrogating non-performance, non-conformity and practices that might undermine the credibility and integrity of the APRM;
- ECOWAS as a regional organization would also benefit immensely from WACAA. First, it will provide the essential bedrock for regional cooperation and sustainable development. Second, WACAA will contribute to breaking down the linguistic barriers which have tended to impede ECOWAS integration. Third, the active participation in the APRM of Civil Society, Non-governmental Organisations, private sector and people at the grassroots will enhance ECOWAS partnerships with these groups which play an important role in promoting the aims and objectives of ECOWAS.

S. K. B. Asante informed conference participants that a number of critical issues of the WACAA were up for discussion. These include:
- The structure the WACAA should take in order to realize the objectives of the project;
- How the WACAA should be managed;
- Sustainable funding for the WACAA;
- Relationships that should exist between the WACAA and other sub-regional and continental organisations, as well as relationships with development partners.

Plenary Discussions

Participants engaged in a lively discussion of the issues that were raised in the presentation. Of particular interest to participants were:

- The origin of the WACAA concept;
- Sustainable funding for the WACAA project;
- Relationships between WACAA and other regional and continental bodies;
- Leadership of WACAA

- **Origin of the WACAA concept**

Some participants were concerned about the active involvement of external, non-African institutions and individuals in the conception of the WACCA. They raised questions on how the principles of the APRM in terms of ensuring African ownership and leadership of the APR Process could be reconciled with the seemingly external genesis of the WACCA as a concept. Participants also wanted to know what is envisaged for external collaborators on the WACAA project, especially what the role the University of Quebec at Montreal would play once the Centre is established.

Professor S. K. Adjepong intervened by assuring conference participants that the WACAA idea originated from the Ghana and Benin APRM Governing Councils. The external collaborators who were cited in the presentations only facilitated the process to establish the knowledge-based regional centre. He argued that sometimes Africans are compelled to swallow their pride and accept funding from external sources because of resource constraints. But after the initial funding for the WACAA, African countries should increase their financial support for the Centre whilst funding from Partners decrease. This would help to sustain the initiative. He agreed with participants that if the APRM is African owned and led, then any derivatives of the Mechanism should follow suit. Professor S. K. B. Asante assured participants that WACAA would be committed to the fundamental principles of the APRM and would not sell out to any external benefactors.

A participant suggested that as a tribute to the immense role Dr Francis Appiah played in the concept development of the WACAA, the Centre should be named after him.

- **Sustainable funding for the WACAA project**

Opinions were divided over how sustainable funding sources could be secured for the WACAA Project. There were participants who strongly felt that funding for the APRM and related institutions should be provided from within the continent. Others, including Professor S. K. Adjepong of the Ghana APRM Governing Council, were persuaded that funding from global institutions like the United Nations should not pose any threats to the principles of the APRM since African countries contribute to the United Nations Organisation. African countries would be penalising themselves unnecessarily if they rejected external funding support for the WACAA project.

The Chair for the session, Zemenay Lakew, observed that often such projects are greeted with euphoria but adequate provisions are not laid out to ensure that the projects are sustained. External funding carries the risk of loss of control over policies, prescriptions and recommendations that emerge. She reminded participants that currently, many African nations are in arrears with their annual subscriptions to support the APRM.

That notwithstanding, the Chair further mentioned that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) could support APR processes without any attached strings. Zemenay Lakew admitted that donor countries sometimes pressure the UNDP to furnish them with confidential information such as information contained within the CRR. This is because donor countries must account to their parliaments for the donations they provide to countries. Dr Busia believed that cynicism surrounding donor support is rooted in the objective realities of contemporary development partnerships. The integrity of the APRM should be protected against the imperial objectives of partnerships and external funding support.

Another participant stressed that sustaining the project should be the preoccupation whilst maintaining African ownership and leadership. It was emphasized that developing strategic partnerships would be useful in to mobilise financial resources for the maintenance of the WACAA. Additionally, innovative ways should be found to raise resources to sustain the project. There was a suggestion that a separate forum should

be organised for the purpose of detailed deliberations on sustainable funding for the WACCA.

- **Relationships between WACAA and other regional and continental bodies**

The point was made that the relationship between the WACAA and other institutions on and outside the continent should be clearly defined, especially the relationship with the continental APRM Secretariat. This is important in the light of the kind of relationship that currently exists between the APRM and NEPAD. Another participant stressed that the WACAA cannot work in isolation from other institutions and regions of the continent – West Africa cannot make strides in governance if the other sub-regional blocs are retrogressing in governance. Additionally, there are several lessons to borrow from other parts of the continent. Mauritius, for instance, has just been reviewed but as a middle-income country it has considerable experiences to share. Channels of communication should be created between the WACCA and other institutions and regions of Africa. Professor S. K. Asante assured participants that the WACAA does not seek to work in isolation from existing institutions. Neither does the WACAA seek to cocoon itself from the other sub-regional blocs of the continent. On the contrary, the WACAA seeks active engagement with the institutions on the continent. The birth of WACAA should stimulate the establishment of similar centres in the other sub-regional blocs of the continent to accelerate the unification of Africa.

- **Leadership of the WACAA**

One participant suggested that since the WACAA would have a mix of French-speaking, English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries the leadership of the Centre should be rotated accordingly to ensure fairness.

2.4 Day Three Workshop

WORKSHOP ON THE WEST AFRICA CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE APRM (WACAA)

Objective: To discuss the objectives, leadership, management and components of WACAA

Chair
- **Marcus Dahn, Liberia**

The final day of the conference was characterized by breakout sessions during which participants were free to join any group of their choice based on interest. The groups deliberated on the following:

- Structure of the WACAA (Group One)
- Leadership and management of the WACAA (Group Two)
- Funding for the WACAA (Group Three)
- Relationships, Partnerships and Communication Channels of the WACAA (Group Four)

Group deliberations were held after which representatives took turns to present their recommendations in plenary. Follow-up questions and discussions were allowed after each presentation.

Summary of Group Presentations

Structure of the WACAA – Group One

- The WACAA should have a Board of Governors (BoG) comprising all the Chairpersons of National APRM Governing Councils in West Africa. Some members of the Board should constitute a Bureau which would supervise the routine operations of the Secretariat that will be set up as part of the structure. The Secretariat would consult the Bureau when the need arises.

- Next to the BoG should be the Scientific Committee. Membership of this Committee should be non-permanent and should comprise Research Institutions

and individual researchers mainly within West Africa. Researchers from other parts of Africa and beyond may form part of its membership.

- There should be a Secretariat which should be headed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Secretariat should have departments as required for the effective and efficient execution of WACAA objectives. For starters, the Secretariat could have the CEO and a secretary or administrative officer who should be computer literate.

- The WACAA should work with the continental APRM Secretariat and ECOWAS towards the realisation of common objectives.

- African ownership and leadership of the Centre should not be compromised.

- The WACAA should exhibit the African culture of doing business and work within the African Governance Architecture.

Leadership and Management of the WACAA – Group Two

- There should be a Governing Board which should consist of one representative each from all the countries that have acceded to the APRM in West Africa. Those countries yet to accede should be given observer status.

- The BoG should appoint their leadership. But the positions of President and Vice-President should be held for a term of two years only. These positions should rotate between English-Speaking and French-Speaking West Africa.

- There should be a Management Committee consisting of members of the Governing Board. Members of the Management Committee should be assigned portfolios.

- There should be a Secretariat and an Executive Committee.

Funding for the WACAA – Group Three

- Stable, secure and sustainable sources of funding should be guaranteed for the centre. The financial management of the WACAA should be ensured by the centre and a department or body should be established to that effect.

- Funding for the Centre must be done in a transparent manner. There should be a compulsory accounting formula to enhance transparency and accountability.

- The amount of funding the Centre would require should be determined once the essential structures are established.

- The first source of funding for the WACAA should be the countries of West Africa which have acceded to the mechanism. These APRM member states should demonstrate their political commitment to the WACAA project. A minimum contribution should be determined. But member states could contribute more than the minimum if they have the capacity to do so.

- The second funding source should be the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) through its governance programme. This should be the largest source of funding for the WACAA. The contribution of ECOWAS is important because at the regional workshop on the implementation of the APRM which was held in Accra in August, 2009, ECOWAS committed itself to the establishment of the Centre.

- Sub-regional organisations such as the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union and the West African Development Bank should constitute the third source of funding for the WACAA. Also, contributors in this category should include the West Africa Monetary Institute (WAMI) and the Central Bank of West African States.

- The WACAA should operate within the framework of the AGA to facilitate funding from the AU as well as the AfDB.

- The fifth source of funding should be the private sector – banks and telecommunications companies in the sub-region. The Centre should set up an investment fund in the Banks that would generate interest to fund the activities of the Centre.

- Another source of funding should be international development partners such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Economic Commission on Africa (ECA) and others which together can play immense roles in the APRM. Credible sources of funding should be sought wherever they might be found.

- Equally important is the fact that the Centre should generate its own sources of funding through its activities once it is established. It should include fund mobilisation activities in its operations.

- When the WACAA comes on stream with the full complement of structures, it should be necessary to define the operational and activity budgets. It would be crucial at this time for the pioneering countries to step up the leadership of the process and make the initial contribution to the start-up fund for the Centre. Additionally, it would be practical to organise a round-table conference with development partners who would show interest and absorb some of the budget lines. The conference should involve states, civil society, private sector and also development partners. It would offer an opportunity to present the project and the various manifestations of interest should be collated.

- It should also be necessary to undertake advocacy in conjunction with the ECOWAS, AU and other institutions in order to cover ground in terms of policy and space.

Relationships, Partnerships and Communication Channels – Group Four

- The national APRM Governing Councils should be the conveners in terms of engagement with the WACCA. This is because the Governing Councils are recognised in the permanent structures of the APR processes at the country level.

- There should be direct involvement with ECOWAS to ensure accreditation and recognition of the WACAA as a legitimate institution. Such involvement would also be useful in cultivating the interest of ECOWAS towards the project. The WACAA would have the comparative advantage of evidence-based research which can be used for purposeful and strategic advocacy and engagement. This would represent significant value-addition for ECOWAS as a regional institution.

- The Centre should assist in coordinating activities that are relevant to the region. It should lend support to resource building and resource mobilisation.

- In respect of Civil Society engagement, the Centre should focus on core constituencies at the national and regional levels in order not to reinvent the wheel. The Centre should seek to build a strong relationship with the West African

Civil Society Forum which already has a formal relationship with ECOWAS, as well as the West African APRM Panel.

- The WACAA should work with CSOs that are working on governance issues. These CSOs would have the comparative advantage to carry some of the messages across from what the WACAA would be engaged in. Besides, CSOs would provide valuable feedback at the country level.

- The Centre should consider offering training to CSOs to develop their capacity to monitor and track the APR Process. By engaging with CSOs and building their capacity, the WACAA would be strengthening relationships with CSOs.

- The WACAA should energize and mobilize strong momentum towards moving the APRM forward.

- Peer learning within the APRM should be institutionalised and strengthened by the WACAA.

- The WACAA should ensure effective coordination with the APRM Secretariat and the Panel in South Africa by establishing open communication channels and supporting these institutions where they are constrained because of capacity.

- The Centre should engage with the Pan African Parliament and move the process beyond the APRM. It should contribute to issues relating to the accelerated ratification of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

- In regard to external donors and partnerships, the WACAA should focus on its objectives to maintain its integrity in line with the core principles of the APRM – freedom, participatory development and accountability.

- Finally, there should be a shift from simply mobilising financial resources to exploring how resources could be leveraged as partnerships are mobilised and alliances are built.

Plenary Discussion

The Group presentations were followed by discussions on issues of leadership and the relationship between the WACAA and existing regional and continental institutions of the APRM and the AU.

- **Leadership**

Some participants proposed that in order to build trust and forestall any leadership crises in the future, clear rules and guidelines on tenure and succession should be produced for the WACAA process. At the level of the BoGs there should be term limits so that members of the Board do not overstay. Also, there is the need to develop a common vision and mission at the outset.

It would be important to reflect on the realities of the continent to be able to design an institution of excellence that would produce results. Reverend Professor S. K. Adjepong believed that in relation to tenure and succession for the BoG, the WACAA could be guided by the recommendations that the Committee of Focal Points produced for reconstituting the APRM Panel. The Committee especially took into account the need to maintain institutional memory. This would prove invaluable to the WACAA Process.

- **The relationship between the WACAA and other APRM institutions**

It was suggested by one of the participants that in order that the WACAA does not give the impression that it was competing with the APRM Panel in South Africa, the WACAA should present whatever it does to the Panel for subsequent tabling before the APRM Forum for it to be accepted. Some participants disagreed. Reverend Professor S. K. Adjepong argued that WACAA did not need the fiat of the APRM Panel before it acts. He explained that the WACAA is an exercise at the level of the APRM Governing Councils. It is a kind of peer interaction which does not detract from the goals of the APRM – regional cooperation and integration. The WACAA represents a bottom-up approach to the APRM project. It is not a parallel institution because WACAA and other similar centres that would be established in other sub-regions of the continent would not swallow the functions of the Panel. Rather, these regional centres would complement the efforts of the APRM Panel and the Secretariat in South Africa.

A participant recommended that to forestall any confusion of roles, the relationships between the WACAA, the APRM Secretariat and the National APRM Governing Councils be clearly spelt out. Other participants stressed that the WACAA would be playing a complementary role to the Panel. It would also be assisting with coordination within the

regional context. However, the details of the relationship ought to be spelt out to clear any ambiguities.

2.5 Drafting of Conference Communique

A four-member panel was constituted to draft the conference communiqué. The panel members were:

- Sam Cudjoe, Ghana
- Prof Alex Gboyega, Nigeria
  Zacharie Richard Akplogan, Benin
- Mamadou Moustapha Seck, Senegal

Participant inputs were incorporated into the draft which was then finalized and approved. The final communiqué is in Appendix

2.6   Closing Ceremony

Remarks were made by several dignitaries to bring down the curtain on the three-day conference. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, Hon Chris Kpodo, was present to give his closing remarks.

Speakers
- S. K. Adjepong, Chair of APRM Governing Council, Ghana
- Ousmane Batoko, Vice Chair, APRM Commission, Benin
- Zemenay Lakew, UNDP
- Hon Chris Kpodo, Dep Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ghana

Summary

In his closing remarks, **Rev. Prof. S. K. Adjepong** pointed out that WACAA must lead to the establishment of similar platforms in the other sub-regions of the continent. He outlined some key lessons from the conference to include: WACAA should not be a parallel institution to those already in existence; WACAA must align itself with strategic partnerships particularly regarding funding support; WACAA must play the advocacy role for APRM; and Parliaments have a crucial role to play in advancing the APRM.

Rev Adjepong described the APRM as a paradigm shift representing, perhaps, the most important subset of the new paradigm for Africa's development. It is important to keep in mind the targets that should be achieved by the APRM for Africa: freedom to engage the state, participatory development and accountability. He ended his remarks by thanking all the conference participants, sponsors and strategic partners.

Ousmane Batoko was full of commendation for the 'African nature' of the conference. He congratulated conference participants for the rich diversity of perspectives they brought to bear. He was optimistic that WACAA will fulfill its mission of promoting the APRM and good governance. He thanked all participants and hoped for even more fruitful deliberations in the future.

Zemenay Lakew expressed appreciation for the privilege of taking part in the workshop. She traced Ghana's pacesetting role in the APRM, recounting significant contributions made by Ghana in refining the methodology of the APRM. While praising Ghana for her trail blazing strides, she said WACAA represents an important milestone in the actualization of the APRM. She pledged the commitment of the UNDP to the establishment of WACAA, adding that the work of the UNDP will not be done until the fruits of the APRM are visible.

Hon Chris Kpodo expressed, on behalf of the government and people of Ghana, his deepest appreciation to the participants. He underscored the importance of the conference by describing it as a major contribution towards Africa's renaissance, and was optimistic that the enthusiasm and knowledge of the conference will serve as a springboard to overcome the interlocking challenges facing the implementation of the APRM.

The Deputy Minister acknowledged that in Ghana, the APRM has provided a clear picture of strengths and shortfalls which have led to changes in the National Plan of Action. These changes include: the Amendment of the Constitutive Act of the African Union; the Amendment of The AU Convention of Preventing and Combating Corruption; the Amendment of the AU Non-aggression and Common Defense Pact; and the Abolishment of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

Hon Kpodo stressed that global trends point to the need to forge closer integration among countries and regions, citing the Lagos Plan of Action in 1980 and the Abuja

Treaty in 1991 as early attempts by African countries towards integration. In this vein, the objectives of the conference were in line with fostering integration and good governance. The time was right, therefore, to establish a sub-regional chairing house to coordinate the production, dissemination and sharing of knowledge and information on the APRM. He pledged the support of the Ghana Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM.

3.0   Media Briefing

At the end of the conference, resource persons provided a briefing to the media on conference proceedings.

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Appendix I

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Sunday, 17th October 2010	
Arrival of participants	
Monday, 18th October 2010:	Focus of the Day: Opening Ceremony and 'setting the tone'
08h00 – 09h00	Registration of participants
09h00 - 10h30	**OPENING CEREMONY**
09h05 – 9h10	Welcome address by Rev Prof S.K. Adjepong, Chairman, National African Peer Review- Governing Council, Ghana
09h10 – 09h20	Statement by M. Ousmane Batoko, Vice Chairman, National APRM Commission of Benin
09h20 – 09h30	Statement by Professor Prof Rene Cote, Representativive, University of Quebec at Montreal, Canada
09h30 – 09h35	Remarks by Ruby Sandhu-Rojn, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative
09h35 – 09h40	Remarks by Dr. Kojo Busia, OIC, APRM Support Unit, UNECA
09h40 – 09h45	Remarks by Dr. Patrick Agoma, AfDB
09h45 – 10h05	cultural interlude
10h05 – 10h25	Keynote Address by H.E. John Mahama, the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana
10h25 – 10h45	Group photograph
10h40	**End of Opening Ceremony**
10h45 – 11h00	Coffee Break

Day One: Monday, October 18, 2010		
11h00 – 12h30	**TOPIC 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE AFRICAN GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE** Objective: To present the African Governance Architecuture and the position of the APRM in this structure **Chairperson: Rev Prof S.K. Adjepong,** Chair of National APRM Governing Council, Ghana	Plenary
11h00 – 11h20	The Evolving African Governance Architecture (AGA) – **Dr. Kojo Busia,** UNECA	
11h20 – 11h40	The Role of Regional Economic Commissions in the (AGA) – **Mr. Eyesan Ookurududu,** ECOWAS Commission	
11h40 – 12h00	The APRM implementation, monitoring and its relationship with other African processes and initiatives – **Mr. Dalmar Jama,** APR Secretariat	
12h00 – 12h30	Discussions	
12h30 – 14h00	LUNCH BREAK	
14h00 – 17h00	**Topic 2: OVERVIEW OF THE APR PROCESS IN 5 WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES** Objective: To present different cases of implementation of the APRM in West Africa **Chairperson: Monsieur Ousmane Batoko,** Vice Chair, APRM Commission, Benin	Plenary
14h00 – 14h20	APRM implementation in Benin – **Mme. Konou Idohou Leontine**	
14h20 – 14h40	APRM implementation in Burkina Faso – **M. Losseni Cisse**	

14h40 – 15h00	APRM implementation in Ghana – **Mr. Sam Cudjoe**	
15h00 – 15h20	**Health Break**	
15h20 – 15h40	APRM implementation in Mali – **M. Bani Toure**	
15h40 – 16h00	APRM implementation in Nigeria – **Prof Alex Gboyega**	
16h00 – 17h00	Discussions	
18h00 – 20h00	**Cocktail**	

Day Two: Tuesday, October 19, 2010		
9h00 – 10h30	**TOPIC 3: ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE APRM** Objective: To discuss the role of civil society actors in the APRM and knowledge-based organizations **Chairperson: M. Losseni Cisse,** APRM, Burkina Faso	Plenary
9h00 – 9h20	Presentation of Institute of Democratic Governance (IDEG, Ghana) – **Dr. Emmanuel Akwetey**	
9h20 – 9h40	Presentation by Social Watch, Benin – **Prof. Assah Gustave**	
9h40 – 10h00	Presentation by Partnership Africa-Canada – **M. Ousmane Deme**	

10h00 – 10h30	Discussions	
10h30 – 10h50	**Health Break**	
10h50 – 12h20	**Topic 4: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE APRM** Objective: To discuss the roles and responsibilities of parliamentarians in the APRM country and continental processes. **Chairperson: M. Losseni Cissi,** APRM, Burkina Faso	Plenary
10h50 – 11h10	Presentation by Pan African Parliament – **Hon. Mabiletsa Isaac Stephan**	
11h10 – 11h30	Presentation by Ghana Parliament – **Hon. Alhaji Muntaka Mubarak Mohammed**	
11h30 – 12h00	Discussions	
12h00 – 13h40	**Lunch Break**	
13h40 – 15h10	**TOPIC 5: THE ROLE OF RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS IN THE APRM** Objective: To discuss the role or research institutions, as well as experts in the promotion ot the APRM **Chairperson: Prof. Alex Gboyega,** APRM Commission, Nigeria	
13h40 – 14h00	Presentation by South African Institute of International Affairs – **Mr. Tsoeu Retlane**	
14h00 – 14h20	Presentation by United Nations Economic Commission for Africa – **Dr. Kojo Busia**	
14h20 – 14h50	Discussions	

14h50 – 15h10	Health Break	
15h10 – 16h30	**TOPIC 6: ROLE OF NATIONAL DEVELOPING PLANNING COMMISSIONS IN THE APRM** Objective: To discuss the role of Planning Commissions/Ministires and other public institutions in the implementation of the APRM **Chairperson: Prof. Alex Agboyega,** APRM Commission, Nigeria	Plenary
15h10 – 15h30	Presentation by National Development Planning Commission, Ghana – **Mr. Kenneth Owusu**	
15h30 – 15h50	Presentation by National Planning Authority, Uganda – **Ms. Silvia Angey Ufoyuru**	
15h50 – 16h20	Discussions	
16h20 – 17h20	**TOPIC 7: THE KNOWLEDGE-BASED APRM ORGANIZATION FOR WEST AFRICA** Objective: To present the objectives, components, structures and management of the WACAA **Chairperson: ECOWAS Commission**	Plenary
16h20 – 17h30	Presentation by Ghana **(Prof S.K.B. Asante)** and Benin **(M. Zacharia Richard Akplogan)**	
	Formation of Groups	

Day Three: Wednesday, October 20, 2010		
9h00 – 10h30	**WORKSHOP ON WACAA** Objective: To discuss the objectives, components, leadership and management of WACAA	Breakout sessions
9h00 – 10h30	Group 1: Structure of the WACAA Group 2: Leadership and management of the WACAA Group 3: Funding for the WACAA (Group Three) Group 4: Relationships, Partnerships and Communication Channels of the WACAA	
10h30 – 10h45	**Health Break**	
10h45 – 11h35	**Report from Breakout Sessions** **Chair: Marcus Dahn, Liberia**	Plenary
11h35 – 12h05	Discussions	
12h05 – 13h30	**Lunch Break**	
13h30 – 15h00	**DRAFTING CON CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE** Objective: To draft Conference Communiqué	
13h30 – 15h00	Summary of decisions taken on the WACAA and drafting of Conference Communiqué	
15h00 – 15h30	Adoption of Conference Communique	

16h30 – 17h20	**CLOSING CEREMONY**
16h30 – 16h40	Remarks by **Rev. Prof. S.K. Adjepong,** Chairperson, NAPRM-GC, Ghana
16h40 – 16h50	Remarks by **M. Ousmane Batoko,** Vice Chair, National APRM Commission, Benin
16h50 – 17h00	Remarks by **Zemenay Lakew**, UNDP representative
17h00 – 17h20	Closing Remarks by **Hon Chris Kpedo,** Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ghana
17h20 – 18h00	**PRESS BRIEFING**
17h20 – 17h30	Declaration of Communiqué – Ghana/Benin
17h30 – 18h00	Question time for Press

Appendix II
OPENING REMARKS BY COTE RENE, UNIVERSITY OF QUEBEC AT MONTREAL

Honorable Vice-president of the Republic of Ghana, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

It is with great humility that I make this presentation to you this morning. I owe my presence here in Accra today to four people, three of whom are absent from this gathering.

The first of these three is the late Dr. Francis Appiah whom I met for the first time in spring 2008 in Montreal. I recall him sharing with me his passion for his work with the National Commission of the APRM in Ghana. It is with great sadness that we were announced his death last spring. Indeed, it is on the shoulders of this forerunner that we have assembled here to have this conference.

The second person is Frank Elmar whom I met also in the spring of 2008. Many thanks to Elmar, whose work at Hanns Seidel Foundation enabled Dr. Appiah to come to UQAM. I spoke with Elmar a couple of days back and he extends his apologies for not being able to take part in this important conference.

The third person is my colleague Alain Grandbois, professor at UQAM, who came to Accra on two occasions, after hosting Dr. Appiah at his residence in the spring and fall of 2008. It was he who laid the necessary groundwork, long before the conference we are beginning today.

It was Alain who sourced the needed funding for this conference. I spoke last Thursday with Alain, who cannot join us, and he sends his best wishes for the success of the conference. He also asks me to tell you that he will continue to support the proposed creation of a center for the advancement of the APRM in West Africa. UQAM, and particularly the Faculty of Political Science and Law that I represent today, wants to continue to be active partners in North America to support the creation of this center. Already much of the funding for the organization of this conference came from a grant obtained by UQAM from the Centre for Research on International Development, IDRC. For that I must thank them. Let me also mention in passing another Canadian organization – Partnership Africa Canada – which supported us in the organization of the conference.

Alain has also been in contact with representatives of the Canadian International Development Agency and the World Bank, all of whom have expressed interest in the project. UQAM may therefore be a strategic ally to sourcing funds to support the creation of the center. UQAM can also participate with African universities in training or dissemination of knowledge.

Francophone University, UQAM can also open doors to other universities, speaking this time on the North American continent.

Finally, the fourth person by whose help I am here today is Sophie D'Aoust, who worked on the planning of the conference and its financing. Sophie has also had intensive training on the functioning of the bureaucracy in our university. Without her dedication and loyalty to the proposed conference, I would not be here. Thank you for your attention and I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Appendix III
KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN DRAMANI MAHAMA, VICE PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Chairperson, Chairpersons of APRM National Councils and Commissions, Members of Parliament, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Representatives from APRM Strategic Partners, Invited Guests, Our friends from the Media, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by congratulating the conference organizers for a punctual start to this conference.

Nine years ago in Lusaka, Zambia, Africa began a bold march to address the challenges of governance that had plagued our continent over decades following independence. In this exercise we did not avoid core issues of bad governance and poor leadership which had been a major constraint to our development. Today, there is a growing consensus in Africa that good governance and better leadership are key elements in promoting growth and development and enabling African countries to achieve the desired prosperity that we are striving for.

Chairperson, the APRM has indeed been a bold and ambitious undertaking. It ensures that member countries adopt policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental integration, through the sharing of experiences and enforcement of best practices.

It does not only underscore the new political will of African leaders to serve the wellbeing of their peoples, but it challenges the citizenry and other stakeholders to act responsibly. The fact that as many as thirty (30) countries, representing more than 70 percent of the continent's population, have acceded to the process is an indication of Africa's commitment to this new regime.

Chairperson, in Ghana we have endeavoured to make the APRM relevant to our development process. To this end, the APRM has been managed along three main fronts; namely Policy Formulation, Resource Allocation and Monitoring and Evaluation.

Chairperson, through the country Self-Assessment and Formulation of the National Programme of Action, the citizens' role in the policy formulation process has been greatly enhanced. The National Programme of Action highlighted the strengths as well as weaknesses and deficiencies in our governance architecture. We have tried to

capture the concerns and recommendations raised in the National Programme of Action in all our policy formulations.

Considering that the expressed needs and aspirations of our people are captured in our Development Frameworks, this has a direct bearing on our allocations of resources to the priority areas most desired by our people. Increasingly, government has allocated more resources to interventions aimed at reducing and eliminating poverty. It is therefore not surprising that as a nation we are on target to meet the Millennium Development Goal target of reducing poverty by half.

Chairperson, accountability is the lifeblood of democratic governance. But there cannot be accountability if there is a deliberate exclusion of our people from the governance process. As a country we have made a conscious effort through the APRM to involve citizens in the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the National Programme of Action. The introduction of the District APRM Oversight Committees provides yet another avenue for civil society perspectives to be captured. Validated reports from the conduct of the District Governance Assessments by civil society are debated at the District Assemblies. Today, we find civil society providing empirical data for local authorities to address governance and service delivery challenges.

Chairperson, as a people, Africans have a lot to learn from one another. Regional integration has been the vision of African leaders since the early years of independence. The reality of African integration cannot be realized if we do not address the issues of governance and leadership. Today, the APRM affords us the unique opportunity to move this vision a step further.

Chairperson, this conference could not have come at a better time. As a country we are fully committed to this initiative which seeks to coordinate the production, dissemination and sharing of knowledge and information on the APRM as well as to decentralize the APRM implementation process to enhance effective governance in local authorities.

Chairperson, I must caution, however, that we must not dissipate our energies and resources in the creation of parallel institutions. It is in this regard that I am particularly glad that the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, is championing this knowledge-based initiative.

Let me once again welcome you all to Ghana and wish you fruitful deliberations and we will all be looking forward to the final conclusions of the conference.

Once again I say 'AKWAABA'; 'Akwaaba' means welcome.

Appendix IV

APRM IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER AFRICAN PROCESSES, MR DALMAR

1.0 BACKGROUND

- In 2003 African Heads of State created the APRM.
- The APRM is a self-introspection tool owned and driven by Africans themselves.
- Participation in the APRM is through voluntary accession.
- The APRM seeks to foster adoption of policies, standards and practices leading to political stability, high economic growth and sustainable development.
- The overarching goal of the APRM is to accelerate progress towards **sub-regional** and continental integration through sharing of experiences and best practice.
- The APRM is designed to be open, inclusive, participatory, transparent and broad-based.

2.0 POTENTIAL OF THE APRM

- The APRM will allow us to ensure that our leaders and all stakeholders are accountable.
- It seeks to inject transparency into our governance structures through collective, sustainable and equitable solutions.
- It is a gradual process that will build momentum towards better governance structures.
- It will put into motion the highly desired African renaissance.
- It will lead to the eventual acceleration of technical cooperation throughout Africa.

3.0 OPERATIONAL STRUCTURES OF THE APRM

- Top level: forum of heads of state and government.

- Actual reviews: conducted by the Panel of Eminent Persons (currently 5 in number) –

Oversee the conduct of the review mission and ensure integrity of the process

- Continental Secretariat (South Africa); takes care of the secretarial, technical and coordinating services for the APRM.

- Continental structure, country level structure, no sub-regional structures yet (intermediate layer to be created)

4.0 APRM PROCESSES

The APRM has 5 processes.

5.0 WHERE WE ARE

- 29 countries have acceded representing 74% of the African population.
- In 2006, the African Governance Forum (hosted by the ECA and the UNDP) focused on the implementation of the APRM; challenges and recommendations.
- Recommendations included:
  ❖ Revision of the questionnaire;
  ❖ Drawing up a more effective research design methodology document that would allow the national structures to better run their reviews to obtain better country self-assessment reports;
  ❖ Development of a process manual to guide the review mission;
  ❖ Strengthening of communication strategy at the APRM secretariat; and
  ❖ Development of a clear definition for identifying national stakeholder representatives in the APR process.

- Currently, with our strategic partners (AfDB, ECA, UNDP and technical research institutes across Africa) we are revising the base document in the mechanism under a project on streamlining and fast tracking the APRM. We will be coming out with a new questionnaire or new tool that will help guide us in the next set of reviews. Validation workshops etc.

- Currently involved in strengthening the secretariat and implementing a new communication strategy.

- We are represented in the organizing committees of AGF8 due to take place in 2011. AGF8 will concentrate on the areas of Election Management, Management of Diversity, which are key areas highlighted from 13 reviews so far.

- We have completed 13 peer reviews across Africa many of which are in West Africa.

- We are putting together a Best Practices Manual to guide the dissemination of best practices across Africa.

- We have had a first Extraordinary Summit in 2008 where we discussed about 5 cross-cutting issues. Planning a second Extraordinary Summit

- In terms of the secretariat, country review missions will be soon dispatched to Zambia and Kenya, Support Missions to Senegal and Sierra Leone, Advance Missions to Gabon, Djibouti, Malawi and Togo. We will be launching the review report for Mozambique, Lesotho and Mali. We will be completing the peer review of Ethiopia. We will be having a stakeholder validation workshop as part of efforts to streamlining the APRM.

- One of the most important phases we started few years ago which is rapidly gaining momentum is the Implementation and Monitoring of our National Programmes of Action. This is important because in order to guarantee real progress, NPoAs must be implemented. There is therefore the need for the APRM to move from the diagnosis phase to implementation.

- For example, our country review report highlighted the possibility of ethnic violence in Kenya as well as xenophobic attacks in South Africa. These were well highlighted before they happened.

- One of the outcomes of the validation workshop will be a Monitoring and Reporting Framework for the APRM.

Appendix V
IMPLEMENTING THE APRM: THE GHANA EXPERIENCE
BY MR SAMUEL CUDJOE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- Ghana was among the first 6 countries to officially accede to the APRM by signing the MOU in March 2003
- Declared its intention to implement the APRM in 2003

2.0 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- To provide national leadership to manage the implementation of the APRM, a National African Peer Review Governing Council (NAPRM-GC) was inaugurated on March 18, 2004 ;
- The Governing Council is the Focal Point for APRM in Ghana.
- In keeping with the APRM principles of "independence of the APRM process and freedom from manipulation" members of the Governing Council were not made to swear an Oath of Allegiance to the President.
- To further strengthen their independence and ensure the credibility of the APR process, the Governing Council has been granted **administrative** and **financial** independence.

3.0 REVIEW PROCESS

- **National Consultations**

To ensure that the country self-assessment exercise was anchored on national ownership and participation by the people, the Governing Council conducted extensive dialogue and engagement with stakeholders from all over the country.

- **Technical Review Teams**

To make the assessment independent, credible and technically competent with the active involvement of civil society organizations, the Governing Council appointed four think tanks to be the lead institutions to assess the country in the four thematic areas of the APRM.

- **Country Review Mission**

A 16-member Country Review Mission (CRM) comprising experts from the APR Secretariat, partner institutions, and independent consultants from 12 African countries came to Ghana from 4th to 16th April, 2005, to undertake an external audit or assessment of the Country Self-Assessment Report prepared by Ghanaians.

- **Ghana's Peer Review**

Ghana was peer reviewed on January 22, 2006 during a meeting of the APRM Forum in Khartoum, Sudan. Ghana was represented by ex-President J. A. Kufuor.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

- The APRM's NPOA mapped onto with the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) to exploit synergies and ensure more targeted use of scarce resources.
- The NPOA is implemented through the policy framework and strategic plans of the line Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) through the GPRS II.
- The NPOA is financed through the annual budget and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).
- Implementation strategy was to ensure that the NPOA was not treated as an add-on to the national development agenda.

5.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Ghana's APRM M&E Framework developed to conform to APRM Guidelines on M&E Ghana's APRM M&E Framework aims to track:

- ❖ Activities implemented under the NPoA;
- ❖ Resources invested in the implementation;
- ❖ Outcomes achieved in the implementation; and
- ❖ Provide "non-political" platform for national discourse

- **Ministries, Depts & Agencies**: report on progress of implementation of activities as indicated in NPoA
- **CSOs; Technical/Research Inst; Experts:** provide independent assessment on progress of implementation.

- ❖ **CSOs** provide annual reports to Secretariat (<u>free of charge</u>).

❖ **Technical Institutions & Experts** are contracted to assess progress of implementation.

- **Citizens (Beneficiaries)** provide information about the relevance and quality of output and services.

- **Resource Allocation**: track resources allocated through the national budget under the MDBS. Secretariat does not track "funds provided directly by DPs to CSOs).

- **Ministries, Depts and Agencies** have Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Departments (PPMEDs).

- APRM Secretariat collects data/information generated by the PPMEDs.

- **National Development Planning Commission (NDPC)** tracks progress on implementation of national development agenda.

- **Citizens:** Citizen Report Cards.
- What is the role of ordinary citizens in M&E?
- District Oversight Committees (DOCs) represent CS perspective on governance and service delivery at local level.
- DOCs are local representatives of recognizable CSOs.
- Role in APRM is to (1) educate and sensitize (2) monitor implementation of NPOA at district level.
- Monitoring done through **Citizen Report Cards** and **Focus Group Discussions.**
- Validation exercises.
- DOC Reports are discussed at the District Assemblies.
- It identifies gaps and weaknesses in governance and service delivery.
- Influencing district planning, prioritizing and allocation of resources.

6.0 OUTCOMES OF IMPLEMENTATION

- The APRM is contributing to opening up space for civil society engagement in national dialogue.
- Passage of key legislation – Domestic Violence Act; Disability Act; Whistleblower Protection Act; Amendments to the Criminal Code; Human Trafficking Act.

- Initiation of key social intervention programmes: Free Maternal Health Care; Livelihood Enhancement and Empowerment Programme (LEAP); and Northern Development Fund/Savanna Accelerated Development Authority.
- Establishment of a Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture to deal with chieftaincy issues.
- Constitution Review process.
- Reduction in Aid Dependency from a high of 47% of GDP to below 20% of GDP.

7.0 CHALLENGES

- Buy-in of populace (communication strategy)
- Aligning with existing M&E systems (timing of reporting and capacity of MDAs)
- Tracking resource allocations (MDGs, APRM, etc.)
- Funding for Technical Institutions and Experts and DOC monitoring
- Tabling APRM Progress Reports at Parliament
- Role of institutions such as Ghana Statistical Service (governance indicators)

Appendix VI

CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT APRM SUB-REGIONAL CONFERENCE
ALISA HOTEL, GHANA
18TH – 20TH OCT 2010

1. Participants from several APRM-participating countries met in Accra, Ghana on 18th – 20th 2010 to share the different experiences regarding the implementation of the APRM in West Africa and to deliberate on the establishment of a Regional Centre for the advancement of the APRM.

2. The conference was declared open by the Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency Mr. John Dramani Mahama, who reaffirmed the support of the Government of Ghana to the APRM process and the Centre.

3. Participants appreciated that the APRM has become established as a powerful instrument for promoting good governance. It was noted that since 2003, twenty-nine (29) African countries have acceded to the APRM and thirteen (13) countries have completed the review process. Nine (9) West African countries have acceded while five (5) have completed their review.

4. While recognizing the efforts being made by the APRM Continental Secretariat, participants felt the need for institutionalization of mutual support among the countries and reinforcement of the APRM through the establishment of a sub-regional Centre. Such a Centre should be guided by the fundamental principles of the APRM, such as,
- African ownership and leadership;
- Utilization of existing African institutions;
- The use of non-bureaucratic structures; and
- Promotion of peer learning.

5. Participants endorsed, in principle, the idea of establishing such a Centre, within the context of the emerging African Governance Architecture, and should be promoted in consultation with the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons and the Continental APRM Secretariat, the ECOWAS Commission, and other pertinent sub-regional bodies.

6. The main objectives of the Centre are to promote good governance and democracy in the West African sub-region and to promote and enhance the APRM implementation process in the West African countries through:

- Establishment and management of shared regional knowledge-based organization that would coordinate the production, dissemination and sharing of knowledge and information on the APRM in West Africa;
- Promotion of civil society participation, popular ownership and bottom-up development strategy through civic education;
- Promotion, sensitization, awareness creation and public education, using communication and information strategies including the media; and
- The acceleration of the implementation of the APRM in participating countries as well as encourage non-member countries in West Africa to accede to it.

7. It was agreed that the National Governing Councils of the various countries would be the main drivers of the centre, collaborating effectively with their regional, national and in-country local stakeholders.

8. The Centre should be a knowledge-based organization, using research and advocacy generated by academic and research institutions to leverage the promotion of good governance in the region.

9. The Centre should be founded on the basis of stable and sustainable source of funding. To ensure that the Centre is owned and led by Africans, participating countries should demonstrate their commitment by contributing towards its financial sustainability. Recalling the support extended by ECOWAS towards the establishment of a centre of excellence to promote APRM values at the Regional Workshop on APRM held in Accra on 12th – 14th August 2009, the participants agreed that ECOWAS should be a major source of funding for the Centre.

10. The conference was attended by participants from countries in the sub-region – Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo as well as from other African countries – Uganda, Kenya and Mozambique. Representatives from Parliaments, Development Planning Commissions/Departments, research institutions, and civil society organizations, as well as, UNDP, UNECA and the African Development Bank participated in the process. Partner institutions such as Africa Governance Monitoring and Advocacy Project

(AFRIMAP), Partnership Africa-Canada (PAC), Pan-African Parliament (PAP), SAIIA, also attended the conference.

11. The conference expressed its appreciation to the National APRM-GC, the APRM Commission of Benin and UQAM for organizing the conference, and IDRC and UNDP for sponsoring the Conference and participating in it.

Adopted in Accra on this day, Wednesday, 20th October 2010.

Appendix VII

CLOSING REMARKS BY REV PROF S.K. ADJEPONG, CHAIRMAN OF NAPRM-GC, GHANA

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, in the last three days, we have had a very productive interaction. We have learnt a lot of things. We have shared a lot of things. The interaction has been very rich.

It is not in doubt that the WACAA initiative will not have the desired impact unless it leads to the establishment of similar platforms in the other sub-regions of the continent. We therefore expect that the outcome of this conference will generate discussion by our sister commissions or councils on the establishment of similar centres in their respective sub-regions.

The concerns that have clearly emerged is that WACAA should not be a parallel institution to those that are already in existence and that it should operate under the umbrella of ECOWAS and through it feed into the African Governance Architecture at the AU level. A number of lessons have been learnt in the three (3) days that we have been together, deliberating on the theme of the conference and on other issues relating to APRM in particular and governance in general. I will mention just a few.

One, we must inform ourselves of the principles and dynamics of strategic partnerships particularly with regard to funding support. Two, advocacy for APRM country to country is essential but is currently lacking. WACAA and other similar centres can be very effective advocates for APRM through the organization of conferences, workshops, capacity building, dissemination of information on APRM, etc. etc. Three, Parliament's role in the implementation of the APRM is crucial. Parliaments are also to be advised to ensure that their committees work hard and report to the House when they participate an discussions or attend workshops on APRM and other issues. As it is said, parliament is only as strong as its committees make it.

Let me end my remarks by saying that on balance we have fared well. But the actual work has just begun. We have to maintain the momentum we have gathered individually and collectively. We have reminded ourselves of the fact that APRM is a paradigm shift. It is perhaps the most important subset of the new paradigm for Africa's development.

The three important targets that should be achieved by the APRM for Africa are one, freedom to engage the state, two, participatory development and three, accountability.

Let us continue to be inspired in our resolve to march on without stopping to the new Africa.

Long Live APRM! Long Live Africa!

Finally on behalf of the APRM commission of Benin and the national APRM Governing Council of Ghana, I wish to thank all the speakers at this conference and our sponsors namely IDRC through the University of Quebec at Montreal and UNDP. We also express our sincere gratitude to all the strategic partners of APRM. I thank you for your attention.

Appendix VIII

CLOSING REMARKS BY VICE CHAIR OF APR GOVERNING COUNCIL, BENIN, OUSMANE BATOKO

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, here we are at the end of a three-day conference. An African conference conceived by Africans and organized by Africans. A conference organized in an African manner obviously, in a brotherhood that characterizes Africans in free talk. But also, and especially, a conference for the promotion of good governance on the African continent.

We can only be happy about and congratulate ourselves and congratulate all those who brought in their different perspectives and contributions to the discussions at this conference. At this time I think that we all agree together that the outcome of this conference has been great and the results are obvious for all to see. I am convinced that WACAA will fulfill the mission that we will entrust to it, which is the promotion of the APRM and especially the promotion of good governance. It is through this good governance that the African continent can actually be on the path to development.

I would like to say thank you to each one of you and hope that the next meeting we are going to hold will provide even greater satisfaction and advance our mission. Ladies and gentlemen I thank you.

Appendix IX

REMARKS BY ZEMENAY LAKEW, UNDP REPRESENTATIVE

Hon Deputy Minister, Chairman of the Ghana APRM Governing Council, Vice Chair of the Benin Governing Council, Distinguished Participants, It gives me indeed a great pleasure to have taken part in this workshop. On behalf of the UNDP, on my own behalf as well as our strategic partners, I really want to express my appreciation for the privilege of being associated with this very exciting mechanism.

Ghana has done it again! Ghana has made it first in the APRM. Ghana was one of the first countries to have been peer reviewed and I had the privilege of being a member of the review team. During the review of Ghana, there were still many fundamental questions in our minds on how the review was going to be conducted. Through the process of review Ghana has made significant contribution to the mechanism. For instance the domestication of the questionnaire, the research methodologies that were introduced were all started by Ghana. The general guidelines at the time did not specify whether the review were to be done through gender surveys, focus group discussions or through relevant issues that were peculiar to the national circumstance. All that we learnt from Ghana.

Again in that tradition of being first, we have now reached, here in Ghana, a very important milestone, where we have now discussed the endorsement and establishment of the West African Centre for the Advancement of the APRM.

The UNDP has been supportive of the APRM from its early days and will continue to support the mechanism all the way. Our work will not be done until the fruits of the ARPM are visible. It is in this light that I pledge our unbridled support to WACAA. We consider it a privilege to be a part of this process and wish to assure you that whatever decisions you make we will be there to support you. Once again thank you very much.

Appendix X

SPEECH BY HON CHRIS KPODO, DEP MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Distinguished brothers and sisters, and friends, we are all gathered here with a clear agenda – to have an open discussion on how to promote good governance within the West African sub-region using the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as a catalyst. In the last two days, days that I consider very productive, and part of today, you have gone through and listened to stakeholders telling you about the state of play, and the opportunities and the obstacles to overcome in pursuing your goals. I am here this afternoon to acknowledge your shared commitment and your collective determination to reaffirm your vision, your foresight, and sense of direction towards the realization of our common goals. I am here also, to express on behalf of the government and people of Ghana, and my own name, our sincere thanks to you all for the high level of deliberations and the invaluable recommendations which you have emerged from this important conference.

The fact that we have spent three days in Accra talking about how to promote good governance in Africa is encouraging for the continent. It is a major contribution towards the march to Africa's renaissance. I have just been informed that in your deliberations you have appreciated exciting and innovative approaches being undertaken in some countries to implement the APRM. You have also shared opportunities as well as interlocking challenges confronting the implementation of the APRM. I am in no doubt at all, that the energy, enthusiasm, determination and knowledge that you all demonstrated in these days will surely enable us to effectively overcome these challenges.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the APRM offers us a unique opportunity to reshape the fortunes of Africa in terms of good governance. In Ghana, it has opened up the opportunity to look at ourselves in the mirror. In so doing, we have acknowledged our strengths as well as our shortfalls. As a country, therefore, we have sought to address some of these shortfalls by ratifying some of the outstanding quotes and standings identified in the National Programme of Action.

These, if I may recall, include the amendment of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, The AU Convention of Preventing and Combating Corruption and the AU Non-aggression and Common Defense Pact. We have also abolished the Ministry of

Parliamentary Affairs which tended to blur the line between the Executive and the Legislature. As a Pan African conscious country, Ghana has happily shared her lessons and experiences with a number of our sister African countries, particularly in such areas as the establishment of constitutional bodies such as the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE), an independent electoral commission to the formation of an interparty advisory group. We have also opened our doors to enable us learn from the experiences of other countries.

Distinguished Chairperson, global trends point to the need to forge closer integration among countries and regions. Since independence, African countries have made tremendous efforts at integration. The Lagos Plan of Action in 1980 and the signing of the Abuja Treaty in 1991 all demonstrate our common desire and our shared commitment to succeed. The objectives of this conference move us one step closer to achieving this desire of good governance. That we need a sub-regional chairing house to coordinate the production, dissemination, and sharing of knowledge and information on the APRM is an initiative whose time has come. We welcome the fact that the initiative will help sub-regional countries that have acceded to the APRM to prudently utilize resources by avoiding the reinvention of new wheels in the implementation of the mechanism. I believe that your message on the important role that regional economic communities should play to reshape the governance landscape has come across loud and clear.

Given your fruitful discussions, information sharing and networking demonstrated in the last two days, I am more than convinced that this conference has been very productive and successful. It indeed brings us hope for a brighter future. As a Ministry certainly placed in the African integration process, we are in full support of this initiative, and as was intimated some few days ago to the chairman of the Governing Council, we will do all within our power and resources to see to the realization of this project.

Finally, distinguished Chairperson, I am fully aware that your deliberations have made it clear and convincing the national and sub-regional institutions especially the regional economic communities should play a leadership role in promoting the APRM. You have challenged all of us to be more innovative in our approaches to entrenching good governance in the sub-region and we undertake to do just that. It is in accepting this challenge that I wish to reaffirm the support of the Government of Ghana to all your efforts, especially to the Centre that you are working on. Let me, distinguished brothers and sisters and friends, end by thanking you all for work well done.

We hope in spite of the hard work you've done, you found some time to enjoy a bit of Ghanaian hospitality. As you prepare to return to your respective countries, we wish you Godspeed, guidance and protection. We anxiously look forward to working together again on this important project. I thank you for your attention.