



## REVIEWING A DECADE OF PEER LEARNING AND PROJECTING A FUTURE OF GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

17-18 MAY ADDIS ABABA ETHIOPIA

### Outcomes of the Civil Society Colloquium:

#### THE APRM +10: REVIEWING A DECADE OF PEER LEARNING AND PROJECTING A FUTURE OF GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA 17 – 18 MAY 2013, AFRICA HALL (UNECA), ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA



“The APRM should stay its course as the moral conscience of our development mechanisms...the fact that the chair of NEPAD, President Macky Sall of Senegal, was forced to make the comment that ‘as a mechanism on governance, the APRM should practice what it preaches’, is very narrative of the present predicament”, said Abdoulie Janneh, former Executive director of the Economic Commission of Africa.

Delegates pointed to the mechanism’s mandate to facilitate a partnership between the governments and their citizens to focus on key issues that promote diversity, economic governance, and socio-economic development, and generally agreed that more must be done to ensure that such ambitions move from rhetoric to reality.

Many raised concerns over the lack of political will to implement the National Programmes of Action, which are pledges made by African leaders to address shortfalls in the areas of transparency and accountability in managing state resources, fighting poverty and consolidating growth and prosperity, promoting and practicing free and fair elections on the African continent.

Delegates also agreed that the mere fact that 33 states have acceded to the APRM is a positive development, which has resulted in greater dialogue between governments and their citizens.

However, evidence does show that the APRM's full potential is yet to be fully realized. Certain states, and leaders have often times ignored the red flags raised by the African mechanism. In cases of Kenya and Uganda, warning was advanced on the urgent need for electoral reforms. In Nigeria, alarm bells rang out at government's inability to manage and redistribute oil revenue in a sustainable and equitable manner, through corporate social responsibility, especially within the oil producing states. In South Africa, warnings were advanced on the issues of xenophobia and rampant corruption. In Mali and Mozambique issues of exclusion and marginalisation were raised. In all cases the respective governments disregarded the warnings, which resulted in civil unrest, human suffering and loss of life and property.

"After 50 years of this monumental unity project, which seeks to bring us together in a borderless continent and after 10 years of the APRM, which seeks to deliver good governance and real democracy to the peoples of Africa, we should now focus on practice instead of policy alone. On paper, it seems, Africa is healthy, wealthy and well managed, and its citizens are happy. But in actuality the opposite, for the most part, holds true," said a delegate at the meeting.

Delegates agreed to continue engaging with the APRM, because it is the best instrument Africa has in striving for equality, diversity, plurality of voices and ideas, prosperity, growth and opportunity. But this would only be possible if the process of the APRM is improved, to cater for the voices of the African citizenry, who demand that they be governed well.

Non-state actors needed to do more in engaging with the APRM in a more effective and efficient way. Delegates challenged African civil society to take responsibility for some of the shortfalls in implementing the National Programmes of Action, and endeavour to recommit to the process as a priority. It was acknowledged that the APRM needed to be demystified, so that the African citizenry can better appreciate and understand it in order to fully participate in its implementation.