

**STATEMENT READ ON BEHALF OF**

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**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, REGIONAL  
INTEGRATION AND NEPAD OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF GHANA**

**AT**

**THE 10<sup>TH</sup> AFRICA PARTNERSHIP FORUM**

**TOKYO, JAPAN**

**7-8 APRIL 2008**

**Excellencies,  
Development Partners of the APF Fraternity,  
Representative of the African Union Commission,  
Acting Chief Executive of the NEPAD Secretariat,  
Honourable Colleagues Ministers,  
Friends from the Civil Society Organisations,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Distinguished Invited Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

**It is with pleasure and profound gratitude that I make a statement on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Africa Partnership Forum (APF). Indeed, I deem it a great honour to be part of this august body that has set itself the important task of addressing a theme that holds the potential to contributing positively to Africa's quest for continental renewal.**

**I take the opportunity to convey our collective gratitude to the Government and people of Japan for generously hosting this meeting in the beautiful city of Tokyo. The impressive facilities put at our disposal and the vintage hospitality exhibited by Government and people of Japan are praiseworthy; and I am sure will help make our meeting successful.**

**Excellencies,**

**The theme of the 10<sup>th</sup> APF which is *'Making a Vibrant Africa a Reality through TICAD IV and the G8 Toyako Summit'* is germane to the increasing realization that agenda of the APF series should, as much as possible, be crafted towards appraising**

**the development achievements of Africa in the context of the intentions, plans, pledges and commitments mutually made by all parties in the APF fraternity. Besides, the general orientation of the 10<sup>th</sup> APF to discuss the issues of boosting economic growth, poverty reduction, environmental and climatic change, gender and the AU/NEPAD Africa Action Plan, significantly reflects the overwhelming desire to retool the APF towards assessing the milestones of progress and obstacles in actualizing the goals of the APF series regarding the lives of ordinary Africans.**

**Excellencies,**

**The key drivers of the NEPAD initiative since its inception have been; entrenching democracy and good governance, deepening regional cooperation and integration and realizing sustainable economic growth.**

**And one other strategic driver to delivering the lofty goals of the NEPAD initiative has been the call to Africans to first of all build bridges between ourselves and subsequently forge enduring partnerships towards achieving Africa's quest for a socio-economic renewal.**

**Africa has been on a growth path during this new millennium, registering for the fourth consecutive year in 2007, a real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate in excess of 5%. This is encouraging but the reality is these gains in growth have not translated in to demonstrable grand-scale poverty reduction outcomes. The growth path is still fragile as diversification of our economies is generally low and slow.**

**However, Africa continues to re-emphasise her overwhelming and collective desire to re-focus the APF on its fundamental principles of using consensus building and shared values to assess the delivery of pledges, mutual responsibilities and commitments designed to overcome the challenges confronting the African continent.**

**Excellencies,**

**We need to mutually develop specific, realistic, measurable, achievable and time-bound indicators in order to assess the delivery and fulfillment of pledges and commitments made towards Africa's rejuvenation. Indeed, it is important for us to endeavour to review each other's policies, pledges and fulfillment of commitments in an open and transparent manner.**

**We must all endeavour to find innovative ways to ensure that the object of APF reflects meaningfully in the lives of ordinary citizens of Africa. This we can all achieve if we consciously relate the issues at stake to the delivery of social equity, expressed in access of citizens to education, food, health services, sanitation and security.**

**This is the most credible way of ensuring that economic growth, gender empowerment and sustainable environmental and climatic practices are reflected in poverty reduction initiatives.**

**May I conclude by emphasising the fact that African leaders have shown their common resolve to work together even more closely in order to end poverty on the continent. While recognizing the importance of fostering a new relationship with developed countries based on mutual respect, trust, responsibility and accountability, the 10<sup>th</sup> APF gives us the opportunity to discuss issues pertinent to the development of strategies aimed at supporting the under-privileged and eliminating poverty in the long-term.**

**It is our expectation that the outcome of this meeting will inform proceedings of TICAD IV and G8 meetings to ensure that priorities for overcoming the challenges to poverty reduction in Africa are noted and addressed.**

**I thank you for your kind attention.**