

The Organisation of African Unity, which has served the continent well in fostering unity and solidarity as well completing the decolonisation process, will be transformed into the African Union, which will be better placed to respond to the challenges of globalisation. The African Union will deal comprehensively with the questions of economic, political and social challenges of the new era.

The African Union will also deal practically with issues such as:

- Greater unity and solidarity and the socio-economic integration of the continent;
- Acceleration of the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
- Promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent;
- Promotion of democratic principles and institutions of popular participation and good governance;
- Promotion, protection and prevention of the violation of human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and human rights instruments; and
- The promotion of co-operation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standard of African people.

NEPAD

In taking the continent forward, in their last OAU Summit in Lusaka, African leaders also adopted an economic blueprint for Africa's recovery; namely the New Partnership for Africa's Development, to be better able to respond to the challenge and changing international environment. The New Partnership for Africa's Development is a comprehensive programme that deals *inter-alia* with Peace Security, Democracy and Political Governance, Economic and Corporate Governance and Sub-regional and Regional Approaches to Development.

These documents can be easily accessed through the South African Government web site: www.dfa.gov.za. We have a few documents that will be distributed tonight.

This ambitious economic development programme is designed by Africans to respond to unique African challenges. It derives its legitimacy from ownership and its success to a large measure, hinges on Africans assuming leadership of the process with the international community joining in partnership with African countries. This is not a foreign imposed programme but a homegrown response to our difficult development challenges, hence it will succeed.

We need to work towards changing the negative perception of our continent as a "risky continent". In this regard, we need to deal with conflicts in a comprehensive, emphatic and expeditious manner. Of importance is the peaceful settlement of conflicts and the prevention of new ones, which, if left unresolved, breed poverty, displacement, diseases, despair and refugee crises. Accordingly, issues such as the