



**Brief to the Portfolio Committee on the meeting of African Peer Review Mechanism Report**

**1. Purpose**

- To brief Portfolio Committee Members about the summarised report of the African Peer Review Mechanism.

**2. Summary of the African Peer Review Mechanism**

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is the most effective tool for sharing and learning best practices about the development of African countries experiences. The APRM is an indigenous instrument conceived in Africa by Africans to promote and encourage the revitalisation of political democracy, economic development and achieve socio-economic progress. It is a mutually agreed instrument for self-monitoring by participating governments through which participating countries will consider seriously the impact of their domestic policies on both internal political stability and economic growth, as well as on neighbouring countries.

APRM is as an instrument created by African leaders for self assessment and to focus efforts on entrenching democratic values and good governance. South Africa stands ready to contribute and commit to the objectives of the APRM as demonstrated not only by compliance with the reporting requirements of the mechanism but by honouring our responsibility to implement the Plan of Action that is intended to achieve objectives of good governance. The Report covers the period from October 2010 to January 2013. The period saw numerous positive developments as well as new challenges which government confront in this report openly and advance plans that government has put in place to address these challenges.

The DPSA held consultative conferences in the nine provinces of the country and provided an opportunity for all the sectors to make inputs in the APRM processes. Report provides an outline of how South African government are dealing with persistent challenges of corruption, lack of capacity and skills in public finance management, violence against women, children and vulnerable groups, poverty and unemployment as well as xenophobia and racism.



- There are challenges of crime and violence, particularly against women and children;
- An integrated and holistic approach to combating HIV and AIDS will be appropriately resourced;
- An integrated and holistic approach to combating TB, malaria and other communicable diseases needs strengthening and deepening;
- Without universal access to basic rights and services, citizens cannot participate in and benefit from socio-economic development; and
- Weaknesses in civil society reduce their participation in, and impact on socio-economic development processes and outcomes, and ensuring their increased contribution to South Africa's national development imperatives.

#### **4. Key Findings on the APRM Report**

##### **4.1 Democracy and Political Governance**

- There is continuity in the use and consolidation of forums such as izimbizo (public meetings), as well as participatory processes connected to the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and Local Economic Development Plans (LEDs) at municipal levels, as well as participatory Provincial Growth and Development Strategies (PGDS). These initiatives continue to serve as the basis for participation of communities and organs of civil society in the planning and implementation of government programmes.
- Good governance is understood in this Report to entail, "the existence of efficient and accountable institutions – political, judicial, administrative, economic, corporate – and entrenched rules that promote development, human rights, respect the rule of law and ensure that people are free to participate in, and be heard on, decisions that affect their lives".
- The Community Development Workers Programme provides ambulatory workers that move from location to another helping the needy access essential government services, as part of government efforts to come closer to citizens.
- The Departments of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and the organized labour have played a vital role in ensuring the proper capacitation of the CDWs through special training and customized capacity building.
- Key among these include parliamentary and committee hearings, where citizens are engaged in conversations about policy, legislative and oversight measures, offering them an opportunity to voice their concerns and make inputs towards the improvement of their lives.



**3. The main focus of the APRM report focus on the following issues emanating from National Plan of Action**

- Racism, sexism, marginalisation, crime, lack of awareness and poor access to information impair the full enjoyment of human rights;
- Racism prevents many citizens from realising their human potential and contributes to unequal access to valued goods and services and reproduces acute social inequities;
- Violence and crime in general and against women and children, in particular, as well as the need for active engagement of all communities in the fight against crime and violence;
- Marginalised and vulnerable groups experience difficulties in making use of the institutions of justice;
- Civil society structures seek increased opportunities to contribute to and participate in the delivery and monitoring of public services;
- Corruption undermines national integrity;
- Inadequate public consultation, education and feedback in policy making;
- Underdeveloped capacity and skills in public expenditure management and monitoring;
- Blockages to service delivery;
- Lack of deeper economic integration within the SADC;
- Unemployment;
- Company legislation is not transformative and needs to be reviewed;
- Key institutions and certain social groups are underdeveloped and need to become more effective;
- Consumers and shareholders fail to assert their rights, are ill-informed and inactive;
- Governance in civil society needs development;
- No consensus among stakeholders on definitions and measurements of poverty;
- The need for more effective land use that contributes to sustainable livelihoods, especially for the rural poor;
- The need to build capacity to implement the programs of the developmental state;
- Strategies for ensuring children's nutrition, health and development need improvement;



- Expanding the programme on fostering social cohesion in order to entrench the values of human dignity, peaceful co-existence and human solidarity to root out the evils of xenophobia and racism in South African society.
- Government, in partnership with civil society and business, has intensified the fight against corruption, making it a lot more prominent in public discourses and actions.

#### 4.2 Economic Governance and Management

- Report acknowledges that the country continues to be confronted by an acute lack of capacity, especially, financial expertise to manage social programmes, public spending and facilitation of the delivery of services at the provincial, district and local levels.
- The 2011/2012 Audit outcomes reflect that the country is making progress as the number of entities and departments reporting clean audits as a key indicator of sound public finance management increase year-on-year, this is occurring at a slow pace.
- Progress has been made with regard to increasing the number of people in employment despite a continued high level of unemployment. The total number of people employed in the economy reached **13.1 million** by the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2010. Employment levels increased by 2.8% year on year and reached a level of **13, 5 million** by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2011. In 2012, the unemployment statistics followed a similar trend as the previous year; however total employment continued to increase and reached **13.7 million people**.
- Increasing levels of employment can be attributed to targeted government measures like investment in infrastructure development, new incentives for job-creating business ventures and the energetic attraction of private sector investment.
- Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) under the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has started producing positive outcomes in regard to an expanding exporter base.
- South Africa has also made efforts to strengthen trade and economic integration in Africa through the Tripartite Initiative made up of SADC, the East African Community (EAC) and the Community of East and Southern Africa (COMESA) which was launched in South Africa in 2011.
- The lack of adequate infrastructure in Southern Africa is a limitation to trade and investment growth.

#### 4.3 Corporate Governance

- New Companies Act of 2008, whose implementation began on 1 May 2011, will take time to have its benefits fully realised but represents a major step forward towards stimulating private sector growth and impact on development.



- In 2011 Parliament signed off the Draft Amendments to the Broad-Based BEE (B-BBEE) Codes of Good Practice and in 2012 - such amendments became part of the B-BBEE Act. These sought to deal with complexities and blockages in the previous framework, which had the effect of limiting black economic empowerment and thus constrain the expansion of economic ownership to previously excluded sections of society.

#### 4.4 Socio-economic development

- Increasing the pace of land reform is a priority for government. Land reform in the form of restitution and redistribution is a key enabler of rural development, a catalyst for expanded economic participation and a boon for social justice. There is general consensus that land reform is slow due to protracted processes of land purchasing and the bureaucratic nature of the processes of settling land claims.
- Government has put in place strategies and plans aimed at fast-tracking land restitution and redistribution. Government has also reviewed the Willing-Buyer Seller (WBWS) to land reform with the intention of increasing the pace of land reform.
- Measurable progress recorded under the Recapitalisation programme includes targeting specific agricultural sectors such the sugar cane farming, red meat industry, poultry farming across the country.
- Government finalised the strategic framework used to guide the work of the National Department of Health (NDoH) during the period of reporting. The Plan prioritises, amongst others, the fight against HIV/AIDS. Subsequently, the country unveiled a new National Strategic Plan (NSP) on HIV/AIDS and TB for the period 2012 – 2016, which was officially launched by President Jacob Zuma on World AIDS Day in 2011.
- Steady decline in the rate of new HIV infections and in the prevalence of AIDS in general. The decline in the rate of mortality as the result of HIV/AIDS infection is due to various government interventions that are implemented in partnership with other stakeholders.
- Launched an innovative single-dose Anti- Retroviral (ARV) regime. This single-dose regime will make it much easier for HIV/AIDS patients to use treatment necessary for prolonging their lives.
- Government has created the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) as a systemic monitoring unit to improve governance. Government continues to focus on ensuring that every child is given a good start early in life through the provision of quality Early Childhood Development (ECD).
- A task team has been assigned the responsibility of strengthening the National Mathematics, Science and Technology Strategy whose aim is to increase learners' success rate in these subjects, while increasing the capacity and numbers of teachers in these fields.
- Measureable progress in improving basic education it has acknowledged that challenges remain and it has intensified interventions aimed at addressing these. Some of these



challenges include the number of pupils still faced with a lack of proper learning facilities, the poor rate of literacy and numeracy among junior primary school pupils, teaching skills shortages (i.e. mathematics and science), and the delivery of learning material in some instances.

- Government has focussed on increasing the production of honours, masters and doctoral graduates needed to support innovation and knowledge production in our economy.
- South Africa faced a noticeable increase in service delivery protests. In response to these protests and other related delivery challenges government has intensified mechanisms aimed at improving synergies among and between national, provincial and local government levels in order to improve service delivery.
- South Africa has made significant strides in reducing poverty through income transfers, poverty supporting programmes and through access to basic services, health care and education. This is evident in feedback provided by the Anti-Poverty Strategy Discussion Document and the 3rd Country Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

## **5. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Members of the Portfolio Committee note summary report for the purpose of engaging the Department on the content APRM report to be presented.

The Portfolio Committee may therefore adopt the APRM report to allow the Department of Public Service and Administration to present the report in African Union.