



SPEECH BY THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ZIMBAMBWE,

HON. PHELEKEZELA MPHOKO

AT THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 25th
ANNIVERSARY OF THE AFRICAN CAPACITY BUILDING
FOUNDATION (ACBF)

4 MAY, 2016

- The Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Hon. Goodall Gondwe;
 - Honourable ACBF Governors here present;
 - The Chairperson of the ACBF Executive Board, Prof. Calisto Madavo and all Board members present;
 - The Minister of Finance and Economic Development and ACBF Governor for Zimbabwe, Hon Patrick Chinamasa;
 - The Executive Secretary for the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie and ACBF officials gathered here;
 - Senior Government of Zimbabwe officials here present;
 - Excellencies, members of the diplomatic corps here present;
 - Distinguished guests;
 - Ladies and gentlemen.
1. It is a great pleasure to be present at this occasion where we are celebrating the African Capacity Building Foundation's silver jubilee. I have known the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) as the organization which exclusively pays attention to capacity for our continent to be able to rise and shine. Twenty five years ago, wherever one looked in Africa, the state of capacity had been very alarming. While admitting that a lot still needs to be done, the picture is quite different today with most African countries supported with capacity building – thanks to institutions, such as the ACBF.

2. I therefore wish to thank the ACBF Board of Governors, its Executive Board, and its Secretariat, for organizing the 25th Anniversary celebration here in Harare, Zimbabwe. From the outset, in 1991, when the organization was created, the committed support of African Governments, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, UNDP and other bilateral partners has been inspiring. I am excited that ACBF has become a solid institution delivering capacity building solutions across our beloved continent.
3. We, as Zimbabwe, gladly volunteered to support and host the headquarters of the ACBF, as we were certain and very confident about the work this institution would be doing for the continent. Today, I am pleased to say that, I am not disappointed about the performance of this noble African organization which has ably delivered capacity building initiatives and solutions in almost every African country, as has also been the case with other African development institutions.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

4. Join me again in congratulating the ACBF for 25 years of remarkable growth — growth in membership, vision, effectiveness, credibility, and results achieved. ACBF is today one of a handful of the premier capacity building organizations in Africa dedicated to building and strengthening human, institutional and societal capacities on our continent.

5. Twenty five years is a major milestone for an institution, as it is for an individual. We are celebrating 25 years of achievement and work well done but this celebration is not so much a festivity. We all should bear in mind that it is a solemn occasion to pause and look back at this 25 years journey. This occasion is a golden opportunity for us to look in, look out and look ahead.
6. More importantly, the celebrations represent a moment to look ahead at the mountains we must still climb. Despite our achievements thus far, capacity remains a challenge. Thus, as we celebrate and pay homage to the founding fathers of this organization, we need to take note that we have a lot of work ahead of us.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

7. Let us take some time to reflect on the role and the importance of ACBF on the continent, especially in the new context of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 whose success will be underpinned by improved institutional capacity and critical technical skills. As Agenda 2063 takes off and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are launched, allow me to call upon ACBF to initiate more capacity building programmes for our people and institutions to achieve the desired goals.
8. In this regard, I call upon African Governments, development partners and other stakeholders to support the ACBF's efforts in

getting the number of experts, engineers, scientists and researchers needed to ensure a successful implementation of our Agenda 2063.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

9. We need to consolidate the great strides ACBF has made over the past 25 years in becoming one of the leading capacity development organizations on the continent; empowering professionals and leaders, as well as strengthening capacities of Governments, Parliaments, Civil society, private and higher learning institutions.
10. Specifically for Zimbabwe, amongst other notable support areas, ACBF supported the creation of the Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis and Research Unit (ZEPARU). This think tank has been instrumental in providing strategic studies that contributed to policy formulation in order to address various development challenges we are facing. As Zimbabwe, we greatly appreciate and value the support from ACBF.
11. The Women's University in Africa, based in Harare, is equally another success story of ACBF, which I also need to mention. Many more examples of ACBF's success story can be cited from Member countries across Africa.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

12. In 25 years of experience, ACBF has achieved a lot in supporting African countries build their capacities. This again means that more is expected from the Foundation. You will all agree with me that building the capacities as such is not enough. We are therefore expecting more from you. To my friends from the ACBF Team and its network, here is my message: you need to continue building capacities, but more importantly, support countries and institutions in avoiding brain drain by retaining, harmonizing and utilizing capacity built on the continent.
13. Now that you all agree that ACBF has done a good job and I am sure that you still need its support, I am now calling on you, my fellow Africans who have a vision for the continent in the spirit of pan-African solidarity. Here is my message to you brothers and sisters; let us support ACBF for the implementation of sustainable capacity building solutions that will ensure Africa's sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development. Future generations will never forgive us, if we do not provide the required support and attention to a pan-African institution such as ACBF.
14. Moreover, I am also urging development partners to support the Foundation in its noble efforts of building institutional and human capacities on the continent. We all have a role to play and let us be part of it with pride.

15. On the part of Zimbabwe, I want to assure you of our commitment and full support.

Ladies and gentlemen,

16. With these remarks, I declare the African Capacity Building Foundation's 25th Anniversary Celebrations officially open. I wish you very fruitful discussions, networking and knowledge sharing.
17. Thank you for your attention and I wish you a memorable silver jubilee celebration! **God Bless.**

Hon. Phelekezela Mphoko

Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe

May 4, 2016