

**OPENING REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. UHURU KENYATTA, C.G.H., PRESIDENT AND  
COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING THE 24TH  
SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE PARTICIPATING IN THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM**

Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission,

Your Excellency Dr. Mustapha Mekideche, Chairperson of the APR Panel of Eminent Persons,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to welcome you all to this Special Summit of the Committee of Heads of State and Government participating in the Africa Peer Review Mechanism here in this beautiful city of Addis Ababa. I thank you for honoring my invitation to attend this important gathering.

I thank my Brother, Prime Minister HAILEMARIAM DESALEGN, and the people of Ethiopia for the warm and friendly welcome that they have extended to us.

At the onset, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Committee of Heads of State and Government participating in the Africa Peer Review Mechanism for electing me to the position of Chairperson during our Summit in Johannesburg six months ago.

Further, allow me to convey my apologies for rescheduling the Extra-Ordinary Summit that was initially supposed to take place in Nairobi in September 2015.

The postponement was necessitated by unavoidable circumstances; but I am glad that we now have the opportunity to deal with the agenda that we had outlined for ourselves.

I am determined, with your support, to see to it that the APRM is revitalized, and regains its rightful place as an effective and innovative governance tool for our continent.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Special Summit is aimed at discussing the current challenges facing the APRM and agreeing on practical and clear ways of revitalizing this mechanism. We will also seek avenues for improving the Mechanism's relevance and impact.

As you all appreciate, the APRM process is an unprecedented initiative. It is a unique apparatus that we created voluntarily to help each participating member undertake extensive assessments in all the sectors of governance.

Since its inception in 2003, it has made significant progress. Today, 37 countries have voluntarily acceded to the APRM. Of these, 17 have been peer reviewed.

The APRM has opened up space for policy debate and fostered a culture of national dialogue between citizens and their governments. I commend Djibouti, Zambia and Tanzania which were reviewed most recently. The reviews have been key in helping us identify areas that require improvement to create enabling environment to pursue our development agenda.

It is my hope and expectation that the remaining countries will expedite the process of initiating reviews.

Despite the achievements cited above, you will all agree with me that the APRM has lost its vitality. When it was conceived, the APRM was driven with much enthusiasm because it embodied then, as it does now, the promise of entrenching good governance and accountability, which are necessary for the success of Africa's development agenda. The review process has slowed down, and half of the member states have not commenced the process.

In addition, financial contributions necessary to ensure Africa's ownership of the process have dwindled, as have contributions from strategic partners.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the APRM to achieve its full potential and take its place of pride as an African wide mechanism, it is imperative to strengthen its linkage with NEPAD programmes, engage with our Regional Economic Communities and interface with implementation of frameworks such as the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030.

We must, therefore, hasten its integration in the African Union system. This will make the mechanism more credible, relevant, and visible at the continental stage and will give impetus to our revitalization efforts.

In addition, we should actively strengthen the linkages within the APR organs namely the APR Forum, Committee of Focal Points, the Panel of Eminent Persons and the APR Secretariat.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we discuss ways to revitalize the APRM, it is critical that we look back at its inception and reflect on the values that motivated us to set up this peer review process.

The Base Document that we adopted to guide us indicated that: "The primary purpose of the APRM is to foster the adoption of policies, standards, and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental integration through sharing of experiences and reinforcement of successful best practice, including identifying deficiencies and assessing the needs for capacity building."

At the time, we were very clear in our minds that one of the most important ways that we will be able to overcome Africa's challenges was through the establishment of good governance mechanisms in our countries. This principle was true 13 years ago when we adopted it, and it is still true today.

I therefore call upon all of us to reaffirm our commitment to the purpose, spirit, and values of the African Peer Review Mechanism and to do all we can to make it something we can all be proud of.

Let us encourage the brotherly countries that have not acceded to the Mechanism to come on board. Let us also honor our financial obligations by paying our APRM subscriptions on time. Let us be the generation that entrenches good governance across our continent for the advancement of our people and future generations.

ASANTENI SANA, THANK YOU.