Remarks at the closing of the Annual Meetings 2015

Donald Kaberuka
President
African Development Bank Group

Abidjan, 29 May 2015
Mr. Chairman,
Board of Governors,
Dear Governors,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good afternoon.

As our meetings come to a close, I want to thank you once more for making it to Abidjan and to this landmark Annual Meeting to celebrate our 50th Anniversary and to usher in a new Administration.

The African Development Bank has come of age, in the last fifty years to a world class Institution it is today.

The way in which the President of this Institution is elected is an example of how Leaders of International Organizations are elected, open to all, transparent, competitive and meritorious.

I want to extend my congratulations to the candidates for the Presidency, and you Governors for conducting such a smooth election in an open spirit and good humour, a spirit that should always characterise our Institution.
I want to warmly congratulate Dr. Akinwumi Adesina for a well-deserved victory and look forward to the handover on September 1st.

I have full confidence that under Adesina’s leadership, the Bank would move to the next level and I know that you will extend the same support you gave me to the new President and his team.

As I said at the opening of this Assembly, the work for a seamless transition began some months back, and we have every intention to ensure that the new President’s assumption of duty in September is as smooth as possible, especially because of the very busy agenda for the Bank in the months to follow.

I am referring to the African Development Fund Mid-Term Review later this year and the post-2015 related activities, which will be an intensive period for the Bank.

I want to thank you again, Governors, for the support you extended to me during my tenure.

Our achievements are very much due to your support.

In a decade-long tenure, there will have been many shortcomings; there are things we might not have
done as well. I may even, most probably, have made a few mistakes.

All I can assure you is that any such shortcomings were not for lack of will – and any mistake were not what was intended.

There remains much unfinished business, some of which the Board and I will try to resolve in the remaining three months of my Administration.

One such matter, I would say the most important, is to consolidate the return of the Bank to its HQ.

We have succeeded wonderfully in the physical sense of the return; however we must now consolidate that process by implementing the complementary measures necessary.

The African Development Bank we want, which Africans want is a world-class, first-class IFI.

It must at all times be able to attract and to retain the very best skills in the world.

The African Development Bank is an Institution which is very much prized by Africa and it has been an enormous privilege and honour to serve the African
Development Bank and fellow Africans.

I have been described often as an optimist for Africa.

It is an optimism tempered with realism as to the obstacles we must overcome, the uncertain global environment, the new threats Africa must deal with.

During my tenure, I have visited nearly every African country.

As I retire from the Bank, I consider every country my land; their problem, mine; their destiny, the one I share.

I want once again to express my deep appreciation to my country, Rwanda, for sponsoring me, for putting my humble person at Africa’s service.

I thank all member countries of the Bank for their support.

I thank you Governors for your friendship.

Wherever I will be, the African Development Bank will be part of me.
Finally, let me express my appreciation to the Government and People of Côte d’Ivoire for their hospitality.

I thank everyone who has contributed in one way or another in making this Assembly a success.

Until your next Assembly in Lusaka, Zambia, safe return to your countries and God bless you all.