ADEA – Launching Of Triennale (Tunis, 3rd Dec. 2010)

Statement of VP Kamal El Kheshen
Your Excellency, Honourable Hatem Ben Salem, Minister of Education, Tunisia

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Guests,

Esteemed participants,

Partners in development,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of President Donald Kaberuka, I would like to welcome you to this launch ceremony for the 2011 Triennale of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

I commend the organizers and the Minister of Education of Tunisia and his government for their role in facilitating the holding of this meeting. Any forum, such as this one, aimed at promoting and building solidarity on Education, Training and Qualifications strategies is a welcome initiative.
This Triennale is of major importance to the African Development Bank (AfDB), ADEA’s host institution. There are a number of reasons for this.

As a regional institution, with all of its operations focused on Africa, the Bank places special emphasis on higher education, science, technology and innovation as tools serving the sustainable development of Africa. In addition, the Bank considers skills development as a continuum that includes technical, vocational, entrepreneurial, scientific and technological aspects.

To this effect, in its Strategy for Higher Education, Science and Technology (HEST), the Bank’s emphasis has been on reforming higher education, technical and vocational education and science and technology systems in Regional Member Countries.
Under HEST, planned activities are designed to address needs in three major areas: (i) the creation of adequate infrastructure for higher education, science and technology; (ii) the establishment of national and regional centers of excellence; and (iii) the strengthening of the linkages between institutions of higher learning and research and the productive sectors. Under these three pillars, the Bank aims to play a key role in revitalizing higher education and scientific research as key factors in capacity building for economic development and poverty reduction.

African economic revival is a challenge that cannot be met by any single development partner or by African Governments alone. In this context, the private sector is a strategic partner of African higher education. While promoting private sector investment in higher education, science and technology, the Bank supports the creation of regional regulatory bodies for quality assurance in higher education. It also serves as a catalyst for attracting private sector financing for incubators and innovations that increase value in the production chain. In addition to the private sector, the Bank has strengthened its partnerships with development partners such as the World Bank, UNESCO, the French Development Agency, the UK’s Department for International Development, the African Union.
and NEPAD, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the African Capacity Building Foundation.

The Bank pursues its partnership with African countries and with other bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies through the policy dialogue within the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, which it joined in 1996.

The Bank has been ADEA’s host institution since August 2008. In addition, it is the lead agency of the ADEA Working Group on Higher Education.

The relocation of the ADEA Secretariat to Tunis has enabled the Bank and ADEA, both of which are strategic partners of the African Union, to strengthen their collaboration for the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa in important sectors such as higher education, the establishment of the Observatory of Education in Africa, and technical and vocational skills development.

Their close relations with ministers of finance and of education have enabled them, in conjunction with the World Bank, to advocate successfully that the funding allocated to education should be maintained, despite the severe financial crisis that has hit African economies.
As you can see, ADEA’s role as a forum for policy dialogue on education and training in Africa is absolutely crucial.

The Bank is therefore very happy to support the organization of the coming Triennale and this launch ceremony.

The scope of the Triennale theme extends beyond the education and training sector to cover all development sectors. Consequently, this theme mobilizes all components of African society and both bilateral and multilateral development cooperation partners.

In the process of preparation for the Triennale, an important role has also been reserved for the African and international private sector, social and professional organizations, youth, women, and stakeholders in both formal and non-formal education. This participatory process is aimed at engendering real policy dialogue on the issue of education and training for sustainable development in Africa.

For all these reasons, President Kaberuka is very pleased by the presence at this ceremony of all parties concerned by African development.
President Kaberuka urges you all to join with us in supporting the organization of the Triennale and to participate actively in the preparatory process through your intellectual contributions and by encouraging other members of your respective networks to join this initiative, which is so important for the development of Africa.

On behalf of the President of the African Development Bank, I hereby officially launch the 2011 ADEA Triennale on the theme:

“Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa: How to design and implement an effective response through education and training systems”.

Thank you for your kind Attention.