

LAUNCH OF THE ACBF STRATEGY 2017-2021
ADDRESS OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT
OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP

- *H.E. Mr. Hamed Bakayoko, Senior Ministe, Minister of Interior, Representing the Prime Minister of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire*
- *Hon. Mr. Adama Kone, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister for Economy and Finance*
- *Hon. Goodal Gondwe, Minister of Finance of Malawi and Chair of the ACBF Board of Governors*
- *Hon. ACBF Governors*
- *Distinguished Guests*
- *Ladies and Gentlemen*

It is with great pleasure that I attend this launch of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)'s Strategy for the period 2017-2021. I seize this unique opportunity to thank the Government of Côte d'Ivoire for choosing to partner with the African Development Bank Group to host this event.

Allow me to now turn to and welcome the current and potential Donors to the Foundation as well as its Technical Partners. You are most welcome to what I consider a critical Conference for our Foundation.

Our Foundation indeed, *Hon. Senior Minister, Hon. Governors, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen*. Allow me to give a quick historical background of the winning partnership that led to the establishment of the ACBF.

- *Hon. Senior Minister*

ACBF is your Foundation. Most countries represented here today have a vivid memory of the key role played by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire in the creation of ACBF in 1991. It took visionary Leaders from African and non-African Governments, as well as from the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank, to establish an institution entirely devoted to capacity building. Leaders who understood clearly that capacity building, which has the ultimate goal of empowering Africans to take full ownership and control of their development process, was at the heart of the continent's sustainable development progress. Twenty-five years later, one can only praise such a vision.

- *Distinguished Partners,*

ACBF is yours, you its Donors of yesterday, today and tomorrow. Without your commitment to Africa's development, ACBF would not have made the quality investment it put into capacity building in Africa, with the significant results that are widely recognized in terms of stabilization of the macroeconomic environment in Africa through the provision of evidence-based research results and significant increase of skilled economists in the public sector, to list just a few.

Honourable Governors

Your growing ownership, and continued political and financial support, have allowed your Foundation to significantly help you address key capacity challenges, both national and regional, over the past 25 years and to position itself as one of the best technical and strategic partners in the effort to transform your countries.

Distinguished Guests

ACBF is also yours. It is my hope that you will select from one of the options offered (membership, sponsorship and technical partnership) to join the Foundation before the end of this Conference

Hon. Senior Minister, Hon. Governors, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

The African Development Bank Group belongs to all categories of ACBF stakeholders: the Bank Group is a Founding Member of ACBF, a Donor, a Technical Partner, a Member of both its Board of Governors and Executive Board. The Bank Group has participated in all funding phases of the Foundation since its inception and has invested USD 40.5 million¹ to date.

The African Development Bank Group is currently working with ACBF on the disbursement of the balance of its revised pledge to ACBF's third Strategic Medium Term Plan (SMTP III), which was confirmed in 2015 at the level of USD 30 million to be disbursed before the end of the year 2018.

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The capacity building needs of African countries and institutions have greatly evolved over the last 25 years. Many African countries have significantly

¹ Phase 1 (1991-1997): USD 6 million; Phase 2 (1998-2001):USD 6 million; SMTP I (2002-2006): USD 12 million; SMTP II (2007-2011): USD 12 million and SMTP III (2012-2016) to date: USD 4.5 million

improved the fundamentals of their economies and are working towards less dependence on commodity exports, through diversification and industrialization. Others, which may be grappling with lower economic performance due to conflicts or other crisis situations should not be left behind in terms of capacity building for improved policy management.

This contrasted economic standing of African countries calls for adaptation of capacity building service lines and business model. This is what ACBF has tried to do in this new Strategic Plan by targeting better coordination of continental and regional agendas; improved implementation capacity at country level; better participation of the private sector and civil society in the development effort; and knowledge generation and sharing to inform the continued reform process.

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The African Development Bank Group is working with ACBF to upgrade the current Donor-Grantee relationship to a win-win Strategic Partnership during the implementation of the Foundation's new Strategy. Through its new partnership with ACBF, the African Development Bank Group's support to ACBF will allow the Foundation to help in the achievement of the Bank's priorities and especially the High Fives.

In doing so, the Bank Group will expect ACBF to support the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of good programs, that is programs in which draw-downs are accelerated following approvals. This will require complementing capacities within the Bank Group as well as addressing capacity shortage in regional member countries.

There will also be need to connect research with macroeconomic and fiscal management and, to collectively build human and institutional capacity in African countries to sustain the gains already made in macroeconomic management on the continent. More analytical work will also be required of ACBF in support of effective engagement of decision-makers for real change.

Finally, ACBF will be expected to work with the Bank to leverage knowledge and resources in African countries to get things done on the ground in the High Fives in a way that allows us to collectively anticipate on the continent's needs and leverage its resources in order to avoid taking account of the continent's challenges after the fact.

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The Bank Group is working with ACBF to design a program of cooperation along these lines, which should allow the two institutions to take their partnership to another level.

Meanwhile, it is critical that African countries as well as traditional and new Donors to the Foundation, collectively help ACBF with the initial push in the financing of the Strategy 2017-2021. This will provide the Foundation with the necessary time and working capital to develop cooperation with, and mobilize additional resources from, new partners.

The role of African countries, either already official members, newly joining members or sponsors of the Foundation, will also be vital in advocating for these additional resources. Investing in capacity building is investing in the future of the continent. Funded at the appropriate level, ACBF can leverage its 25 years of experience, its internal strengths and its networks not only to advance the continent's transformation agenda but also, and more importantly, to ensure sustainability of the progress made.

Hon. Senior Minister, Hon. Governors, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

I want to assure you of the continued commitment of the African Development Bank Group to capacity building and to ACBF as the continent's strategic Implementing Partner in this area. I have no doubt that the partnership being currently negotiated will provide the necessary framework for building and scaling up a mutually beneficial cooperation between the African Development Bank Group and the African Capacity Building Foundation.

I thank you for your kind attention