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NEPAD: Born Out of the African Experience and Key to Africa's Prosperity

Sullivan Foundation Town Hall Meeting a Success

(Washington, DC) On October 12, 2005 hundreds gathered at the Ronald Reagan International Building for a second series of town hall style discussions on NEPAD. The panel featured Gerard Byam, Acting V.P. of the World Bank's Africa region, Douglas Menarchik, Assistant Administrator of Policy and Program Coordination USAID, Professor Firmino Mucavele, CEO of NEPAD, George Obiozor, Ambassador of Nigeria, and Sullivan Foundation Chairman Andrew Young. The Embassies of Eritrea, Kenya, Mozambique, Netherlands, Portugal, South Africa, Uganda and the Zambia were also represented.

Professor Mucavele, who traveled from Johannesburg, South Africa for the event also met with several high-level members of the World Bank and appeared on Voice of America's televised *Straight Talk Africa* program during his visit. "Africa is rich in natural resources, but poor in human resources," stated Mucavele. "The way to solve Africa's problems is to allow the Africans to solve those problems...and Africa's leaders must be brought into a mutual partnership as well."

The theme that emerged as most prominent during the discussion and the question and answer period of the town hall meeting was the importance of involving the Diaspora in Africa's development. Although NEPAD is largely a partnership between Africa and its donors, all of the speakers stressed the critical role that people of African descent living outside of the continent should play in helping Africa meet its development goals by investing their financial and technical resources into Africa. "Africa is open for business, but Individuals must also take the initiative in engaging Africa in business," stated George Obiozor, Ambassador of Nigeria.

NEPAD was created by the shared vision of Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Thabo Mbeki and Abdelaziz Bouteflika in July of 2001 to place their countries on a path of sustainable growth and poverty reduction. President Adboulaye Wade later joined and together they are strategically setting the agenda for Africa's renewal.

The summary and transcript from the event will be available on the Sullivan Foundation website next week. Visit www.thesullivanfoundation.org. For more information on NEPAD, visit www.NEPAD.org.

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