

Speaking Notes of Ms. Estherine Fotabong¹
to launch the book:

“Innovation and the Development Agenda”

Edited by Dr Erika Kraemer-Mbula and Dr Watu Wamae and published by the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation in September 2010.

Time 17h00. Venue: IERI

Delivered by Dr. Philippe Mawoko²

1. It is with delight that I accepted to give some few remarks at the launch of the book **“Innovation and the Development Agenda”** edited by our two sisters of Africa: Dr Erika Kraemer-Mbula (Equatorial Guinea) and Dr Watu Wamae (Kenya).
2. Thank you Rasigan Maharajh³ for giving me the opportunity to be part of this book launch.
3. I have wished that this book was available earlier as we implement the NEPAD Programmes. As you know, NEPAD, a programme of the African Union, was launched in 2001 with the mission to eradicate poverty and to place African countries, both individually and collectively on a path of sustainable growth and development and, at the same time, participate actively in the world economy. You also know that transforming a country and a continent is a long-term process that cannot be achieved in a couple of years.
4. I would like to say two main things about the book:
 - a. the book is interesting and relevant to NEPAD; and
 - b. the book is challenging.
 - The book is well written and thanks to the editors: Erika and Watu.
 - The book is interesting and relevant to NEPAD.
 - NEPAD, as an African development programme, has been referred to at several occasions in the book. Our main challenges however is to ensure that innovation features in our development Agenda.

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- It is exciting to learn through the various chapters of this book the roles of innovation in developing countries, the role of knowledge in innovation for development and the importance of comparable country studies and official statistics on innovation.
 - Another merit of this book is that it tackles the issues frontally and brings a very interesting perspective. The recommendations to include the so called “informal sectors” as part of the Development Agenda is the right thing to do since most of our livelihood in Africa is driven by the informal sectors.
 - The informal and agriculture sectors are the basis of various innovations in Africa; unfortunately this phenomenon has been ignored by decision makers.
 - It is encouraging to read the papers written by some of the experts who are involved in some NEPAD programmes. Reference is made to Dr Fred Gault and Rasigan Maharajh.
 - The main challenge for us who are leaving with poor peoples is how to implement the issues which have been highlighted in the book. How do we create wealth for our people? Let us implement these ideas.
 - The editors of the book: Dr Erika Kraemer-Mbula and Dr Watu Wamae are also recognised for engendering this valuable contribution to addressing the challenges of our continent and the world at large. We recognise their gender as an inspiration to all African women in advancing the cause of development through innovation.
5. I am certain that our countries will make good use of the information contain in this book.
 6. It’s a wonderful book – I do exhort all of us to have a copy.
 7. I would like you to join me in congratulating the editors and authors