

Remarks by Mr. Sheku Sambadeen Sesay, Independent IDA21 Co-Chair

At the Eastern and Southern Africa (AFE) Regional IDA Forum, Nairobi, Kenya

April 30, 2024

Dear representatives of Civil Society Organizations, IDA Borrower Representative, Dr. Liberat Mfumukeko, members of the World Bank / IDA management led by Vice President Akihiko Nishio, the Vice President for Development Finance and Dirk Reinermann, the Director of IDA and IBRD Finance and staff.

The high-level presence of the Bank Management in this forum demonstrates the importance they place on your input and support.

It is my honor as the Independent IDA21 Co-Chair to provide some closing remarks to this IDA21 Forum. It is the first in a series of regional forums that IDA will convene in the coming months.

IDA replenishment happens every three years and the year-long process is Co-Chaired by a senior official of the World Bank and an independent Co-Chair selected jointly by the World Bank Management, Donors, and Borrower Representatives.

I am therefore delighted to have been selected to serve as the Independent IDA21 Co-Chair to work with World Bank's Senior Managing Director, Axel, and all our stakeholders for a successful IDA21 replenishment.

I am not new in the development space. I am a retiree of the African Development Bank where I served for over two decades in various professional and managerial positions ending as the Tanzania including Zanzibar Country Representative. During this period I covered the activities of the East African Community and represented the Bank on the Board of Directors of the East African Development Bank. I later served my country as the Financial Secretary for the Ministry of Finance and the Governor of the Central Bank in Sierra Leone. It was during this period that I became more conversant with the voices of the CSOs during the preparation and implementation of the budget and also issues economic and social issues.

I also served as IDA Borrower Representative.

As you have heard, we had a very good discussion with members of the international civil society organizations in Washington DC some days ago and they shared their perspective on the strategic directions and how we can work together for a successful IDA21. IDA has in fact intensified the

engagement with CSOs. The enhanced engagement with partners including CSOs is very deliberate and an indication of how much we expect from you.

Yesterday, we had the Africa Heads of States Summit which also shared very good ideas as you must have followed in the news.

As already indicated, IDA provides financing in the form of grants and highly concessional loans to 75 low-income countries in six regions of which 39 countries are on our continent. And that nearly three quarters of IDA resources go to eligible African countries.

IDA has therefore become a longstanding partner and the single largest source of concessional financing that assisted Africa's economic and social development.

The role CSOs play in the success of IDA is very important. It is due to your work of strong advocacy and monitoring on the ground that we can design better projects and uphold high standards in implementation of projects in your respective countries.

As we informed the international CSOs, we cannot have a successful conclusion to the IDA21 replenishment negotiations without a solid engagement with civil society organizations to complement strong social accountability under the World Bank's evolution agenda. That is how we can deliver more impactful oriented development.

Your views and ideas are crucial, especially during IDA replenishment negotiations. As IDA adopts new systems, it will be important to retain the focus on the core policy commitments linked to human development, fragility, and the fight against climate change, which, thanks to your interventions in the past, have become an integral part of IDA's work.

Let us use the current IDA21 replenishment negotiations as an opportunity to strengthen the collaboration between the Bank and CSOs even further, especially in the field of project design, implementation, and evaluation.

In the end, we are all in this together. All of us, management, staff, the board, IDA Deputies, IDA Borrower Representatives, and CSOs, constitute the Bank's community and we all have our part to play in making IDA more effective and impactful.

Simply put, input from civil society partners will help shape an IDA21 package that is richly informed and driven by a desire to act aggressively against today's challenges.

From now on to December 2024, we really need our Heads of State, IDA Governors, and everybody to be laser focused on a robust IDA21 replenishment and to make a personal commitment to raise IDA in all your engagements, especially with donors.

Advocacy, advocacy, advocacy.

Let us build and sustain momentum for IDA.

The Bank has a very active department of External and Corporate Relations (ECR) which can provide you with all the information you need. Make use of them.

I thank you all.