

Development Support: UNDP Earmarks \$22 million

Maputo, March 29, 2008 - The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has allocated to our country a total of \$22 million to support the democratic governance, economic development, poverty reduction and HIV/AIDS sectors. Besides this amount, the UNDP will provide support for the local government and provincial elections, scheduled to be held in 2008 and 2009 respectively. This was revealed by UNDP Resident Coordinator Ndolamb Ngokwey.

Speaking at the opening of the regional meeting of UNDP representatives in Africa, Ngokwey said the support will also be extended to the implementation of the government's decentralization strategy and the citizens' wider access to the services of justice and reduction of the natural disasters' impact.

He explained that the support to our country is within the framework of the United Nations' accelerated reforms process, within which are covered the four programmatic pillars, namely, good governance, human capital, HIV and AIDS, and human development.

Meanwhile, State Administration Minister Lucas Chomera, who chaired the opening ceremony, held under the theme "Africa's Concurrent Priorities in a Global and Dynamic Agenda", said the solution to the problems afflicting African countries should be incorporated in global policies. He stated that it is pertinent the conclusion of the Doha Development Round, with results that guarantee an adequate integration of Africa in the trade world system, a condition from which to take advantage of trade to fund development and wealth generation.

He noted that despite a considerable increase of pledges since the Monterrey conference, in terms of funding development, the official aid is still low and unstable and there have been no significant increments since 2004. "There is need to fulfill the targets agreed upon, particularly regarding the allocation of 0,7 percent of the GDP of developed countries for the development and canceling of African countries' external debt", he said, adding that in order for Africa to respond in an integrated and competitive way at global level, it is important to upgrade its institutions at all levels.

Chomera said priority should be given to the strengthening of actions aimed at elevating the quality of services in the public and private sectors and reforms of the education system, so as to incorporate processes and practices with impact on the development process.