

**INTRODUCTORY NOTE**

**BY THE OAU SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**H.E. MR SALIM AHMED SALIM**

**BEFORE THE FIFTY-FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION**

**OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

Addis Ababa, 25 February, 1992.

MR CHAIRMAN,  
HONOURABLE MINISTERS,  
DISTINGUISHED HEADS OF DELEGATION,  
DISTINGUISHED AMBASSADORS,  
INVITED GUESTS,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

MAY I FIRST OF ALL, ON BEHALF OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT, WELCOME YOU ALL TO AFRICA HALL FOR THE FIFTY-FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE COUNCIL. I SHOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION TO PRESIDENT MELES ZENAWI OF THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA FOR HAVING ACCEPTED TO COME AND FOR THE IMPORTANT MESSAGE HE DELIVERED TO US HERE. I SHOULD LIKE ALSO TO CONGRATULATE THE HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF EGYPT, H.E. MR AMR MOUSSA, ON HIS UNANIMOUS ELECTION, AS THE CHAIRMAN OF THIS SESSION. MY CONGRATULATIONS ARE ALSO ADDRESSED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NEW BUREAU. I WOULD LIKE, ON BEHALF OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT, TO ASSURE THEM OF OUR FULL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE IN CARRYING OUT THEIR TASK. I WOULD EQUALLY LIKE TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE OUTGOING CHAIRMAN AND BUREAU FOR THE ABLE MANNER IN WHICH THEY DISCHARGED THEIR DUTIES ON BEHALF OF OUR ORGANIZATION DURING THEIR TERM OF OFFICE. LAST BUT NOT LEAST, I WOULD LIKE TO PUT ON RECORD MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION TO THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, MADAM SADAKO OGATA, FOR RESPONDING TO MY INVITATION TO BE WITH US HERE, IN ADDIS ABABA, AND TO ADDRESS THIS DISTINGUISHED COUNCIL. HER IMPORTANT ADDRESS YESTERDAY DESERVE THE MOST SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.

MR CHAIRMAN,

THIS IS THE FIRST SESSION YOUR COUNCIL TAKING PLACE AFTER THE HISTORIC SIGNING OF THE TREATY ESTABLISHING THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY IN ABUJA, IN JUNE, 1991. INDEED, ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY AND THE PERRENIAL ISSUE OF CONFLICT SITUATIONS ON THE CONTINENT AND THEIR ATTENDANT HUMAN SUFFERING ARE TWO OF THE MAJOR CHALLENGES FACING OUR ORGANIZATION AND OUR CONTINENT. THIS SESSION IS, THEREFORE, CRUCIAL AS I BELIEVE IT WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERIOUSLY ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES AND TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM CREATED BY THE DECLARATION OF THE 26TH ASSEMBLY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT, IN ADDIS ABABA, ON THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION OF AFRICA AND THE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES TAKING PLACE IN THE WORLD AND THE SIGNING OF THE TREATY, IN ABUJA, DURING THE LAST SUMMIT.

AS THIS IS ESSENTIALLY A BUDGET SESSION, THIS COUNCIL WILL NATURALLY FOCUS ITS ATTENTION ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE ORGANIZATION. GIVEN, HOWEVER, THE URGENCY WHICH OTHER PROBLEMS AFFECTING OUR CONTINENT HAVE ASSUMED, I HOPE IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR THIS COUNCIL TO DEVOTE SOME TIME FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION. THE IMMENSE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, WHICH ALL AFRICAN COUNTRIES NOW FACE, THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS, SOME SEEMINGLY ENDEMIC AND SOME ARISING FROM THE TUMBLING ECONOMIC FORTUNES OF THE CONTINENT REQUIRE URGENT ATTENTION. THE SCOURGE OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS, THE CHALLENGE OF PRESERVING OUR ENVIRONMENT AND RESOLVING A HOST OF OTHER SHARED

SOCIAL PROBLEMS REQUIRE A COORDINATED CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL STRATEGY IF THEY ARE TO BE RESOLVED.

MR CHAIRMAN,

IT IS NOT MY INTENTION, THIS TIME, TO MAKE A LENGTHY STATEMENT AS I HAVE EXPRESSED MY OBSERVATIONS ON VARIOUS ISSUES OF CONCERN IN THE INTRODUCTION TO MY REPORT CONTAINED IN DOCUMENT CM/1681 (LV) part 1 WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN DISTRIBUTED. THESE ISSUES RANGE FROM THE VARIOUS CHALLENGES FACING US IN THE DIFFERENT POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC FIELDS TO THE BURNING ISSUE OF CONFLICT SITUATIONS IN AFRICA AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA. AT THIS JUNCTURE, I WOULD LIKE, THEREFORE, ONLY TO HIGHLIGHT SOME PRIORITY ISSUES WHICH, IN MY VIEW, SHOULD ENGAGE THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL.

THE COUNCIL WILL NATURALLY EXAMINE THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE ORGANIZATION AND, IN THIS RESPECT, WILL NOTE THAT THE BUDGETARY PROPOSALS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1992/1993, AMOUNTING TO US\$ 27,900,894.00, HAVE BEEN KEPT WITHIN THE LIMITS SET UNDER RESOLUTION CM/1279. THIS HAS BEEN POSSIBLE THROUGH THE CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT AND THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE. THE OVERRIDING OBJECTIVE WAS TO AGREE ON A BUDGET PROPOSAL CONFORMING TO THE ALLOWABLE CEILING WHILE, AT THE SAME TIME, ENSURING THE PROVISION OF THE MINIMUM REQUIRED RESOURCES FOR THE SECRETARIAT TO BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT ITS ACTIVITIES. THE COUNCIL WILL ALSO NOTE THE PROPOSAL MADE BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE USE, ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS, OF 15 PERCENT OF THE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION RECOVERED FOR THE

FINANCIAL YEAR 1990/1991 AND 20 PERCENT OF THOSE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1991/1992 TO FINANCE THE BUDGETS OF 1992/1993 AND 1993/1994 RESPECTIVELY. ACCORDINGLY, THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 1992/1993 WILL BE DEDUCTED BY THE AMOUNT OF US\$ 2,279,993.00 CORRESPONDING TO THE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION RECOVERED DURING THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1990/1991 BEFORE DETERMINING THE ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS TO BE PAID BY MEMBER STATES. IF THIS PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED BY THE COUNCIL, IT WILL CONSTITUTE AN INNOVATION AND WILL ENABLE MEMBER STATES TO PAY LESS THAN THEIR ACTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PRECEDING BUDGET.

AS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION, I AM SENSITIVE TO THE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES OF OUR MEMBER STATES. THIS PROPOSAL LIGHTEN THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF MEMBER STATES AND I HOPE WILL ACT AS AN INCENTIVE TO COUNTRIES TO CLEAR THE HUGE AMOUNT OF OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS. I WOULD LIKE, HOWEVER, TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS SYSTEM OF DEFICIT-FINANCING OF THE BUDGET CAN WORK EFFECTIVELY ONLY IF ALL THE MEMBER STATES COMMIT THEMSELVES TO PAY THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS AS WELL AS THEIR ARREARS. SHORT OF THIS COMMITMENT, WE MAY RUN THE RISK OF PLACING THE ORGANIZATION IN SERIOUS FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES BY CREATING SHORTFALL IN ITS INCOME. I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS SYSTEM DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON THE WILL OF MEMBER STATES TO SHOULDER THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. CONSEQUENTLY, I WOULD LIKE TO URGE ALL THE MEMBER STATES, WHICH HAVE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS, TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO HONOUR THEIR OBLIGATIONS ACCORDING TO A SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT. IT IS MY EARNEST HOPE THAT THE COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER THE MATTER WITH THE SERIOUSNESS IT DESERVES.

THE COUNCIL WILL ALSO EXAMINE THE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS OF THE ORGANIZATION. IN MY REPORT, I HIGHLIGHTED SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH HAMPER THE SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT. THESE RELATE ESSENTIALLY TO THE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF STAFF MEMBERS, INCLUDING SALARY, PROMOTION AND MOBILITY OF STAFF. THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO KNOW THAT THE PRESENT STRUCTURE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT PROVIDE NO ADEQUATE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROSPECT FOR STAFF MEMBERS. THIS OBVIOUSLY DOES NOT ENHANCE MOTIVATION, PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY. I WOULD LIKE TO URGE COUNCIL TO EXAMINE THIS ISSUE COMPREHENSIVELY AND TO GIVE APPROPRIATE GUIDELINES TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOURTEEN ON STRUCTURAL REFORMS, WHICH WILL CONVENE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, TO CONSIDER THE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF THE STAFF.

HONOURABLE MINISTERS AND HEADS OF DELEGATION WILL RECALL THAT, DURING THE LAST SUMMIT, IN ABUJA, I BRIEFED OUR HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ABOUT MY INTENTION TO PROPOSE TO THIS SESSION OF COUNCIL AN INTERIM REORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT SO AS TO ALIGN ITS STRUCTURES WITH THE NEW CHALLENGES FACING AFRICA. SINCE THE ABUJA MEETING, I HAVE ENDEAVOURERD TO WORK OUT A REORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NEW PRIORITY AREAS OF THE ORGANIZATION SUCH AS THE CONFLICT SITUATIONS IN THE CONTINENT AND THE ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF OUR CONTINENT. I DREW UP SOME PROPOSALS WHICH I SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOURTEEN ON STRUCTURAL REFORMS AND TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE. THESE PROPOSALS, WITH THE INPUTS OF THE TWO BODIES, ARE SUBMITTED TO THIS SESSION OF COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION. IT IS MY HOPE THAT THE

COUNCIL WILL ALSO DEVOTE SOME TIME TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS BEING PROPOSED.

MR CHAIRMAN,

AFRICA NEEDS PEACE AND STABILITY IN ORDER TO FORGE THE UNITY OF PURPOSE AND ACTION WHICH IS CENTRAL TO A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS FOR ADDRESSING THE MANY SOCIAL PROBLEMS BEFORE IT. CONSEQUENTLY, IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT PEACE AND STABILITY, WE MUST, AS OF NECESSITY, REDIRECT OUR COLLECTIVE ATTENTION TO THE SCOURGE OF CONFLICTS WHICH NOW ENGULFS OUR CONTINENT. FOR AFRICA'S STRENEOUS EFFORTS AT ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT WILL BE IN VAIN IF CONFLICTS PERSIST IN OUR MIDST. THE CONFLICTS HAVE NOT ONLY BROUGHT IMMENSE PHYSICAL SUFFERING AND DEATH TO MILLIONS OF INNOCENT MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, THEY HAVE ALSO GOBBLED THE MEAGRE RESOURCES OF OUR CONTINENT AND RESULTED IN THE DESTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROPERTY. ABOVE ALL, CONFLICTS HAVE DASHED THE HOPES OF OUR PEOPLE FOR A LIFE IN PROSPERITY FOLLOWING INDEPENDENCE. CONFLICTS HAVE CREATED MILLIONS OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND GIVEN OUR CONTINENT AN ERRONEOUS IMAGE OF A PLACE WHERE SUFFERING IS ENDEMIC.

AFRICA OWES IT TO HERSELF TO CORRECT THIS NEGATIVE IMAGE, RESTORE TO HER PEOPLE THE HOPES FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW AND ULTIMATELY BEGIN ON THE ROAD TO RECONSTRUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE COMMITMENT UNDERTAKEN BY THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF OUR COUNTRIES IN THEIR DECLARATION ON

FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES ADOPTED DURING THEIR SUMMIT HERE, IN ADDIS ABABA, IN JULY 1990, TO PLACE GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICTS IN OUR CONTINENT, AS WELL AS THE DECISION OF THIS COUNCIL, LAST YEAR, TO SET ASIDE BUDGETARY FINANCIAL APPROPRIATION FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION, CONSTITUTE A SOUND BEGINNING. THESE DECISIONS ARE BOTH A POLITICAL DECLARATION OF PURPOSE AND DEVOTION OF RESOURCES TO PURSUE THAT OBJECTIVE. IN MY VIEW, WE NEED TO BUILD ON THIS BEGINNING SO THAT, GRADUALLY, WE CAN ELABORATE A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY WHICH MARRIES THE POLITICAL OBJECTIVE WE WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH THE WAYS AND MEANS OF ACHIEVING IT.

MR CHAIRMAN,

MY EXPERIENCE WITH HANDLING CONFLICT SITUATIONS, ESPECIALLY OVER THESE LAST YEARS I HAVE HELD OFFICE, HAS BROUGHT INTO SHARP FOCUS THE GAP BETWEEN THE POLITICAL INTENTIONS OF THE LEADERS OF AFRICA AND THE CAPABILITIES OF THIS ORGANIZATION. IN MANY CASES, THE MAIN OBSTACLE HAS BEEN THE LACK OF POLITICAL WILL ON THE PART OF THOSE AT CONFLICT TO ALLOW THE OAU A MEANINGFUL ROLE IN ASSISTING THEM TO FIND A PACIFIC SETTLEMENT. IN SOME CASES, THE OBSTACLE HAS BEEN THE RIGIDITIES OF INTERPRETING THE CLAUSES OF THE CHARTER, IMPLYING THAT IT WAS NOT WITHIN THE COMPETENCE OF THE OAU TO DEAL WITH CONFLICTS WITHIN STATES. I AM ENCOURAGED TO NOTE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT SHIFT IN THINKING AMONG MEMBER STATES AND, INCREASINGLY, THERE IS A RECOGNITION THAT ALL CONFLICTS, WHETHER AMONG OR WITHIN STATES, AFFECT AFRICA COLLECTIVELY AND, THEREFORE, THE OAU HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR PEACEFUL RESOLUTION.



INCREASINGLY, I AM ALSO ENCOURAGED BY THE EXPRESSIONS OF DISPOSITION BY MANY PARTIES TO THE CONFLICTS IN AFRICA TO COOPERATE WITH THE ORGANIZATION IN PROMOTING PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS TO THOSE CONFLICTS. AS THIS DISPOSITION HAS WIDENED, I HAVE COME TO RECOGNIZE THE SERIOUS DEFFICIENCIES WITHIN THE STRUCTURES OF THIS ORGANIZATION AND ITS METHODS OF WORK IN DEALING WITH CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION. MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, WE HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO IMPROVISE, THERE BEING NO ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES OR MECHANISM TO HANDLE CONFLICTS. THESE EXERCISES OF IMPROVISATION HAVE DIFFERED FROM CASE TO CASE AND DEPENDING ON THE POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES TO BE ADDRESSED.

I HAVE, ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, SPOKEN OF THE NEED FOR A MECHANISM WITHIN THE OAU SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO HANDLE CONFLICTS. I HAVE SPOKEN OF THE NEED OF A MECHANISM WHICH WILL ENABLE THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND THE OAU, GENERALLY, TO RESPOND SWIFTLY AND DECISIVELY TO CONFLICT SITUATIONS ON THE CONTINENT. I NOW THINK THAT, GIVEN THE MULTIPLICATION OF CONFLICTS ON THE CONTINENT AND THE URGENT NEED OF THEIR RESOLUTION, IT IS HIGH TIME THAT SUCH A MECHANISM WAS SET UP AND DEPLOYED.

MR CHAIRMAN,

THE RECOGNITION OF NEED FOR SUCH A MECHANISM IS NOT NEW. OVER THE YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN A DEBATE ON THE KIND OF MECHANISM MOST DESIRABLE AND BEST SUITED TO DEAL WITH CONFLICTS. WHETHER WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF RESUSCITATING THE NOW DORMANT COMMISSION ON MEDIATION, CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION WHICH IS PROVIDED FOR UNDER THE CHARTER, ESTABLISHING AN AFRICAN SECURITY COUNCIL

OR EXPANDING THE MANDATE OF THE DEFENCE COMMISSION, THE DEBATE HAS BEEN ON HOW THIS ORGANIZATION CAN BE EMPOWERED TO DEAL, DECISIVELY AND COMPREHENSIVELY, WITH CONFLICTS. WHILE THIS DEBATE CONTINUES, AND IT IS HEALTHY THAT IT DOES, THERE IS NONETHELESS THE URGENT NEED TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF CONFLICTS. IN THE DAYS AHEAD, WE, IN THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT WILL BE HOLDING DISCUSSIONS AMONGST OURSELVES AND WITH MEMBER STATES WITH A VIEW TO ELABORATING CONCRETE GUIDELINESS FOR A PERMANENT MECHANISM FOR HANDLING CONFLICTS. IN THE MEANTIME, I SEE STRONG NEED, EVEN ON A TRANSITIONAL BASIS, TO LOOK INTO WAYS OF ENABLING THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, WITH THE COOPERATION OF MEMBER STATES, TO TAKE URGENT MEASURES TO PREEMPT POTENTIAL CONFLICTS, MANAGE AND ULTIMATELY ASSIST IN THE RESOLUTION OF EXISTING ONES.

ONE SUCH WAY, WHICH COULD BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED, IS TO USE THE BUREAU OF THE SUMMIT MORE EFFECTIVELY IN BACKSTOPPING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT IN PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION. I FIND THE BUREAU MOST SUITABLE FOR THE SIMPLE REASON THAT IT HAS BEEN USED BEFORE, ALBEIT ON AN AD HOC BASIS, IT IS SMALL AND EASILY CONVENABLE, IT HAS INSTITUTIONAL LINKS WITH ALL THE PRINCIPAL ORGANS OF THE OAU AND, ABOVE ALL, IT EXISTS. IT WOULD, IN MY VIEW, BE MOST EXPEDIENT TO ENTRUST THE BUREAU WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF WORKING IN CONCERT WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, ON A STANDING BASIS, TO ASSIST IN THE RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS. THIS WOULD GIVE THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND THOSE AT CONFLICT A POINT OF REFERENCE. TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, IT WOULD BE A BODY TO WHICH HE WOULD ADDRESS HIMSELF INSTANTLY EITHER TO GIVE NOTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OR TO COORDINATE STRATEGY FOR THE RESOLUTION OF A

GIVEN CONFLICT. SUCH COOPERATION AND POLITICAL GUIDANCE FROM MEMBER STATES ARE CENTRAL TO ANY PROSPECTS FOR A CREDIBLE EFFORT AT RESOLVING CONFLICTS. THIS WOULD ALSO GIVE THE PARTIES AT CONFLICT AN OPTION OF RECOURSE. SOMETIMES, EVEN THOSE AT CONFLICT BUT WILLING TO SUBMIT TO PACIFIC SETTLEMENT ARE CONSTRAINED BY THE ABSENCE OF A PERMANENT AND ACCEPTABLE BODY OR MACHINERY SPECIFICALLY CHARGED WITH ARBITRATING, CONCILIATING OR MEDIATING CONFLICTS.

AT THE LEVEL OF THE SECRETARIAT, WE ARE TAKING THE NECESSARY MEASURES TO ALIGN THE STRUCTURE OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT WITH THE IMPERATIVE QUESTION OF CONFLICTS. BEFORE THIS COUNCIL, IS MY RECOMMENDATION TO ESTABLISH A DIVISION OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION. THE IDEA IS TO REDIRECT THE FOCUS OF THE SECRETARIAT TO THIS URGENT AGENDA AND TO ENABLE IT BE THE OPERATIONAL LINK BETWEEN THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND THE MEMBER STATES THROUGH THE BUREAU OF THE SUMMIT. THE DEPARTMENT WILL ANTICIPATE CONFLICTS, STUDY AND ANALYSE THEM AND RECOMMEND STRATEGY FOR THEIR MANAGEMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE RESOLUTION.

MR CHAIRMAN,

APART FROM THIS MECHANISM FOR PEACE-MAKING, THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF NEGOTIATION AND PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT, PERHAPS WE SHOULD ALSO BEGIN THINKING SERIOUSLY ABOUT MODALITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR PEACE-KEEPING. OF COURSE, I AM AWARE THAT PEACE-KEEPING AND PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY REQUIRE IMMENSE RESOURCES, BOTH HUMAN AND FINANCIAL. I DO EQUALLY REALIZE THAT,

APART FROM THE HUGE ECONOMIC COST INVOLVED IN ANY PEACE-KEEPING OPERATION, MUCH PREPARATION AND IMMENSE MANPOWER OUTLAY ARE NEEDED. THIS MAY SEEM AN UNBEARABLE BURDEN FOR AFRICA OR AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK TO ACCOMPLISH. BUT IT IS A CHALLENGE WHICH MUST BE MET. CONFLICTS HAVE COST AFRICA ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF RESOURCES, BOTH HUMAN AND FINANCIAL. THE ONLY WAY TO STOP THESE RESOURCE DRAINS, WHICH UNDERMINE OUR ECONOMIES, IS TO PUT INTO PLACE A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PEACE-MAKING INCLUDING PEACE-KEEPING. A DEFINITE END TO CONFLICTS WILL NOT ONLY RESTORE PEACE TO OUR PEOPLE BUT ALSO LIBERATE THE RESOURCES WHICH AFRICA NOW DEVOTES TO SELF-DESTRUCTION.

SUCH AN INITIATIVE WILL, AS OF NECESSITY, REQUIRE COMPLETE PREDISPOSITION ON THE PART OF MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION. WE CANNOT REACT TO CONFLICT SITUATION RAPIDLY AND EFFECTIVELY IF WE DO NOT HAVE THE CAPACITY TO RAPIDLY DEPLOY PEACE-KEEPING FORCES TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND SECURITY IN SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT AS WELL AS THE RESOURCES TO FINANCE THEM. THIS TASK OF SETTING UP A MACHINERY FOR PEACE-KEEPING MAY SEEM ENORMOUS BUT WITH THE NECESSARY POLITICAL WILL AND DETERMINATION, IT IS MANAGEABLE. IT WILL NOT, FOR EXAMPLE, REQUIRE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COSTLY STANDING ARMY AND WE CAN BENEFIT FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS WHICH DRAWS ITS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES FROM THE ARMIES OF MEMBER STATES. THIS COUNCIL SHOULD LIKEWISE SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING WITHIN AFRICAN NATIONAL ARMIES OF COMPONENTS SPECIALIZED IN PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS. THESE COMPONENTS COULD BE SWIFTLY ASSEMBLED AND EASILY MADE AVAILABLE TO THE ORGANIZATION WHENEVER NEEDED.

I MUST, HOWEVER, EMPHASIZE IN THIS PARTICULAR ISSUE THAT, WITHOUT THE NECESSARY POLITICAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT OF THE MEMBER STATES, THE OAU CANNOT FUNCTION INDEPENDENTLY. THE OAU IS AN EMBODIMENT OF THE COLLECTIVE POLITICAL WILL AND ITS STRENGTH LIES IN THE DETERMINATION OF ITS MEMBERS TO CONCRETLY ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS FACING THE CONTINENT. WHILE THE ORGANIZATION SHOULD NOT BE INDIFFERENT OR INSENSITIVE TO THE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE CONTINENT, IT CAN NOT ACT EFFECTIVELY WITHOUT THE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE OF THE MEMBER STATES. THE STRENGTH OF THE ORGANIZATION, INDEED, ITS WEAKNESS IN THE AREA OF CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT REPRESENT THE ACTUAL LIMITATIONS OF THE OAU MEMBER STATES.

MR CHAIRMAN,

I AM CONVINCED THAT IF MEMBER STATES WANT THE OAU TO FUNCTION AS A STRONGER ORGANIZATION WITH THE NECESSARY CAPACITY TO HANDLE CONFLICTS, THE ORGANIZATION HAS THE NECESSARY POTENTIAL. WHAT IS REQUIRED IS FOR THE MEMBER STATES TO DEMONSTRATE THE REQUISITE POLITICAL WILL SO THAT, TOGETHER, WE CAN FORGE A STRONG FORCE AT THE SERVICE OF PEACE ON OUR CONTINENT. WE SHOULD FIGHT CONFLICTS WITH THE SAME ZEAL AND POLITICAL DETERMINATION WE DEMONSTRATED IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST COLONIALISM.

I AM CONVINCED THAT BY ADOPTING THIS APPROACH AND THIS CAUSE OF ACTION, WE SHALL ENHANCE THE CREDIBILITY OF OUR ORGANIZATION WHERE IT MATTERS MOST NAMELY TO THE PEOPLE OF

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AFRICA AND ESPECIALLY TO THOSE WHO ARE VICTIMS OF THESE UNFORTUNATE CONFLICTS. AT THE SAME TIME, WE CAN EXPECT TO GET THE UNDERSTANDING AND EVEN THE SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

IN CONCLUSION, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT THIS SESSION WILL AFFORD THE OPPORTUNITY TO FOCUS ON THESE PRIORITY ISSUES AS WELL AS STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE ORGANIZATION TO ASSUME ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIVE UP TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION.