

**Remarks by Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim at the opening ceremony
of the African Optimist Championship at the
Dar es Salaam Yatch Club
Sunday, 21 August 2005**

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Your Excellencies High Commissioners and Ambassadors,

IODA representatives, invited guests, sponsors, organizing committee
and Club members

I would like to thank the Tanzania Optimist Dinghy Association for
inviting me to be their Guest of Honour for this special event. It is a
particular pleasure to be able to meet our visitors from so many
African countries, as well as from Denmark.

Special thanks go to the sponsors, who through their support and
generosity have helped make this all possible.

I would like to greet the IODA Delegate, Mr. David Booth, and his
team, and commend their efforts in bringing this Championship here.
This kind of event can only improve relations between our countries.
For one of the most important factors of sports, whether this or any
other is to promote friendship, understanding and cooperation
between peoples and nations. I am therefore confident that this
Championship will also live up to that challenge.

Some of you will be aware that for twelve years I had the honour and privilege of serving as Secretary General of Africa's premier Panafrikan Institution, the Organization of African Unity (now transformed into the African Union). The objectives of the continental organization included the promotion of co-operation among our States in order to meet the aspirations of our peoples, transcending ethnic, racial and national differences. I can see that IODA is contributing to that vision, by bringing together people with similar interests throughout the world, to compete against each other, in a friendly way.

It is gratifying to see the Dar es Salaam Yatch Club hosting such an important continental championship. This is an honour to the Club as it is to the City of Dar es Salaam and indeed to our country as a whole. I believe this occasion provides a unique opportunity for the Club Members and all of us to show to our guests the beauty of our country and its manifold unique characteristics. I hope our guests from Africa and beyond will enjoy the Indian Ocean which Tanzania amply shares as well as places of historic and touristic interest that this country takes pride in.

But for now, this is an opportunity for our cadet sailors to meet like-minded young people, to compete, to learn, and to make new friends. In all this one thing is certain. All will leave this Championship as winners.

I wish all of you "Fair Winds".

Thank You