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REVIEW MEETING BETWEEN THE OAU AND  
THE UNITED NATIONS

(2 - 5 APRIL, 1991)

STATEMENT OF H.E. SALIM A. SALIM  
SECRETARY GENERAL - OAU

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

I WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME YOU ALL TO ADDIS ABABA. YOUR COMING HERE TO DISCUSS AND REVIEW THE ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE OAU AND THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM WHICH YOU REPRESENT IS, IN ITSELF, A CLEAR PROOF OF THE CO-OPERATION THAT ALREADY EXISTS. OUR MEETING HERE TODAY THEREFORE SERVES TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMON RESOLVE TO RE-EXAMINE THOSE AREAS WHERE CO-OPERATION NEEDS TO BE DEEPENED AND TO LOOK FOR NEW AVENUES WHERE OUR CO-OPERATION WOULD FURTHER CONTRIBUTE TO THE ATTAINMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES WHICH THE OAU HAS SET TO ACHIEVE.

YOU ARE UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE OF THE PROGRESS WHICH THE OAU HAS MADE TOWARDS THE FINALISATION OF THE DRAFT TREATY ESTABLISHING THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY. I AM GLAD TO MENTION HERE THAT FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 44/17 WHICH REQUESTED THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE AGENCIES OF THE UN SYSTEM TO EXTEND CO-OPERATION, SUPPORT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE OAU IN THE EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH AN AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, YOUR RESPONSE HAS BEEN POSITIVE. THUS, THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM INCLUDING THE ECA BUT MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, UNDP'S SUSTAINED SUPPORT <sup>EFFORTS</sup> IN OUR (TO IMPLEMENT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNITY HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. THE PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHER AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN THE WORK OF THE OAU PERMANENT STEERING COMMITTEE WHICH PREPARED THE DRAFT TREATY HAS ALSO BEEN RELEVANT.

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DEAR COLLEAGUES,

I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE SOME OF THE PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES WHICH, WE IN THE OAU, HAVE PUT ON AFRICA'S AGENDA FOR THE 1990'S AND BEYOND. FIRST, AFRICA HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO CLOSER ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLECTIVE SELF-RELIANCE AS ENSHRINED IN THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION AND IT'S FINAL ACT. THE EMERGENCE OF SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROUPINGS ACROSS THE CONTINENT AND THE FORTHCOMING SIGNATURE OF THE TREATY ESTABLISHING THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS POINT TO THE DETERMINATION OF AFRICA TO REKINDLE THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION ON THE BASIS OF THE PRINCIPLE EMBODIED IN THE FINAL ACT OF LAGOS. THE IMPERATIVE IS TO PROMOTE THE SPIRIT OF COLLECTIVE SELF-RELIANCE BASED ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION. IN ADOPTING THE FINAL ACT OF LAGOS, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE OAU RE-AFFIRMED THEIR COMMITMENT TO SET UP, BY THE YEAR 2000, ON THE BASIS OF A TREATY, AN AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, SO AS TO ENSURE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INTEGRATION OF OUR CONTINENT. THE AIM OF THIS COMMUNITY IS TO PROMOTE COLLECTIVE, ACCELERATED, SELF-RELIANT AND SELF-SUSTAINING DEVELOPMENT OF MEMBER STATES; CO-OPERATION AMONG THESE STATES; AND THEIR INTEGRATION IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FIELDS.

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FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS, THE OAU HAS BEEN DEPLOYING EFFORTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE LAGOS PLAN. HENCEFORTH, AND WITH INCREASING VIGOUR, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SINGING OF THE TREATY, THE OAU SHALL DEVOTE ~~ALL~~ ITS AVAILABLE RESOURCES IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE ATTAINMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE TREATY AND ESPECIALLY IN THE INTEGRATING PRIORITY AREAS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EXISTING REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES AND AT CONTINENTAL LEVEL. MORE EMPHASIS SHALL BE PUT ON:

- RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE;
- FINANCIAL AND MONETARY CO-OPERATION;
- TRADE, CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION;
- INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ENERGY, NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT;
- TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS AND TOURISM;
- HEALTH, LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS;
- EDUCATION, CULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT.

AS YOU WILL NOTE THESE PRIORITY AREAS ARE THE SAME AS THOSE WE AGREED TO TARGET FOR OUR CO-OPERATION DURING THE LAST MEETING IN APRIL 1990.

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

AN ASSESSMENT OR REVIEW OF OUR CO-OPERATION DURING THE PAST YEAR, SHOULD IN MY VIEW FOCUS ON THE SPECIFIC MEASURES AND ACTIONS WHICH WERE UNDERTAKEN BY EACH OF THE INSTITUTIONS

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OF THE UN SYSTEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 44/17 ON CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE OAU AND THE UN AND WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF WHAT WE AGREED TO DO IN THE LAST MEETING. I CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT THAT SUCH AN ASSESSMENT SHOULD CLEARLY DELINEATE THOSE ACTIONS WHICH THE AGENCIES OF THE UN SYSTEM HAVE UNDERTAKEN WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF RESOLUTION 44/17 AS OPPOSED TO THE ACTIONS WHICH WERE CARRIED OUT AT NATIONAL LEVEL. MORE SPECIFICALLY, I WOULD LIKE YOUR MEETING TO INDICATE THE PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS WHICH HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED SINCE WE LAST MET OR THOSE WHICH HAVE BEEN INITIATED. IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL TO KNOW WHETHER SOME OF THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT YOU REPRESENT HAVE SET ASIDE OR PLAN TO ALLOCATE, WITHIN YOUR RESPECTIVE BIENNIAL BUDGETS, RESOURCES FOR PURPOSES OF IMPLEMENTING OAU/UN CO-OPERATION IN THE PRIORITY AREAS WHICH I HAVE JUST MENTIONED.

I AM AWARE THAT THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM HAS THE GLOBAL MANDATE TO DEAL WITH SOME, IF NOT ALL OF THESE PRIORITIES. YOU ARE ALSO AWARE OF THE NEW AND EMERGING APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION AMONG AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND ESPECIALLY THE APPROACH TO REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROUPINGS SUCH AS THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS), THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES, THE ARAB MAHGREB UNION (AMU), THE PREFERENTIAL TRADE AREA FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN (PTA) AND THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATION CONFERENCE

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(SADCC). THESE INSTITUTIONS CONSTITUTE THE BUILDING BLOCKS ON WHICH THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY SHALL STAND. THE OAU HAS BEEN CALLED UPON, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE TREATY ESTABLISHING THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY TO STRENGTHEN THESE SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROUPINGS AS THEY ARE DEFINED IN THE TREATY. WE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF COORDINATING AND HARMONISING THEIR POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES AS WELL AS THOSE OF THE EXISTING AFRICAN INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS WITHIN EACH OF THE REGIONS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THEIR ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY. IT IS IN THIS REGARD THAT I WOULD LIKE TO CALL UPON THE AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO REDEFINE AND FOCUS THEIR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THESE NEW IMPERATIVES IN AFRICA. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO SCATTER HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES IN AN UN-COORDINATED MANNER.

THIS MEETING DOES PROVIDE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CONCRETISE A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY AND ELABORATE MODALITIES FOR FUTURE OAU/UN CO-OPERATION THAT TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ROLE AND PRIORITIES OF THESE SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC GROUPINGS. IN THIS REGARD, IT IS OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE FOR THE

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UNITED NATIONS AND ITS AGENCIES TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE OAU, MORE CLOSELY IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE RATIONALISATION, CO-ORDINATION AND PROGRAMMING OF UN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE. TO THESE SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS WHICH SHOULD NOW BECOME TARGETTED DIRECT RECIPIENTS OF UN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 44/211.

AN IMPORTANT ASPECT TO BEAR IN MIND IS THE NEED TO BUILD UP AND STRENGTHEN THE HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITIES IN THE SECRETARIATS OF THESE SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC ENTITIES AND IN THE OAU/AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY SO AS TO ENABLE THEM MAN AND MANAGE THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF CO-OPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE STARTING POINT WOULD BE TO AGREE HERE ON THE MODALITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 44/211 ESPECIALLY AS REGARDS GOVERNMENT/NATIONAL EXECUTION OF UN FUNDED DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES. THE DECISION OF THE 37TH SESSION OF THE UNDP GOVERNING COUNCIL TO ACCELERATE THE PROCESS OF NATIONAL EXECUTION DURING THE FIFTH PROGRAMME CYCLE IS A POSITIVE MOVE TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 44/211. I HOPE OTHER FUNDING AGENCIES WILL BE FORTHCOMING SOON WITH SIMILAR MEASURES.

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FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES,

THE OAU GENERAL SECRETARIAT HAS PREPARED A DOCUMENT ON THE REVIEW OF CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES BETWEEN THE OAU AND THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (VIDE DOCUMENT OAU/UN/2 (VI). IT COVERS THE ACTIVITIES WHICH WERE UNDERTAKEN IN CO-OPERATION WITH YOUR INSTITUTIONS IN THE PAST ONE YEAR. THE DOCUMENT ALSO SUGGESTS A STRATEGY FOR STRENGTHENING FUTURE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE OAU AND YOUR RESPECTIVE ORGANISATIONS. ON THE BASIS OF THIS DOCUMENT TOGETHER WITH THOSE WHICH YOU HAVE PREPARED, THIS MEETING SHOULD BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH CONCRETE AND IMPLEMENTABLE PROPOSALS ON CO-OPERATION BETWEEN OUR ORGANISATIONS <sup>FOR</sup> OF THE BENEFIT OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT.

~~WITH THESE FEW PRELIMINARY REMARKS,~~ I WISH YOU SUCCESS  
<sup>Your</sup> IN ~~THESE~~ DELIBERATIONS.

I THANK YOU.