



Organization of African Unity
The Secretary General

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Addis Ababa, November 12, 1991

H.E. Mr. Li Peng
Prime Minister of
the State Council
Beijing.
People's Republic
of China

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

The process of electing the new Secretary General of the United Nations has now reached an advanced if not decisive stage. In these elections the position of the People's Republic of China as a Permanent Member of the Security Council and a traditional friend of Africa is clearly pivotal.

You are aware, Mr. Prime Minister, of Africa's great desire and fervent hope that this time round, a qualified African would be elected to head the United Nations. This desire and expectation on the part of the African States is motivated not just by the fact that no African has had such an honour and opportunity, but more importantly by the belief that Africa does have people of calibre whose competence, commitment and integrity would be an invaluable asset to our Organization. Indeed, these are the considerations which led the African Heads of State and Government at their Summit in Abuja, Nigeria in June this year, to call for the election of an African to the post and to appeal to the international community to make that possible.

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The Security Council has before it a number of qualified candidates presented by our Continent for the position. These candidates combine experience in government, diplomacy and international organizations. Above all they can be relied upon to serve the best interests of the United Nations at a time when the UN's role has become especially crucial, considering the challenges and opportunities of the day. It is Africa's hope that the People's Republic of China will find it possible to support the candidature of an African.

I wish to take this opportunity to appeal to you personally, Mr. Prime Minister, and to the Chinese Government, to give Africa a chance. I do so in the knowledge of China's long standing friendship towards our continent and our people. I do so also with the full understanding of your country's belief in and commitment to the United Nations. But above all, I do so in the confident belief that the People's Republic of China will recognize that these African candidates possess the necessary competence, skills, capabilities and experience to provide leadership of the Organization. This belief is reinforced by China's declared position of strong support to Africa's candidature. In making this appeal for the continued support of your country I am also reflecting the sentiments and aspirations of all Member States of the OAU who are clearly looking forward to an election of an African to this position.

Please accept, Mr. Prime Minister, the assurances of my highest consideration and personal esteem.

Salim Ahmed Salim