



Organization of African Unity

**Statement by Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim,  
Secretary General of the Organization of African  
Unity at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Summit of the Economic  
Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)  
N'Djamena, 4 – 5 February 2000**

**STATEMENT BY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF  
AFRICAN UNITY AT THE 2ND ORDINARY SUMMIT OF THE  
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF SAHELO-SAHARAN STATES (CEN-SAD)  
N'DJAMENA, 4-5 FEBRUARY 2000**

**Your Excellency, The Current Chairman  
Of the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States,  
Leader of the Great El-Fateh Revolution  
Colonel Muammar Ghadafi,**

**Your Excellency M. IDRIS DEBY, President of the  
Republic of Tchad**

**Excellencies, Heads of State and Government of the CEN-SAD**

**Honourable Prime Minister of the Republic of Tchad**

**Distinguished Secretary General of CEN-SAD**

**Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegation**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great honour for me to participate at this official opening of the Second Summit of the Community of Sahelo-Sahara States. I wish in this regard to express my gratitude to the President of the Republic of Tchad, His Excellency Idriss DEBY, who kindly invited me to join you at this occasion. I am particularly pleased to be here in Tchad, a country which is at the cross-road of different African civilizations and cultures. I would like to thank him, and also to express our profound appreciation and gratitude to the Government and people of Tchad for their warm reception and generous hospitality accorded to us. I have no doubt that the traditional warmth of the Tchadian people, and the conducive atmosphere and facilities provided for this meeting will enrich the deliberations and final outcome of this Summit.

The commitment that you made at the founding of this Community on 4, February 1998, has, indeed, been borne out by the significant progress that your Organization has made during the past two years. By the Tripoli Treaty you had dedicated yourselves to fostering closer integration in the economic, political and cultural arenas; and also to promoting peace, stability and security of the Sahelo-Saharan region and in our Continent as a whole. These are noble goals that are at the corner stone of all collective endeavours in our Continent. By amplifying them and translating them within the concrete reality of your areas, your Community is making an important contribution towards the attainment of the continental aspiration of full integration.

Within a period of two years, under the Chairmanship of the Leader of the Great El-Fathei Revolution, Brother Muammer Ghadafi, you have been able to put in place an operational institutional framework that has allowed you to come up with collective undertakings, some of whose basic texts and statutes you will be examining at this Summit.

I wish to congratulate you for these achievements and to pledge the continuing support of our Continental Organization to the various initiatives that you plan to undertake. The survival and prosperity of our Continent can be guaranteed only through such collective endeavours that your Organization represents. In the same vein, the resolve that you have made, together with your colleagues – other Heads of State and Government - since 1991 in Abuja, Nigeria, and recently reinvigorated by the Sirte Declaration of 9. 9. 1999 can only be realized by such determined efforts that you have demonstrated in the past two years.

Owing to its strategic location, the Community of CEN-SAD has a very unique and important role in the pursuit of our Continental development agenda. This is one sub-regional Organization that brings together member states from the north, the west, the central, and the eastern part of our Continent. It traverses across regional, geographical, linguistic, and cultural zones to bind together a people that are united in their resolve to overcome their differences and in their determination to chart out a shared destiny.

Similarly, the fact that your Community is composed of Member States who also belong to four major Regional Economic Communities – UMA,



COMESA, ECOWAS, and ECCAS, creates a powerful synergy allowing the activities of CEN-SAD to impact simultaneously on the development of the four Regional Economic Communities. The importance of this relationship is emphasized by the fact that these four Communities are part of the building blocks for the establishment of the envisaged larger African Economic Community. Indeed, it is in this respect that CEN-SAD has the opportunity to contribute effectively in accelerating the process of harmonization and coordination among the Regional Economic Communities. In other words, your Community is an important catalytic agent for the rapid attainment of the African Union.

Our Continent faces the immediate challenge of promoting sustainable economic development and surmounting the threat of marginalization in a rapidly globalizing world. In such a context we need to harness every single opportunity and to deploy every comparative advantage so as to promote economic and political integration. The fact that within two years of the creation of your Organization, you are able to deliberate on a Security Charter and the Statutes of the Bank for Development and Commerce demonstrates how a sub-regional Organization can contribute to the larger continental agenda for peace and development.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, last year, we committed ourselves to establishing an African Union, and to accelerate the process of implementing the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. This was an historic decision. We, at the General Secretariat of our Continental Organization, have mobilized and directed our efforts towards implementing this Decision within the deadlines stipulated by the Heads of State and Government.

The Sirte Decision, however, also has important bearings for Regional and Sub-Regional Institutions such as CEN-SAD, particularly in accelerating the implementation of the Abuja Treaty and in leading ultimately to the establishment of the African Union. Indeed, in as much as the Abuja Treaty relies significantly on a consolidated and coordinated network of Regional Economic Communities, Organizations such as CEN-SAD have an important role to play in promoting, from below, the momentum for attaining the African Union.

Apart from your fervent determination to promoting economic development and integration, your Community, right at its inception, has committed itself to preserving peace, stability and security in the sub-region and

in the Continent as a whole. I salute the various initiatives you have individually and collectively taken in preempting hostility, consolidating peace, and resolving conflicts in various parts of our Continent. For too long a period the people of Africa have not been able to harness the full potential of their Continent because of the prevalence of avoidable conflicts. Indeed, for too long our people have suffered, many losing their lives, their communities ruined, and forced to become refugees and displaced people.

It is gratifying to see that as we enter the new millennium, Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations are putting in place mechanisms for ensuring that peace, stability and security prevails in their respective milieus. The fact that at this early stage of the founding of your Community you have given a high priority to the ratification of a Security Charter that is aimed at preserving peace and stability underscores your commitment to this endeavour. The timing of this Charter is also a reaffirmation of the decision that you made, together with your colleagues, other Heads of State and Government, in July last year at Algiers, to make the year 2000 one of peace, security and stability in our Continent.

I cannot desist in this connection to pay homage to the Tchadian people, who for so long had suffered the agonies of conflict, but who finally found the road to peace and who are making every effort to ensure that it is preserved.

Allow me to conclude, Your Excellencies, by once again wishing this Summit successful deliberations.

I Thank You.