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STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OAU
DR. SALIM AHMED SALIM AT THE 7TH SUMMIT OF HEADS
OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF INTER-GOVERNMENTAL
AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD), DJIBOUTI
FRIDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 1999

Your Excellency, Monsieur Ismael Omar Guelleh,
President of Djibouti and Current Chairman of IGAD,
Your Excellency, Mr. Daniel Arap Moi, President of Kenya,
Your Excellency, Lt. General Omar Hassan El-Beshir, President
of Sudan,
Your Excellency, Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia,
Your Excellency, Former President Hassan Goueled Aptidon
The Executive Secretary of IGAD,
Distinguished Ministers,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased, as always, to be here in this beautiful capital of one of our Member States, Djibouti, whose commitment to the peace, development and advancement of the sub-region and, indeed of the continent as a whole, continues to be eloquently manifested. I am equally grateful to be attending this important meeting of IGAD Heads of State and Government, at the invitation of the Current Chairman, President Guelleh, a timely meeting which takes place at

this critical moment when the sub-region faces innumerable challenges to its peace, security, stability and development.

We in the OAU believe that these challenges which confront IGAD and the OAU at large, as stupendous as they may appear, are not insurmountable. In this context, we welcome the opportunity which today's gathering affords us yet again, to examine and come up with possible solutions to these many challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

It is in this connection that we are particularly appreciative of the proposals made by you, Mr. President, to bring to a definitive end, the seemingly intractable conflict which persists in Somalia. Here, I would like to seize the occasion to call upon the international community to lend its support this important initiative of President Guelleh. In the meantime, as a member of the Standing Committee, the OAU reiterates its full support for the commendable efforts of IGAD in the Somali peace process.

Mr. Chairman,

We continue to be gravely concerned about the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It would be recalled that from the very beginning of the unfortunate conflict, the OAU has been making efforts to end it and provide a durable settlement. The work which has been accomplished by the OAU High Level Delegation culminating in the elaboration of a Framework Agreement and

Modalities for Implementation which were endorsed in Algiers is now being vigorously pursued by the Current Chairman of the OAU, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria working closely with the Secretary General of the Organization. We remain confident that in the implementation of the OAU peace plan lies the solution to this unfortunate and sad conflict. The OAU is now actively pursuing this path and we urge the parties to continue to lend their full cooperation.

On the conflict in the Sudan, we express the hope that the efforts which continue to be deployed by the Government of the Sudan and the parties concerned, will bring about the light at the end of the tunnel which we hope to see in the near future. In the meantime, the OAU pledges its support for IGAD in its efforts to bring an end to this long running conflict.

Mr. Chairman,

The OAU will continue to do its utmost to support the tireless efforts of IGAD and its Member States which have played a vigorous role in tackling the problems of peace and security which lie at its doorstep and which hinder the attainment of the more fundamental challenges of socio-economic development facing us in the sub-region and indeed Africa as a whole.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to conclude by wishing your deliberations all success. Djibouti does provide the most propitious environment for this. At a time when we are laying considerable emphasis on the process of democratization in our Continent, we have noted with appreciation and admiration, the smooth transfer of power that has taken place in this country through a democratic election. In this connection, we salute the wisdom, courage and vision of our elder statesman, President Hassan Gouled Aptidon.

The OAU which values the role of IGAD looks forward to continued cooperation and harmonisation as your Institution and our Continental Organization forge ahead in confronting the multifaceted crises and challenges that face the sub-region and Africa as a whole. We look forward to IGAD's contribution not only in our collective search for peace and stability in the region but above all as an important pillar of our continental Organization with economic and social development of our countries through economic cooperation and regional integration as provided for in the African Economic Community.

Thank you.