

1

ADDRESS BY THE OAU SECRETARY-GENERAL, H.E. MR SALIM AHMED SALIM

AT THE SIXTH SUMMIT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

FOR CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES (ECCAS)

Kigali, 25 January, 1990

YOUR EXCELLENCIES
HEADS OF STATE OF THE
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY FOR
CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES,
HONOURABLE MINISTERS,
MR SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ECCAS,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I FEEL PRIVILEGED TO BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THIS ASSEMBLY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY FOR CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES AND TO TAKE PART IN YOUR DELIBERATIONS. ALLOW ME, THEREFORE, TO DISCHARGE A PLEASANT DUTY AND PAY DESERVING TRIBUTE TO H.E. MR HABYARIMANA JUVENAL, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA AND FOUNDER PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT (NRND), HIS GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF RWANDA FOR THEIR TRADITIONAL AFRICAN HOSPITALITY. MR PRESIDENT, YOUR PERSONAL COMMITMENT AND THE DEDICATION OF YOUR COUNTRY TO THE PRINCIPLES AND IDEALS OF INTERAFRICAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION IS A MATTER OF RECORD. NOT ONLY IS RWANDA, A FOUNDER MEMBER OF ECCAS AND A DYNAMIC MEMBER OF THE PTA, BUT SHE HOSTS THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF THE GREAT LAKE STATES AND OF THE KAGERA BASIN ORGANIZATION.

THE HOLDING OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF ECCAS IN THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY OF KIGALI IS, ONCE AGAIN, A TESTIMONY TO THAT STEADY AND UNSHAKABLE COMMITMENT OF THE RWANDESE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF ORGANIZED SOLIDARITY AND COLLECTIVE MOBILIZATION OF EFFORTS AND RESOURCES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR CONTINENT.

MR CHAIRMAN,

THIS SUMMIT IS TAKING PLACE AT A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN HISTORY. WE HAVE JUST GONE THROUGH A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT DECADE. IT WAS A DECADE OF ACUTE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, OF NATURAL DISASTERS AND THEIR ATTENDANT SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES. BUT IT WAS ALSO A DECADE CHARACTERIZED BY A NEW VISION FOR AFRICA - A VISION OF AN AFRICA RESOLUTE IN ITS INTENTION TO PULL TOGETHER AND MOUNT A UNITED ASSAULT ON ITS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. DESPITE THIS OPTIMISM, AFRICA FAILED TO REALIZE THESE OBEJCTIVE AND FELL INTO DEEPER ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES.

TODAY AFRICA'S ECONOMIC SITUATION REMAINS PRECARIOUS AS WE ENTER THE LAST DECADE OF THIS CENTURY. THIS SITUATION IS MORE WORRISOME PARTICULARLY NOW WHEN THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT IS UNDERGOING FUNDAMENTAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS, INVOLVING THE RE-DEFINITION OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND THE FORGING OF NEW POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ALLIANCES WHICH WERE, UNTIL TODAY, DIFFICULT TO CONTEMPLATE.

THE RESULTS OF THESE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS ARE BOUND TO DICTATE THE COURSE OF THE WORLD FOR THE NEXT CENTURY. THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ALLIANCES NOW IN THE PROCESS OF BEING FORMED, SHALL DOMINATE WORLD MANUFACTURING, TRADE AND COMMERCE. WHERE WILL AFRICA BE, WHAT SHALL ITS ROLE BE IN THIS NEW AND EMERGING PICTURE OF THE WORLD ? WILL AFRICA BE A PLAYER OR A VIABLE PARTNER IN THE NEW WORLD OR SHALL IT BE TOO PREOCCUPIED WITH ITS POVERTY TO BE OF ANY RELEVANCE ? HOW CAN AFRICA ENSURE THAT IT IS NOT RELEGATED TO THE SIDELINES AND COMPLETELY MARGINALIZED IN THE EQUATION OF THE EMERGING WORLD?

THESE AND MANY MORE QUESTIONS MUST FORM THE MAJOR PART OF AFRICA'S AGENDA IN THIS DECADE AND BEYOND. BUT, AFRICA CAN NOT POSSIBLY EXPECT TO BE A VIABLE PARTNER IN THE NEW WORLD UNLESS IT REVERSES THE CURRENT TREND OF ECONOMIC DISINTEGRATION OF THE CONTINENT. IT MUST BEGIN TO ERECT SUPPORTING STRUCTURES OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY WHICH IS BASED ON COLLECTIVE SELF-RELIANCE. FOR ONLY A UNITED AFRICA, ONE WHICH ACTS TOGETHER AND SPEAKS IN ONE VOICE, CAN STAND UP TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE NEXT CENTURY.

MR CHAIRMAN,

THE 1980s SAW THE ADOPTION OF THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION AND ITS FINAL ACT. IT WAS AND STILL IS AFRICA'S BLUE PRINT FOR LONG-TERM

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH JOINT AND COORDINATED EFFORTS AT ALL LEVELS AND IN ALL AREAS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY AS WELL AS THROUGH A RATIONAL REORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN ECONOMIES. IT WAS ENVISAGED TO SET UP VIABLE MARKETS TO INDUCE AND STIMULATE PRODUCTION AND INTRA-AFRICAN EXCHANGES. IN 1985, FOLLOWING THE FIRST REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION, A MEDIUM-TERM RECOVERY PROGRAMME KNOWN AS «AFRICA'S PRIORITY PROGRAMME FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY» WAS ADOPTED BY THE OAU AND ENDORSED BY THE UNITED NATIONS, UNDER UNPAAERD, WHICH, IF IMPLEMENTED, WOULD HAVE BEEN A MODEL FOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN AFRICA AND THE REST OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. THE OUTCOME OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROGRAMME CONDUCTED BY THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IS DISAPPOINTINGLY KNOWN TO YOU ALL.

AS WE ENTER INTO THE 1990s, AFRICA'S ECONOMIES ARE CHARACTERIZED BY NEGATIVE PERFORMANCE AS A RESULT, TO A LARGE EXTENT, OF THE INCREASING DETERIORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CLIMATE, BY THE COLLAPSE OF COMMODITY PRICES AND THE WORSENING OF AFRICA'S DEBT BURDEN. ALL THESE ADVERSE FACTORS COMBINED AND COMPOUNDED WITH THE LACK OF SOLID ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURAL, INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL BASE, AS WELL AS WITH A SHORT RANGE OF OUR EXPORT COMMODITIES WITHIN AND OUTSIDE AFRICA, HAVE CONVERGED TO CRIPPLE THE FRAGILE, CASH CROP ORIENTED ECONOMIES OF OUR COUNTRIES. INVARIABLY, MOST COUNTRIES

HAVE BEEN LED INTO SOCIO-ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS, INSTEAD OF CONCENTRATING ON LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN KEEPING WITH THE STRATEGY OF THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION. LIKEWISE, MOST OF OUR COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN FORCED TO DIVERT THEIR EFFORTS AND MEAGER RESOURCES TO MITIGATE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS.

MR CHAIRMAN,

THE EFFECTS OF THE EXTERNAL DEBT HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY DEBILITATING TO MOST OF THE AFRICAN COUNTRIES. FOR NOT ONLY HAVE OUR EXPORT EARNINGS FALLEN AS A RESULT OF FLUCTUATIONS OF THE PRICES OF OUR PRIMARY COMMODITIES, EVEN THAT LITTLE WE EARN, WE ARE COMPELLED TO SPEND A GREAT PROPORTION OF IT TO SERVICE THAT DEBT. THE TOTAL AFRICA'S FOREIGN DEBT IS CURRENTLY IN EXCESS OF 230 BILLION DOLLARS - AN AMOUNT WHICH IS ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO FIFTY PERCENT OF ITS TOTAL EXPORT EARNINGS. IT IS THIS ANACHRONISTIC SITUATION FORCING US THE POOR TO TAKE MONEY BACK TO THE RICH LENDERS SO THAT WE MAY PASS CERTIFICATION AS GOOD DEBTORS, WHICH AFRICA MUST REVERSE. IT IS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE FOR AFRICA TO SURVIVE IN AN ENVIRONMENT CHARACTERIZED BY CONTRACTION OF CONCESSIONARY RESOURCE INFLOW, FALLING COMMODITY PRICES AND THE RESULTANT LOSS OF EXPORT EARNINGS AND THE REPATRIATION OF CAPITAL IN THE FORM OF DEBT SERVICING OBLIGATION.

THIS ORGANIZATION, TOGETHER WITH SIMILAR GROUPINGS IN EASTERN, SOUTHERN, WESTERN AND NORTHERN AFRICA, SHOULD BE THE

NUCLEI FOR AFRICA'S MOVEMENT TOWARDS COMPLETE ECONOMIC INTEGRATION. THESE MUST CONSTITUTE THE PILLARS OF A STRONG AND ECONOMICALLY UNITED AFRICA WE ENVISAGE TO CREATE BY THE YEAR 2000. BUT IN THE INTERIM, THESE MUST BE RALLYING POINTS IN OUR DEMAND FOR A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LENDING AND DEBTOR COUNTRIES. AFRICA HAS A COMMON POSITION ON DEBT. IT IS A STATEMENT OF OUR RESOLUTE INTENTION TO CREATE A UNITED FRONT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR BETTER CONDITIONS OF REPAYING OUR DEBTS. WHILE AFRICA'S POSITION ON MEETING OUR DEBT OBLIGATIONS IS WELL KNOWN, WE MUST PERSIST IN OUR DEMAND FOR BETTER CONDITIONS FOR REPAYMENT. WE NEED TO CONSOLIDATE THIS POSITION AND TO PERSIST ALSO IN OUR DEMAND FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEBT. WE MUST USE EVERY OCCASION OF OUR CONTACTS WITH THE DEVELOPED NORTH TO REITERATE THIS POSITION. INSTITUTIONS LIKE THESE PROVIDE A UNITED FORUM FROM WHICH WE CAN ARTICULATE THAT COMMON POSITION.

MR CHAIRMAN,

TEN YEARS AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION, AFRICA IS YET TO CLAIM MONUMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS. WE HAVE NOT MADE ANY SIGNIFICANT DENT IN AFRICA'S POVERTY AND ITS OTHER MYRIAD OF PROBLEMS. IF ANYTHING AFRICA IS WORSE-OFF TODAY THAN IT WAS AT THE ADOPTION OF THE PLAN. A COMBINATION OF FACTORS, SOME EXTERNAL TO AFRICA, SOME MAN-MADE AND NATURAL DISASTERS, HAVE CONSPIRED AGAINST AFRICA'S EFFORTS AT DEVELOPMENT. THE LAST DECADE HAS WITNESSED SOME OF THE MOST CRIPPLING DROUGHTS

WHICH HAVE SWEEPED ACROSS AFRICA. THE PRICE OF PRIMARY COMMODITIES HAVE PLUMETED IN INVERSE PROPORTION TO THE SKY-ROCKETTING PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS. THE RESULT HAS BEEN NOT ONLY THE FALL IN REAL INCOME TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES BUT THE FALL OF THEIR PURCHASING POWER ON THE WORLD MARKET. AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS, IN TERMS OF THE ABILITY OF OUR GOVERNMENTS TO MEET SOCIAL NEEDS OF OUR PEOPLE, HAVE BEEN QUITE SERIOUS.

THIS ADVERSE SITUATION WAS FURTHER WORSENERD BY THE CONTRACTION OF THE VOLUME OF RESOURCE FLOWS TO AFRICA EITHER IN FORM OF CONCESSIONARY CREDIT FACILITIES, AID, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND NEW INVESTMENTS. ONLY A FEW COUNTRIES OF THE DEVELOPED NORTH WERE EVEN PREPARED TO MEET THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT AID TARGETS.

FACE WITH THIS DIFFICULT SITUATION, MOST OF OUR COUNTRIES HAVE MADE EFFORTS TO SEEK RELIEF. WE HAVE ENTERED INTO STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME AGREEMENTS WITH THE WORLD FINANCIAL AND MONETARY INSTITUTIONS; OFTEN AT CONSIDERABLE SOCIAL COST TO THE PEOPLE. WE HAVE INITIATED OUR OWN ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMMES. IN ALL THESE EFFORTS, ONE THING CAME OUT CLEARLY. WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY BEEN REMINDED BY THESE INSTITUTIONS, AND BY MANY COUNTRIES, THAT, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, WE HAVE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR OWN DEVELOPMENT. CERTAINLY, THE NEW POLITICAL LESSON WE HAVE DRAWN OUT OF THIS, HAS INVARIABLY BEEN THAT, IF WE WANT SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENT ACTION, WE HAVE TO SEIZE THE INITIATIVE AND DETERMINE OUR ECONOMIC DIRECTION.

THIS IS A REALIZATION INHERENT IN THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION. IT WAS A POLITICAL DETERMINATION TO MAKE A RADICAL DEPARTURE FROM THE TRADITIONAL RELIANCE ON CHARITY AND TO BEGIN THE LONG AND PAINFUL BUT INESCAPABLE PROCESS TOWARDS SELF-RELIANCE. IT WAS A REALIZATION OF THE INHERENT DIFFICIENCIES OF DEVELOPMENT MODELS WHICH PUSHED AFRICA DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO DEPENDENCE WHILE EVANGELIZING SELF-RELIANCE.

AFRICA HAS MADE SOME PROGRESS - AT LEAST IN THE NEW DIRECTIONS OF THINKING. AFRICA IS NOW INCREASINGLY BECOMING CONCERNED AT ITS OWN FATE AND FACING WITH INCREASING COURAGE, THE CHALLENGES OF ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT. BUT APART FROM THIS NEW REALIZATION OF RESPONSIBILITY, AFRICA HAS BEGUN TO TAKE PRACTICAL MEASURES. YOUR ORGANIZATION, SADCC, PTA, ECOWAS AND THE MAGHREB UNION ARE ALL PRACTICAL EXPRESSIONS OF THIS NEW THINKING WHICH IS ROOTED IN THE BELIEF IN GREATER ADVANTAGES OF COOPERATION. BY PULLING TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE IMPACT AND IF WE STAND INDIVIDUALLY, OUR EFFORTS CAN ONLY BE DISPERSED.

MR CHAIRMAN,

THIS IS ALL THE MORE TRUE NOW IN VIEW OF THE CHANGES RAPIDLY TAKING PLACE IN THE REST OF THE WORLD. THOSE RICHER AND MORE POWERFUL IN THE INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD ARE REGROUPING INTO LARGER AND MORE COHERENT ECONOMIC AND TRADING BLOCS. IT IS A REALIZATION THAT ONLY THE LARGER AND ECONOMICALLY STRONG WILL SURVIVE THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY.

WESTERN EUROPE IS GEARING ITSELF TO A SINGLE MARKET IN TWO YEARS. THE EVENTS IN EASTERN EUROPE ARE PROVING TO BE POTENT CATALYSTS TO EAST-WEST COOPERATION. IT IS NO LONGER A QUESTION OF IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATION BUT ACCOMODATION AND COOPERATION DICTATED BY ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES. EASTERN EUROPE NEEDS WESTERN CAPITAL AND TECHNOLOGY, THE WEST NEEDS EASTERN SKILLED LABOUR AND MARKETS. JAPAN HAS ALREADY STARTED MAKING IN-ROADS INTO EASTERN EUROPE AND PREPARING GROUND OF ITS COMPETITIVE ENTRY ON TO THE ECONOMIC SCENE IN THAT REGION.

THE INTEREST AND ENTHUSIASM SHOWN BY WESTERN EUROPE TO THE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EAST SUGGEST A CLEAR SHIFT IN PRIORITIES. IN EUROPE ALL OVER, THE DEBATE IS ABOUT THE INTEGRATION OF THE ENTIRE CONTINENT INTO A COHERENT AND HOMOGENOUS ECONOMIC ENTITY IN WHICH GOODS AND SERVICES SHALL MOVE BACK AND FORTH WITH THE LEAST HINDRANCE.

IN AMERICA, BOTH CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES ARE MOVING ECONOMICALLY CLOSER IN SETTING UP FREE TRADE ZONES AND EASING TARRIF BARRIERS AND CUSTOM FORMALITIES IN TRADE. THE TREND IS SIMILAR PARTICULARLY IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA.

ALL THESE DEVELOPMENTS ARE CHARATERIZED BY MORE IN-WARD LOOKING POLICIES NOW BEING PUT IN PLACE BY THESE COUNTRIES. EUROPE HAS SET ITS COURSE TOWARDS A UNITED EUROPE. A EUROPE MORE RESPONSIVE TO ITS OWN NEEDS AND MORE PROTECTIVE OF ITS RESOURCES

AND MARKETS. IT MEANS EUROPE CAN NOT MAINTAIN THE SAME LEVEL OF INTEREST AND RESOURCE COMMITMENT TO OTHER AREAS. IT ALSO MEANS THAT AFRICA AND OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WILL HAVE TO ADJUST TO THE CUT IN RESOURCE FLOW FROM EUROPE AND AMERICA.

THIS IS THE CHALLENGE OF AFRICA DURING THIS DECADE AND THE NEXT CENTURY. IT IS THE CHALLENGE OF ECONOMIC GROUPINGS LIKE THIS TO COORDINATE AFRICA'S EFFORTS. AFRICA HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO BEGIN A SUSTAINED MARCH TOWARDS SELF-RELIANCE; TO ELABORATE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES WHICH PLACE PROGRESSIVELY DIMINISHING EMPHASIS ON EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE AND PROMOTE INTRA-AFRICAN COOPERATION AND JOINT ACTION.

YOUR EXCELLENCIES,

WHEN YOU DECIDED, SIX YEARS AGO, TO SET UP THIS ECONOMIC COMMUNITY IN CENTRAL AFRICA, YOU WERE GUIDED NOT ONLY BY THE LOGIC OF ECONOMIC SELF-PRESERVATION BUT ALSO BY YOUR SHARED DESIRE TO PURSUE COMMON POLICIES, TO PROMOTE UNITY THROUGH SOLIDARITY, COLLECTIVE SELF-RELIANCE AND IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE POPULATIONS OF ALL THE MEMBER STATES. YOU HAVE MADE SOME COMMENDABLE PROGRESS. OVER THIS SHORT PERIOD, ECCAS HAS CONCENTRATED ITS EFFORTS ON INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING WITHIN PARTICULARLY UNFAVOURABLE CONDITIONS AND MANAGED TO DEVELOP BASIC OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND MULTINATIONAL PROJECTS DESIGNED TO FOSTER AND ACCELERATE COLLECTIVE AND SELF-RELIANT

DEVELOPMENT OF ITS MEMBER STATES IN SUCH PRIORITY SECTORS AS CUSTOMS, TRADE, MONEY AND FINANCE, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE.

THESE ACHIEVEMENTS, HOWEVER, MODEST THEY ARE, DID NOT COME EASILY. THEY ARE A RESULT OF HARD AND DEDICATED WORK. BUT ABOVE ALL, THEY ARE A PRODUCT OF YOUR COLLECTIVE POLITICAL VISION, WILL AND FIRM DETERMINATION TO PURSUE YOUR OBJECTIVES OF SELFSUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COORDINATED AND COLLECTIVE SELFRELIANCE. THE PEOPLES OF THIS REGION LOOK FORWARD NOT ONLY TO ENJOYING THE FRUITS OF THIS COOPERATION UNDER WAY, BUT ALSO TO TAKE PART IN BUILDING, TOGETHER, THE NEW AND BROAD BASED AFRICAN SOCIETY.

THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY FOR CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES, WITH ITS VAST NATURAL RESOURCES AND ITS IMMENSE POTENTIALS, MUST BE GIVEN ALL THE REQUIRED POLITICAL SUPPORT TO SUCCEED. FOR IF THEY WERE TO SUCCEED, MEMBER STATES OF THIS REGION WOULD NOT ONLY BE PROMOTING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVING THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE PEOPLES OF THEIR COUNTRIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY BUT THEY WOULD, IN THE PROCESS, BE LAYING THE FOUNDATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY. AND GIVEN THE CENTRAL LOCATION OF ECCAS AND THE ABUDANT NATURAL RESOURCES WITHIN ITS BOUNDARIES, THE SUCCESS OF THE ENVISAGED PANAFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY WILL, IN TURN, DEPEND, IN PART, ON THE DEGREE OF ECCAS SUCCESS IN PROMOTING ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF THIS REGION.

MR CHAIRMAN,

UNITY IS STRENGTH AND SOLIDARITY ITS INSTRUMENT. ECONOMIC COOPERATION AMONG OUR MEMBER STATES AND THE GRADUAL INTEGRATION OF THE ECONOMIES ARE NOT A MATTER OF CHOICE BUT AN IMPERATIVE OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SURVIVAL AS INDEPENDENT AND ECONOMICALLY VIABLE NATIONS OF AFRICA. DIFFICULT AS IT MAY BE, WE HAVE NO CHOICE. WE MUST CONTINUE TO MOVE AHEAD IN THIS DIRECTION, TOGETHER, AND GRADUALLY BUILDING STRENGTH, IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA AND TO DEFEND COLLECTIVELY THE POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM OF AFRICA. YOU HAVE SET THE PROCESS IN MOTION. IT IS OUR COMMON DUTY TO SUSTAIN THAT INITIATIVE AND SEE IT TO ITS FRUITFUL END.

I WISH YOU SUCCESSFUL DELIBERATIONS.

THANK YOU.