

file
12

STATEMENT BY THE OAU SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE FORTHCOMING SUMMIT MEETING
BETWEEN
THE PRESIDENTS OF THE USA AND USSR

In a few days, the Leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union will be meeting again. As Secretary-General of the OAU, I wish to welcome this development and to commend the Leaders on their wisdom to sustain dialogue.

The value of these meetings lays not only in the opportunities they present to lessening tension and for more cooperation between the world powers, but also in the framework they provide for the resolution of regional conflicts. Africa is encouraged by the general thaw of relations between the USA and USSR and by the recent agreements for the reduction of armament levels in Europe.

Africa hopes that this positive international political environment, which has gradually brought the USA and USSR into a cooperative relationship, will be applied positively to the resolution of the major problems facing the continent today. In particular, I hope that building on the commendable role they played in promoting the implementation of the United Nations Plan on Namibia, the USA and USSR will persist in their opposition to Apartheid and in maintaining international pressure including sanctions against South Africa until there is an irreversible process towards the total dismantling of that evil system.

In addition, I hope that the two Leaders will accord priority to the worsening economic situation in Africa including especially the issue of the debilitating indebtedness of the continent. Africa should be able to benefit from this improved political environment. Specifically the problem of the external debt could partly be tackled by channelling the expected huge savings arising out of disarmament to economic development of developing countries particularly in Africa where conditions of absolute poverty continue to be a disturbing phenomenon. These conditions of poverty, with their attendant negative repercussion on the welfare of our people, constitute a serious factor of instability with far reaching consequences beyond the continent.

Finally, the OAU wishes Presidents **Bush** and **Gorbachev** a very successful Summit in the confident belief that their meeting will enhance peace and security and promote international understanding and cooperation. Above all, it is our hope that their deliberations will take into due account the realism that to be lasting, international Peace and Security must be universal.

Addis Ababa, 28 May, 1990.