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STATEMENT OF H.E. DR. SALIM AHMED SALIM, THE SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, AT THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY
SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND
GOVERNMENT OF THE PREFERENTIAL TRADE AREA OF
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN STATES, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA
WEDNESDAY, 20 JANUARY 1993

Mr. Chairman

Your Excellencies, the Heads of State and Government
Honourable Ministers

Distinguished Secretary General of the PTA

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish at the very outset, to express my sincere appreciation for the invitation extended to me to participate in this august Assembly on the occasion of this memorable and historic Summit which marks a milestone of the 10th anniversary of the PTA. I would like to extend my personal gratitude to His Excellency President Fredrick CHILUBA, the President of the Republic of Zambia and to his Government and people for the warm and brotherly welcome extended to the OAU delegation since our arrival on this hospitable land.

Permit me also to express my appreciation and congratulations to our brother Dr. BINGU WA MUTHARIKA, the Secretary General of the Preferential Trade Area for the dynamism and commitment that he has demonstrated since taking over the helm of affairs of the Organization. I would like to assure him of my fullest cooperation and that of the OAU as he continues to discharge his responsibilities.

Mr. Chairman

On this solemn occasion when we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the PTA, it is appropriate for us to reflect on the performance of this important regional organization, during the past decade. Emerging from the ruins and ashes of the defunct East African Community, the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) was

established on December 21, 1981 within the framework of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos and became operational on 30 September 1982. The birth of the PTA and its progress have been a further manifestation of the leadership role that the countries in Eastern and Southern African region have played not only in the political decolonization and liberation of Africa but also in the economic liberation of our continent.

The OAU takes pride in the achievements of the PTA. Our continental organization stands ready to continue to collaborate with the PTA in its future agenda which according to its Treaty and strategy is to transform the Preferential Trade Area into a Common Market for Eastern and Southern African States by the year 2000. Let me also state here that in the light of the discussions that have taken place and decisions made in respect ~~with~~ ^{OF} ~~the~~ ^{FUTURE} relationship between the PTA and SADC, the OAU remains ready to make its contributions in the study to be undertaken.

Mr. Chairman

Distinguished Heads of State and Government

As you will recall, when you joined your colleagues the Head of State and Government from the other regions of the OAU in signing the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community in June 1991, you did provide that during the first phase of the process, the OAU should endeavour to consolidate the Regional Economic Communities, such as the PTA. It is in such vein that the OAU has formulated a Protocol which will govern the legal, structural and the functional relationships between them and the African Economic Community. The said Protocol is currently under discussion and negotiation. Before its finalization, the OAU would fully take into account the views of all Member States and those of the African regional economic communities and in due course, would be submitted for your signatures and be annexed to the Abuja Treaty.

Furthermore, in the bid to strengthen the PTA and other regional economic communities, I have personally, on behalf of the OAU, on different occasions, made specific requests to multilateral agencies, like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Commission of the European Communities to

support the economic integration projects and programmes of African regional economic communities such as the PTA.

It is our expectation that in the next few months, the full transitional requirements of the AEC Treaty, regarding the ratification, would be met so that the Community can become operational. In this connection, I would like to appeal to the Heads of State and Government of those Member States of the PTA that have not yet done so, to endeavour to ratify the AEC Treaty, so that the Treaty could come into force. It is therefore, our hope that this can be possible by the time of the next OAU Summit scheduled to be held in Cairo from June 28 to June 30, 1993.

Mr. Chairman

Distinguished Heads of State and Government

As the PTA prepares to enter its second decade, one must also reflect on the socio-political environment under which it must operate. The said environment will also influence the new priorities of the OAU. These priorities are predicted on the clear recognition that without peace, stability and security, meaningful economic development, and especially economic integration is a goal that becomes difficult, if not impossible to attain. Consequently, as the OAU pursues the goal of economic cooperation and integration, which is a priority it must pursue with vigour and determination, it has, at the same time, to pursue its agenda for peace and security in our countries.

That is why the issue of conflict prevention, management and resolution must assume top priority in the affairs of the Organization. It is also why the OAU and the Member States of the Organization must leave no stone unturned in devising ways and means towards conflict resolution. In this connection, I wish to refer briefly to some of the conflicts in the PTA region. We are encouraged at the developments in Mozambique arising from the Peace Accord signed between President Chisano and Mr. Alfonso Dhlakama, leader of Renamo. The OAU, as required by the parties, will play its part in the implementation of the Accord. We pay tribute to President Chisano for his statesmanship and vision. We also recognize the important role played by the mediators and wish to highlight the particular contribution made by Presidents Mugabe, Masire and Moi.

We are also encouraged by the ongoing efforts to end conflicts in Rwanda and restore peace and stability in that war-torn country. The negotiations between the Government and the Rwandese Patriotic Front in Arusha have made significant headway. The OAU has been fully involved in the Rwanda Peace Process. The neighbouring countries as well as non-African observers in support of the Peace Process have all contributed to the progress made thus far. But special tribute is due to Tanzania and President MWINYI for having patiently and energetically facilitated the process of negotiation. It is my fervent hope that statesmanship and vision will be demonstrated by both the Government of Rwanda and the RPF so as to overcome the outstanding issues in the negotiations. In the meantime those agreements already entered to should be respected by both parties.

Mr. Chairman

While there is cause for some optimism in the cases of Mozambique and Rwanda, we are very much distressed by the situation in Angola. This is especially as we consider the optimism generated subsequent to the Bicesse Accord and the free and fair elections held in that country. We consider it to be of utmost importance that the Accords and the wishes of the people of Angola be respected. Furthermore, we consider it most regrettable that there appears to be a resumption of a full-scale war in many parts of the country. In that connection, I would like to state that the OAU, which had sent, last month, a high-level delegation led by President Robert Mugabe stands very much disposed to assist our brothers and sisters in Angola to avoid total conflagration, and to seek a negotiated resolution of the conflict, bearing in mind the verdict at the poles given by the Angolan people and the provisions of the Bicesse Accords.

As regards the traumatic conflict in Somalia, considerable efforts have been made by the International Community including the United Nations, the OAU and the Standing Committee of the Horn of Africa towards finding a solution. It is encouraging to note that as a result of the recent meeting held in Addis Ababa, with the firm support and personal commitment of the President of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, President Meles Zenawi, the

leaders of the Somali factions did conclude and signed, on Friday 15 January 1993, an Agreement which it is hoped would pave way for the convening of a conference on National Reconciliation in Addis Ababa on March 15, 1993. I believe this Agreement constitutes a major development, though admittedly, it is just a beginning of a process. We would therefore like to urge the leaders who have signed this Agreement to commit themselves to its implementation so as to ultimately achieve peace, security and stability for Somalia.

Mr. Chairman

Distinguished Heads of State and Government

Honourable Ministers

Ladies and Gentlemen

The decision by the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government to sign the Treaty establishing the African economic Community is in direct response to the imperative need for Africa to react to the fundamental changes taking place in the World Economy and on that score, Africa has no choice but to cooperate and integrate. That is why I would like to seize this opportunity to invite all Member States to implement the provisions of the various Treaties establishing our regional economic communities. Agreements which they themselves have willingly signed, in order for us to integrate the African national economies into a continental African Economic Community, which can become a force to reckon with. In this regard, we do not seem to have any option because the trend in the world economy which is now characterised by new and strong economic and trading blocks, all around us, all speak for themselves.

At the risk of repeating what your Excellencies are already aware of, it is pertinent to recall that at midnight on the 31st of December 1992, as we entered the New Year of 1993, the single European Market came into existence. Secondly, over the recent few months, the NAFTA - i.e. the North American Free Trade Area, composed of the USA and Canada was expanded to include Mexico. There is also talk of the Southern American Free Trade Area. Therefore, if Africa is not to be further marginalized in the

political and economic spheres of the world, it is absolutely imperative that we translate into concrete actions the decision that your Excellencies and yours Peers in the other Regions of our Continent have made towards the Economic Integration of the Continent.

Mr. Chairman

Your Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Finally, as we celebrate the 10th Anniversary here in Zambia, a country which has played and continues to play an important and indeed leading role in the struggle against Apartheid and for a new South Africa, it is fitting that we also use the occasion to rededicate our efforts in support of speedy and positive changes in that country. The vicious cycle of violence, death and destruction that was all too familiar a picture in the South African Political landscape in 1992 and the impasse in the negotiations which dashed our hopes and expectations for an uninterrupted change towards a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa must this year be replaced by a determined and vigorous pursuit of our common objective.

The Organization of African Unity will spare no effort in support of the attainment of this noble goal. We shall intensify our support to the ANC and the PAC and to the entire Anti-Apartheid Forces. We shall also lend our support to all those in South Africa who are for genuine dialogue and change.

The Member States of the PTA have a great stake in the freedom of South Africa. As part of the 10th Anniversary Celebrations-which incidentally are taking place at a time when the OAU is about to mark its 30th Anniversary - let us resolve to do our utmost so that sooner rather than later a democratic and non-racial South Africa can take its right place in our Continental and Regional Organizations.

I T H A N K Y O U