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Madame Chairperson, Speaker of the Parliament of South Africa
Excellencies Heads of State and Government
Distinguished Ministers
Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

This being the first time I am addressing a plenary session of this Third African Development Forum, allow me to take this opportunity, Madame Chairperson, to convey my appreciation to the organizers of this for inviting me to participate and share some of my reflections on this important and topical issue of integration in our Continent.

Since its launching three years ago, the African Development Forum has become an engaging platform for consensus building and planning for action among representatives of various stakeholders on some of the critical development challenges confronting our Continent. I wish to commend the ECA, the OAU, and the ADB for taking this initiative and for sustaining it over the years. I am pleased to participate in this Third Forum and it is also a pleasure for me to be back in Addis Ababa.

Turning to the issue for reflection at this session, which is the Architecture for Peace and Security in Africa, I wish to underscore what could be considered to be almost a truism. There is a symbiotic linkage between peace and security on one hand, and the process of Continental integration on the other hand. While peace and security promote the conditions for integration, the experience of other societies has confirmed that the process of integration can serve as a basis for the consolidation of peace and security.

The implication of this adage is not simply to acknowledge the logic of this linkage, but even more critical it is to endeavour towards constructing the architecture for peace, security, and also of integration that reinforces these elements. In this perspective, peace and security are not simply the conditions or even pre-requisites for integration, but they are part and parcel of the project of integration in Africa. Consequently, the notion sometimes suggested by the skeptics of this Continent that Africa cannot integrate because of the prevalence of conflicts and insecurity misses the point that the pursuit for cooperation and integration provides an effective means of eradicating conflict and insecurity in our Continent.

Perhaps I should point out right at this outset that the notion of “Architecture”, with reference to peace and security, may imply a well ordered blueprint and neatly assembled structures, norms, capacities, and procedures relating to averting conflict and war, mediating for peace, and maintaining security in our Continent. Obviously, such a perspective could lead into drawing a dismal profile of the Continent as the situation stands now, because it does not lend itself to such a neat and coherent architecture.

Indeed, there are structures befitting the prevailing challenge for peace and security that are developing in the Continent. There is also a corpus of norms and values which is gradually evolving; and there is also a multiplicity of initiatives and engagements on the ground directed at building and maintaining peace out of conflict situations. All these however, may not correspond to a neatly drawn blueprint for an architecture of peace and security in the Continent.

In the first place, the very genesis of these mechanisms, instruments and initiatives has been prompted by the real needs and the conditions prevailing at particular conjunctures. While many have been initiated out of a proactive desire to preempt and resolve specific conflicts, the magnitude of the challenge has forced their operationalization to remain reactive, and perhaps miss the opportunity of creating the necessary linkages for developing a synergy amenable to an effective and integrated architectural structure for peace and security for the Continent.

It should be stated also that the experience of the past decade, particularly the variable characteristics of conflicts that have occurred in the Continent and the outcome of the different intervention approaches that have been initiated, reaffirm the need for flexibility, innovation, and continuous

learning and adaptation in responding to conflict situations and in maintaining peace and security. Each of the conflict situations – whether it is the Comoros, Somalia, the Great Lakes, Sierra Leone, the Mano River Basin, or Ethiopia-Eritrea – has required a different set of initiatives, of course within an ambit of some general and collective Continental mandates.

As we now begin to take time and assess the efficacy of what obtains in the Continent, we should not merely dismiss what we now have as being ad hoc and therefore unviable; and begin to frantically seek for straight jacketed blueprints that either resemble some other experiences or logically fits ... Unfortunately the nature and character of conflicts and the practical realities on the ground tend to be complex and are not amenable to blueprints.

This is not, however, to discount the need for strategic approaches to conflict prevention, management and resolution. Nor does it negate the necessity for improving and enhancing the existing arrangement for promoting peace and security in the Continent.

For a clearer insight, let us briefly examine the existing structures of peace and security in the Continent.

In terms of Mechanisms and Protocols, alongside the Continental Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, there are several structures at the regional level, all of which are attached to the existing Regional Economic Communities. These include, the ECOWAS' Protocol on the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security signed on 10 December 1999; IGAD's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) signed on 9th January 2002; the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defense and Security which operates through the Interstate Defense and Security Committee (ISDSC) for Southern Africa; ECCAS' Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX) [and the mechanism which is being developed for CEN-SAD Community].

In addition to these standing Organs, a number of peace and security initiatives have been pursued through specifically mandated structures, mainly formed by countries of the Region closer to the crisis area with the participation of Members from other regions as well as the Continental Organization. The search for a peaceful resolution of the Burundi crisis as

well as that of the Comoros is coordinated within such a framework of the Countries of the Region mandated by(the Continental Organization)?

There are also a number of Civil Society Organizations, many of which are here today that perform the role of initiating and back-stopping the promotion of peace and security in the Continent. These range from Humanitarian Organizations, Peace and Development Foundations, Religious institutions, Institutes and Universities, Professional Groups, Women's Movements, and Community Based Organizations.

In terms of the existence of structures, there is no doubt from this overview of the inventory of Peace and Security mechanisms in the Continent that the ground is well covered. The issue, however, is one of effectiveness. To what extent are the existing Mechanisms and Protocol vigorous enough to prevent, manage, resolve conflict and also ensure sustainable peace and security in our Continent.

We do not have to be speculative about this. Various assessments done on both the Continental mechanism and those at the Regional level have confirmed that there are a number of handicaps which hamper the effective functioning of these structures. In the case of the OAU Mechanism reflections among the meetings of African Chiefs of Defence Staff (ACDS), internal brainstorming within the General Secretariat, discussions within the Central Organ and Council of Ministers, and joint assessment with partners like the International Peace Academy have all identified a number of weaknesses which impede the work of the Continental Mechanism. I am informed that only two weeks ago, African experts had an opportunity to exchange views on Reviewing the Structures, Procedures and Working Methods of the Central Organ, as the Lusaka Summit had directed.

In the same regard, assessments done on the Regional facilities have also revealed shortcomings arising mainly from the circumstances of their evolution. Many of them were established to respond to particular situations of an emergency nature. Their subsequent institutionalization and the changed regional situation have Hopefully, the ongoing initiatives to revamp and streamline some of them may engender more effectiveness in their operations.

At a general level, three major problems seem to have impinged on the effective functioning of these institutions. Firstly, most of them, including the Continental Mechanism, have not been fully installed. In fact, the critical components for most of them were still being constructed, the most conspicuous being the absence of Early Warning Systems. While the ECOWAS had demonstrated remarkable success in the component of peacekeeping and enforcement, for the other mechanisms the operational components operated through ad hoc arrangements.

The second problem, which was again generic to all, relates to the resource endowment. The maintenance of peace and security, particularly the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts is a resource demanding exercise. It requires large numbers of specialized human resources, a lot of finances, sophisticated equipment and a lot of recurrent expenditures. Existing structures have severely been handicapped by the resource deficiency. In some cases individual Member States have been compelled to sustain whole operations on a voluntary basis. To a large extent, the functioning of these Organs have had to rely on external support.

The most critical problem has been the lack of a stronger synergy among the structures both vertically and horizontally. The operational linkage between the Continental Mechanism and those at the regions has not been deployed consistently and to the optimal level. Apart from acquiring the mandate from the Assembly of Heads of State and Government the tendency has been for one or two officers from the General Secretariat to work with the Secretariat of the Regional Organization, and for the Secretary General or his collaborators to attend the high level meetings. This, however, has not constituted a full institutional collaboration at the two levels.

It is appropriate to underscore at this juncture that these deficiencies I have tried to highlight in the structures for the maintenance of peace and security can not be attributed to being the causes for the proliferation of conflict in the Continent. Indeed, as the experience of the past two decades has demonstrated, the factors which trigger and compound conflict in our society tend to lie more in the structures of political and economic governance, and the social relations that arise from that.

Perhaps, now, as we move into the African Union and build the necessary framework for integration, peace and security there is need to transcend the overwhelmingly militarized orientation of the structures for peace and security in the Continent. The CSSDCA and NEPAD initiatives are directing us to this new orientation.

In terms of delineating an overall framework for a comprehensive Continental agenda for peace and security, it is critical that the people of this Continent develop a shared doctrine of norms of values which forms the pillars for avoiding the disruption of peace and security. Gradually, we are beginning to see the evolution of such a shared doctrine. The Declaration adopted here in Addis Ababa, in July 1990, by the 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on the "Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes Taking Place in the World" marked a profound articulation of a collective perspective emerging in the Continent. African leaders asserted in unison, that:

"We realize that the possibilities of achieving the objectives we have set (socio-economic transformation and integration) will be constrained as long as an atmosphere of lasting peace and stability does not prevail in Africa. We therefore renew our determination to work together towards the peaceful and speedy resolution of all the conflicts in our Continent. The resolution of conflicts will be conducive to the creation of peace and stability in the Continent and will also have the effect of reducing expenditures on defence and security, thus releasing additional resources for socio-economic development...."

It was in fulfillment of this commitment that the Assembly adopted in June 1993, the Cairo Declaration on the establishment, within the OAU, of a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Indeed, this was a major turning point in the perspective of peace and security in the Continent. The Mechanism epitomized a new consensus that issues of peace and security are collective endeavours and no longer relegated to the confines of individual national idiosyncrasies, in the name of respecting sovereignty.

These values are being reinforced by such decisions as that taken in Algiers by the Heads of State and Government on the condemnation of unconstitutional changes of Governments. This decision was elaborated at the Lome Summit to spell out the sanction mechanisms that may be applied in such violations. These values are all synthesized in the principles and objectives of the Constitutive Act of the African Union which provide a basic framework for the development of a doctrine for promoting peace and security in the Continent.

The challenge, however, is to what extent are these values fully shared across the sectors of our societies. Should they remain simply at the level of declarations, decisions and constitutional objectives bounded in pamphlets? How do these augur with the frequent occurrence of acts of intolerance and xenophobia, and recalcitrant conflicts that have been raging for decades? A concerted effort is needed to percolate and disseminate these new values so that they are fully internalized within our societies.

One cardinal norm that has carried us through arduous challenges and delivered us through major milestones has been the respect for the sovereign equality of all Member States. I notice that this is a principle which has been reaffirmed in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, without undermining the quest for cooperation and integration. In this regard, sovereign equality does not disregard differences in capacities and levels of development among African countries. These differences have always existed even during the protracted liberation struggles that we waged through collective and concerted action.

Stronger and well endowed Member States of this Continent may find themselves taking on more responsibilities and increased leadership roles for the good of the Continent, but without being hegemonic. As it is the case at the global and national level, blatant inequalities that are ignored can undermine peace and security and can serve as destabilizing factors even to the most affluent. It may therefore be important to use the relative strength of some of our Member States as engines for the mutual development of all, and also as pillars for building the collective architecture of peace and security.

**Madame Chairperson
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I have pointed out earlier that the building of Continental structures for peace and security has to transcend military considerations and take into also socio-economic and political aspects. A major task here is to avoid the sectoral fragmentation that often obtains in such endeavours of over-concentrating on the growth and structural aspects of the economy, and treating the political arena and its institutions as the main space for creating harmony and peace in societies. Our Continent's experience in the past decade is more illuminating on this. The economic dimensions of conflicts have been as acute as their political corollary.

We are all aware of how the people in some of our Member States have continued to suffer and being deprived of peace and security because of their rich economic resource endowments. Internal strife has been exacerbated by the rich resource potential of these societies. On the other hand, poverty and scarcity of critical resources have also instigated instability and insecurity in other societies. At the same time, shared resources, such as water, grazing and pastoral lands have also triggered conflicts.

As Africa endeavours to position itself to cope and thrive within the dynamics of globalization, it is critical that the mode of economic governance that we adopt should not be focused wholly on market and monetary efficiencies. Economic outcomes have to foster social inclusiveness and to avoid a situation whereby poverty and marginalization are coterminous with particular social groups or regions. This has been a recipe for instability and conflict in some of our societies.

The economic dimension manifests itself also as a consequence of conflict, particularly in the destruction and displacement associated with the breakdown of peace and security. Indeed, it is important to take into account this factor as we begin to reflect on the emerging structures.

The shift from inter-state to intra-state conflict in Africa has also changed the nature and character of violence associated with these conflicts. Wars are now fought within communities with devastations. Apart from heavy loss of lives, severe damage is inflicted on infrastructure and strategic

investments. Massive numbers of population are displaced and turned into refugees and huge areas are rendered useless by mining. All the conventions and laws relating to warfare have been rendered ineffective. Perhaps it is time we review the Humanitarian Laws and Rules of warfare, not only in terms of enforcing respect of them, but also disseminating them as public education to preempt atrocities and the destruction that we have witnessed in the past decade.

Let me end this overview, by underscoring the fact that peace and security in Africa is part and parcel of the global peace and security. Both, the causes and consequences of conflict and instability in Africa do have a significant linkage with global developments and relations in the international arena. Indeed, African states are members of international bodies and organizations, particularly that which has been vested with the responsibility of ensuring global peace and security, the United Nations.

African people and their leaders are showing great determination in taking responsibility in addressing the impediments to peace and security. There is a concern, however, that the International Community does not demonstrate a commensurate response to the crisis situation in Africa, and it does not complement sufficiently African initiatives in that direction. Support that has been rendered has tended to be calculative, often delayed, and acutely insufficient. The trend that is developing of 'regionalizing' responsibilities for peace and security in the world does not work in Africa's favour and undermines the very essence of the United Nations.

The construction for peace and security in Africa, therefore, calls for more improved linkages with global structures and mechanisms, particularly the United Nations Security Council. It is encouraging that at the level of deliberations, African issues seem to receive increasing attention. However, this trend has to be matched by commensurate action in order to be meaningful.

I would like to end by once again thanking you all for your attention.