

**AFRICA MEDIATORS RETREAT ZAMANI KEMPINSKI HOTEL,  
ZANZIBAR, TANZANIA**

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY DR. SALIM AHMED SALIM MONDAY,  
23 APRIL 2007**

Your Excellency, Amani Abeid Karume,  
President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Zanzibar Revolutionary Council,

Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue I wish to welcome you all to this first ever Africa Mediator's Retreat and more particularly to Zanzibar. As a son of these Islands, I am particularly delighted to say to all of you and especially our friends and colleagues who have traveled great distances in order to be <sup>wik</sup>us - **KARIBUNI SANA ZANZIBAR**. I need to say no more on this as our distinguished Guest of Honour, President Amani Karume is best equipped to extend that welcome.

Mr. President,

We are greatly honoured by your presence herewith us. Considering your many commitments, we consider your presence as a manifestation of your own commitment and that of the Government of Zanzibar and Tanzania in support of dialogue and mediation in order to prevent conflict and where they occur to help in resolving them. We look forward to your address. Similarly, we are looking forward to the address tomorrow of the former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, HE Benjamin William Mkapa and the former President of Sri Lanka, Her Excellency Chandrika Kumaratunga.

This retreat has been made possible by the generous contribution and support of the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway to whom we express an appreciation. I wish also to pay tribute to the Humanitarian Dialogue Centre and the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation who have worked hard and in close cooperation in preparing for our gathering here. Our thanks and gratitude also goes to the Zanzibar and Tanzania authorities for their cooperation and assistance extended to the organization of the retreat.

Mr. President,

This is a diverse group with a very rich experience accumulated over the years. We have in our midst representatives from International, Regional and Continental Organizations including the United Nations, the African Union and IGAD. We also have participants from Governments, research centres and non-profit organizations. The participants here present, bring with them considerable knowledge, expertise and experience on a variety of countries and issues in the area of conflict prevention and resolution through mediation as well as in peace building.

This mixture of participants affords us a unique opportunity to discuss and share experiences on various issues and challenges that confront the African continent. We shall do so in an open, frank, constructive, productive discussion but in an informal manner. It is not a Forum for taking decisions. Nonetheless it is our expectation that the Zanzibar Africa Mediators Retreat will be able to come up with constructive ideas and options which will facilitate some of the peace processes that are taking place in the continent.

At the same time a Retreat of this nature offers the participants the opportunity to renew their commitment to make use of dialogue and mediation as vital tool

in conflict resolution. It is also an occasion to re-affirm the engagement in the development of capacity and skills in order to be more effective in mediation.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Participants,

I believe that the quiet and serene atmosphere in Zamani Kempinski provides the right condition and ambiance for informal, frank and in-depth reflection and discussion following the Chatham House rules. It is furthermore my hope and expectation that Zanzibar will continue to be considered as <sup>an</sup> ideal venue for deliberations of this nature in the future.

It is now my honour and privilege to invite President Amani Karume to deliver his address.