



*Organization of African Unity*

**AFRICA-EUROPE SUMMIT**  
**UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE OAU**  
**AND THE EU, CAIRO, 3 – 4 APRIL, 2000**

**CLOSING STATEMENT BY**  
**DR. SALIM AHMED SALIM,**  
**SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE**  
**ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY**

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**Your Excellency President Hosni Mubarak**

**Your Excellency President Abdulaziz Bouteflika**

**Your Excellency Prime Minister Antonio Guterres**

**Your Majesty**

**Excellencies Heads of State and Government**

**Distinguished President of the European Commission**

**Excellencies**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

For two days, the leaders of Africa and Europe have been engaged in a serious, profound and frank dialogue which marks a new beginning in the history of the relationship between our two societies. The fact that so many leaders from the two regions came to Cairo to attend this first ever Summit augurs well for the future of our relationship and for the solid and constructive partnership we want to build together.

The frankness and sincerity of the discussions, the fact that the dialogue was conducted with neither inhibition nor confrontation is a testimony to the value that we attach to our relationship and to our common desire and commitment to improve and consolidate it.

We convened in Cairo, at a minimum, to achieve a better understanding of each other. I believe that the discourse we have been engaged in for two days has brought us closer to that goal. We have shared the concerns and prospects of our people at all levels of interaction. The discussions have underscored our respective responsibilities as well as our obligations as historical partners and as members of a global family. Above all, we have reasserted the prevalence of common interests between us and a commitment to pursue them in a partnership driven by mutual respect.

The decisions taken at this Summit have far reaching implications for our respective communities. All the issues addressed and agreed upon in the economic, political, social and cultural spheres are critical to Africa's development as it enters the new millennium.

It is encouraging to realize that Europe, being a partner having the closest ties with Africa, appreciates the efforts being made in surmounting the formidable challenges of promoting peace, unity and development within a context of democratic governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

In the same regard, I do hope that Africa has been understood in its incessant appeal for the need to alleviate the burden of external debt, as well as to avail market access to African products, support its political transformation efforts and reclaim its misappropriated assets and its cultural heritage. Equally important is the fact that in its relationship with Europe, the unity of our continent as a whole will be given its due importance. In this connection, we are satisfied that the mechanisms we have put in place in order to sustain our dialogue within the new partnership would treat Africa as a united whole rather than a fragmented entity.

If some of these issues happened to be restated again and again during the discussions, it is not because we feel that our partners are not aware of them, or that we do not appreciate some of the important initiatives undertaken with a view to supporting Africa's own efforts in addressing its problems. Rather it is due to the fact that they are central to Africa's destiny and their prevalence hampers the continent's efforts to improve the well-being of its people and to actively participate in the global system.

The Cairo Declaration that has been agreed upon and the Plan of Action that have been adopted set the beacons for constructing a stronger foundation for a new chapter in the history of our association. We should now build on the positive spirit and enthusiasm demonstrated during our discussions here in Cairo and prepare ourselves to follow-up and implement the decisions that we have all committed ourselves to.

We, at the OAU, value the new partnership and process we have launched in Cairo and we pledge to exert all efforts within our means in fulfilling the commitments we have entered into so as to realize our common objectives.

The city of Cairo has once again lived up to its tradition of creating the conditions for a meaningful and successful Summit. As we leave Cairo having laid down a new phase of dialogue between Africa and Europe and towards building a new partnership, we take particular satisfaction in the fact that this African capital, which has been traditionally a meeting ground of people of different backgrounds, has once again provided the most congenial environment for the success of this Summit.

In this context, I would like once again to express our appreciation of gratitude to President Hosni Mubarak, the Government and People of Egypt for their invaluable contribution in the realization of this unprecedented and historical encounter.

I cannot conclude without paying due tribute to the Current Chairman of the OAU, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria and Prime Minister Antonio Guterres of Portugal, not only for their role in pursuing this initiative to its successful conclusion but also in the remarkable manner they have provided leadership to the deliberations of the Summit.

I thank you.