

Farewell Reception for
Mr. Layashi Yaker
UN Under Secretary General
and Executive Secretary of ECA
March 1995? (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)

**Mr. Minister of International Economic Cooperation
of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia,
Mr. Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps,
Assistant Secretaries General,
Ambassadors and Heads of Mission,
Representatives of United Nations Agencies,**

- I wish to thank you all most sincerely for joining us in this special occasion.

- We are gathered here today to say farewell to one of us, our colleague, friend and brother LAYASHI YAKER who has completed his mission as UN Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

- You are no doubt all familiar with the impressive background of Mr. LAYASHI YAKER:

. As a distinguished diplomat he joined the Algerian diplomatic service at its inception with the Provisional Government of Algeria. Apart from his various assignments at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including as Director General for Economic, Social and Cultural Affairs and International Cooperation he served his country as Ambassador to the USA and to the then USSR and subsequently as Ambassador at large.

. As a member of Government as he was Minister of Commerce of Algeria from 1969 to 1977 in charge of Internal and External Trade.

. As a member of Parliament, Mr. Yaker served as Vice President of the Algerian National Assembly from 1977 to 1979.

. As an active member of the international family, he was associated as consultant and advisor with UNESCO, with the UN and served in a number of international bodies dealing with developmental issues. These include the North-South Commission charied by the late Chancellor Willy Brandt of Gernany and the South Commission chaired by former President NYERERE of Tanzania

. In all these capacities, Mr. YAKER was closely associated with Africa and the OAU. I would like to mention here that he had the privilege of attending the first Summit of African Heads of State and Government which created the OAU here in Addis Ababa.

- Since he took over his position as Executive Secretary of the ECA in August 1992, he put all his diplomatic talent and large experience gained at national and international levels at the service of Africa's development.

- He took his responsibility with a high sense of dedication and with remarkable enthusiasm.

- We were all impressed by his dynamism and by his commitment to Africa's development and his faith in our continent and its capacity to get out of the vicious cycle of poverty and under-development. He engaged himself fully at the service of Africa's development and the dignity of our people.

- We at the OAU, were pleased to work closely with him. We appreciated his cooperation and above all, we appreciated his commitment to OAU and for having put the ECA at the service of Africa and its continental Organization.
- With him and with BABACAR NDYAYE the President of ADB, we were able to strengthen the relations between the three institutions to make them more relevant to the needs of African people and countries and so that they could play an important role in the implementation of the Abuja Treaty.
- I would like therefore to express to our brother Layashi Yaker our sincere appreciation for his cooperation and his dedication.
- As we are saying farewell to him, we are saying farewell to a distinguished son of Africa and a committed African and a true internationalist.
- We wish him all the best in his future endeavours. We are confident that Africa will always remain at the centre of his preoccupations.
- Finally, I would like to propose a toast for the good health, well-being and continued success of Mr. YAKER.

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- As expression of our appreciation for the close cooperation and contribution of Mr. YAKER, I would like now to present to Mr. YAKER with the OAU Medal.

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- Last but not least, and as a demonstration of my personal appreciation and that of the Assistant Secretaries General to Mr. YAKER for his role and contribution, I would like to present this modest gift to him on behalf of my colleagues the Assistant Secretaries General and on my own behalf.