

THE MWALIMU NYERERE FOUNDATION



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**"SUB-REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION IN
THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION AND
REGIONALISM"**

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SALIM: SUB-REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION AND REGIONALISM

Chairperson

Seminar Participants

It is a pleasure for me to join you at this second Sub-Regional Seminar organized by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies in collaboration with the Government of Mozambique. I wish to thank Dr. Nancy Walker, the Director of the Center, for her kind invitation that has enabled me to come to Maputo and to join you at this Seminar. My thanks also go to Professor Bathily whose exposé today has in many ways facilitated my task of reflecting on the specificities of the collective security challenge within the dynamics of Continental development and with a particular focus on the Southern Africa Region.

The subject of this Seminar and especially the way it has been articulated captures in a very concise manner the multiple challenges facing Africa in its political and socio-economic development.

Locating the issue of Security, in its broad connotations, within the context of regional efforts towards cooperation and integration recognizes the salient movements taking place in the Continent. Furthermore, by broadening the notion of security beyond its state centric and military underpinnings and bringing to the fore the predicament of the people as a whole, a constructive basis is provided for exploring the threats, challenges and opportunities that confront the Region. This in turn facilitates developing a shared vision and promoting cooperative efforts on how the Region may further work to advance its security.

The Southern Africa Region, taken in its wider scope to include the entire membership of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), reveals the centrality of the security factor and its ramifications at both national and regional levels. This is a region with an abundant resource base, from minerals, water resources, forestry products, marine products, fuel supply, agricultural commodities, to a huge market base. Unfortunately none of these

has been harnessed sufficiently, either nationally or regionally, due to the impingement of a negative security situation.

For much of the past 40 years, development in a large part of this Region has been affected by the security factor to the extent that the Region has become almost a demonstrative embodiment of the security challenge and the necessity of having a collective approach to surmounting it. The struggle against apartheid and settler colonialism, the brutal civil wars in Angola and Mozambique, and the recent conflagration in the Great Lakes are some of the vivid expressions in the experience of the Region of the pervasive effects of security breakdown in countries. The linkage between conflict, political decay, and socio-economic deterioration, which translate into human insecurity and human suffering, needs no overstating in these situations.

The experience of the Southern Africa Region demonstrate in a stark manner not only the magnitude and gravity of a security crisis a Region can encounter, but also how unbounded the repercussions of

such a crisis often are. Like environment, pandemics, or natural disasters, a threat in the domain of security can never be confined to a single country. In this respect, the need for collective efforts to prevent, manage and resolve situations of insecurity cannot be overemphasized.

The dominance and pervasiveness of the security factor in the history of the Southern Africa Region has impacted profoundly on the everyday lives of the people of this Region. By experiencing threats to their lives, deprivation of basic needs, forced to the status of refugees and displaced persons, the people of Southern Africa have developed a clear conception of what human security really entails. In fact, there have been initiatives undertaken in this Region by governments and their institutions, parliamentarians, as well as by civil society organizations, ranging from trade unions to religious institutions and private corporations. Consequently, any attempt to develop a vision of security at the Regional level, cannot afford to lose sight of the centrality of an inclusive engagement of the people.

I should also hasten to add, with respect to the specificity of the Southern Africa Region, that the evolution from SADCC the Coordination Conference, to SADC the Development Community, also sheds important lessons in the transformation of a cooperation infrastructure at a Regional level from a security to a development focus. The genesis of SADCC as a mechanism to bring an end to apartheid and to minimize the destabilization impact of the apartheid regime in South Africa, to its present mission of fostering regional cooperation and integration is instructive for understanding the experience of transforming a regional infrastructure that has evolved from a different context and which is confronted by modern day challenges.

It is in the same regard that the role played by the Continental Organization, previously the OAU and now the African Union, in the different phases of the Region's development in the past 40 years has been very critical. However, as we now embark into establishing new structures of a revitalized Continental Organization, including a definition of a more effective linkage with regional structures, the

issue of regional security, its infrastructure, and connection with the overall agenda for Continental integration, constitutes an important component of African development.

I believe, the outcome of the deliberations of this Seminar, will also make an important contribution to the ongoing efforts of establishing and operationalizing the institutions of the African Union. I also hope that the discussions in the next few days will also reveal the national, regional, and Continental complexities of security and cooperation in Africa.

The problem of security and its threats in the Southern African Region has dominantly been Regional and with Continental ramifications. Yes, there have been crises that were limited to single countries – army mutinies in a couple of cases, a border conflict that was peacefully resolved, and unconstitutional change of governments. However, all these can be described as low intensity conflicts that were quickly settled with minimum destabilization to the countries and the region, and inflicting only a small number of

casualties. The most serious security threats have in all cases assumed a Regional dimension, even when they were internal civil conflicts such as those of Angola, Mozambique, or the DRC

During the era of apartheid in South Africa, there developed a linkage between the regime in that country and any internal conflict in the neighbouring states. This, coupled with the usual spillover of conflict, such as refugees, military incursions, spread of illegal arms put almost the entire Region in a state of grave insecurity. The new political dispensation in South Africa profoundly altered that situation and one would have expected to begin reaping the peace dividend in this Region. However, the crisis of the Great Lakes, particularly that of the Democratic Republic of the Congo revealed an equally grave resurgence of a regionalization of a violent conflict. Once again, in 1998, the Southern Africa Region was embroiled in a devastating war centred in the Congo, where in addition to the Congolese people themselves, 7 nations, various non-state armed groups, and 9 countries neighbouring DRC had to suffer the brutal effects of war and insecurity.

A disconcerting observation one can make about the DRC crisis, is that apart from triggering a new form of tension in the Region, which is different from that of the past, involving a coalition of all the Regional countries against the recalcitrant apartheid regime of South Africa, in this case there were divisions among the Regional Members themselves, a division that turned out to be complicated to overcome. At the same time, the conflict of the DRC and the persistence of the Angolan war until a few months ago, also exposed the weak capacity of the mechanism for collective security in the Region, and perhaps in the Continent and the world collectively.

The experience of the last decade, particularly the loss of lives, suffering, destabilization, damage to property and the lost opportunity caused by the conflicts in the Comoros, in Angola, and in the DRC, as well as the length of time it has taken to contain and resolve these crises, tend to reaffirm the concern that the infrastructure for maintaining peace, security and stability in the Region needs serious revamping.

When we take stock of the various interventions made at the Regional, Continental and even Global levels, for mediation, resolution, peace-keeping and post-conflict reconstruction in such cases as the Comoros, Angola and the DRC, it will obviously be found that there are crucial variables that are lacking.

The experience of the past decade in this Region and also in the other regions of Africa, tend to point out that the challenge of security is dramatically changing as we move into the 21st Century and the new millennium. In the first place, there is a shift from anticipating security threats emerging from threats which are external, to a disruption of peace and stability from within national boundaries. The implication of this shift is that security protection does not entail merely the strengthening of border patrols and defending what are considered general national interests. In the same regard, also it does not entail that security cooperation necessarily implies the protection of signing parties, who are always the States, against potential external elements. It is now recognized

that the real stakeholders of security transcend the state and its machinery. To be meaningful, security is of the people, in their everyday lives and aspirations.

It is also becoming increasingly evident throughout the Continent that threats to security arise predominantly out of internal political conflicts, often triggered by the pursuit of internal demands, whether correctly or wrongly conceived and articulated. The genealogy of conflict in this respect, does not respond to the military logic of the past. Indeed, in the first instance it does not arise as a security issue. Rather, it often evolves as a political, social, and economic imperative, whose failure to address and resolve subsequently leads to situations of crisis and insecurity.

I do not wish to create the impression of totally discounting classical security problems in this Region or in Africa as a whole particularly in this era of fighting against terrorism. All I am suggesting is that when detached of its military connotations, to encompass the broader human dimensions, the issue of security as currently prevailing in the

Continent, traces its foundation to the modality of articulating, accommodating and responding to demands within society. It relates to issues of political and economic governance, to questions of human rights, inclusiveness, and access to and sharing of national resources. It must also entail the fight against the scourge of corruption which destroys the very fabric of our societies as well as illicit trade in drugs with its multifaceted repercussions. Of course, the tendencies of illegality and criminal actions, power mongering, and even belligerence, may require certain levels of deterrence and in extreme cases even direct interventions. However, to a large measure, the issue of security lies primarily in the socio-political and economic domains.

In strategic terms, such a broadened notion of security in our Continent may not necessarily entail focusing on culprits of threats to security. It directs our attention to addressing improvements in regimes of governance and structures for the realization of the collective aspirations of the African peoples.

It is from this perspective that one can understand the linkage between the Continental agenda for cooperation and unity, with the quest to develop Regional security cooperation.

At the present conjuncture, the vision for this aspiration is encompassed in the historical decision taken first on 9 September 1999, as African leaders held an Extra-Ordinary Summit of the OAU in Sirte, the Libyan Jamhariyya, and a decision that was effected on the 9th July this year, when the Inaugural Summit of the African Union was held in Durban, South Africa.

Emerging from the transformation of the Organization of African Unity, the new Continental Organization provides a revitalized framework for pursuing the cherished ideals of our people more resolutely and in a concerted manner. The African Union provides an institutional vehicle to the African peoples for pursuing more vigorously the objectives of the OAU Charter, particularly those of promoting peace, stability, security, unity and development in the

Continent, with the aspirations enunciated in the Abuja Treaty of creating the African Economic Community.

The timing of this historical step was not fortuitous. Important commitments and steps were taken at the beginning of the 1990s aiming at reversing the regressive trend of the 1980s which is often referred to as the Lost Decade of Africa. These include the adoption and signing of the Abuja Treaty and the determination to foster closer integration; the Cairo Declaration establishing the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution; the resolve to enhance democratization and to promote pluralistic political systems; the strengthening of the Human Rights Agenda as well as the efforts made to open and liberalize African economies. However, by the end of the decade, the pace of change was deemed to be too slow and the impact of change in the welfare of the people was minimal.

The African Union endeavours to respond to the totality of political, social and economic challenges facing this Continent. Indeed, a realization of the ideals enunciated in the Constitutive Act of the

Union should contribute to the attainment of the desired state of full human security for the peoples of this Continent. The principles and objectives enshrined in the Constitutive Act underline the quest for democracy, respect of human rights, popular participation, social inclusiveness, and the pursuit of economic development. For the first time ever, African countries have agreed collectively to intervene in a Member State in grave circumstances of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.

All the 53 Member States of the African Union signed for these commitments and to date more than 45 Member States have also ratified the Constitutive Act. And to demonstrate that this is not only a rhetorical and empty commitment, operational strategies have already been outlined in the form of operational framework called the Conference on Security, Solidarity and Development Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) whose memorandum of understanding endorsed by all African countries sets out targets and indicators for the realization of the four calabashes of security, solidarity, development and cooperation.

In the same manner, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is another facet in the operationalization of the African Union, gives a high priority to the maintenance of peace and security as part of the developmental priorities of the Continent. As programmes and projects are being prepared under this important initiative, consideration is also being to the setting a Peer Review Mechanism to ensure compliance to the NEPAD objective.

A further concretization of the Continental efforts to promoting peace and security in the Continent, within the framework of cooperation and integration is the newly endorsed Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. This instrument, which replaces the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, has been more revitalized and strengthened to cope with the challenges of peace and security in the Continent.

The Peace and Security Council is designated to be a collective security and early-warning arrangement to facilitate timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in the Continent. In its operationalization, the Commission of the African Union, a Panel of the Wise, a Continental Early Warning System, an African Standby Force and a Special Fund will support it.

For all these Continental arrangements to have effectiveness, it is recognized that it is the Regional structures that will serve as the building blocs and operational entities for the respective activities. This is a cardinal principle that was recognized as early as 1991 with the adoption of the Abuja Treaty, when the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were designated to be the building blocs. Indeed, even in the action plan for achieving the African Economic Community most of the activities during the first four phases of implementation were driven by the RECs.

On the issue of security, particularly in terms of responding to conflict situations, here is a clear recognition that the effectiveness of the

Continental arrangements depend very much on the linkages with the Regional mechanisms. Indeed, it is appreciated that Regional structures do have comparative advantages in handling conflict situations. These include proximity to the arena of conflict and hence ability to respond quickly, knowledge of the local situation, and intimacy with some of the key actors on the ground. It is therefore easier to undertake preventive diplomacy, particularly through harnessing the knowledge of a shared culture and historical experience of the Region.

I wish to underscore in this, therefore, that both at the level of the broader notion of security to include its socio-economic and political implications, and in its narrow confines relating to the state of conflict, there has always been a complementarity, in principle, in the relationship between the Continental framework and Regional structures of cooperation. In my experience while serving as the Secretary General of the OAU, I found a strong synergy in the efforts to bring peace in the Continent by working closely with the Regional institutions right from the period of the Liberation Committee, to the

Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. In certain cases, responsibilities were specifically assigned to the countries of the Region. Clearly there are illuminating lessons to be derived on the linkages between the Continental body and Regional efforts in the resolution addressing the various security problems that have occurred in the Southern Africa Region. Fortunately, I have had the personal opportunity and privilege of working very closely with the leadership of the Region in almost all the crisis situation of the past 12 years.

Having underscored a case for undisputed complementarity between the Continent and the Region in security cooperation, I should also point out that past experience has demonstrated that the synergy for this linkage has not been optimally deployed owing to various constraints. In the first place, both at the Continental and Regional level, the critical components of the mechanisms and arrangements for security cooperation have not been fully operationalized. Many of the elements, including systems for early warning, structures for rapid response, facilities for backstopping mediation efforts, or even

capacities for integrated intervention in promoting security are not yet in place. Perhaps this Seminar will have an opportunity to assess the development of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security, and to compare it, for example, with the ECOWAS equivalent.

In the course of your deliberations, you may have an opportunity to examine the other components of security, and it may be worthwhile to also examine the Regional capacities for disaster response, for example, using the experience of the last floods in the Region, particularly those which devastated Mozambique. Response to the current drought and famine experienced in the Region is also instructive. This brings into the fore the importance of food self-sufficiency in the region which can ensure food security – a vital component of enhancing overall security in the region. In the same regard one must add to the list, coping with the HIV pandemic, which undoubtedly constitutes a clear and present danger to the very survival of our people. All these together with fighting cross border crimes including the illicit proliferation of small arms and light

weapons, or dealing with terrorism in all its forms and manifestation should all be part of the Regional efforts in the context of common security. Without preempting your conclusions, I am quite certain that one of the observation that will come up is the absence of coherent structures for responding to such security concerns.

The second problem that is also generic relates to resource constraints. The maintenance of peace and security, particularly the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts is a resource demanding exercise. It requires human and financial resources, logistics, and massive outlay of funds to underwrite expenditures. It is a fact that existing structures have been severely handicapped by resource deficiencies. In some cases individual Member States have been compelled to undertake whole operations on voluntary basis. And even at a Continental level, the functioning of the Mechanism continues to rely to a very considerable degree on external support and funding.

The third problem is the very linkage between the Continental Mechanisms and the Regional infrastructure for security cooperation. While there is recognition for the two levels to complement each other fully, at the operational level, the relationship is not sufficiently complementary. Senior Organs do consult frequently, many times advanced information is relayed between levels. However, the day to day working relationship, particularly at the level of officials, is not fully streamlined.

It is important to include among the constraints facing security cooperation at the Regional level, the issue of support by the international community. The dynamics of globalization and the increasing responsibilities taken by regional entities should not negate the fundamental principle of the United Nations that the maintenance of peace and security in the world is a collective responsibility, particularly through the Security Council. Africa is a part of this globe and all African nations are Members of the United Nations. While appreciating the efforts such as these, being made by the United States to support efforts towards greater democracy and

security in Africa, there is a concern that the international community does not respond to Africa's security problems effectively and promptly. Africa seems to be treated differently when it comes to responding to its security problems. There is indeed a growing feeling within our continent that there is an element of double standards in dealing with African crisis or conflict situations as compared to some crises elsewhere especially in terms of provision of much needed resources. This is evident for example, in the shrinking resources being provided to meet the needs of the millions of African Refugees and displaced persons.

Let me conclude by asserting that Africa today more than ever before is committed to taking responsibility in shaping its destiny by overcoming the challenges confronting it through collective efforts. There is recognition that peace, security, and stability constitute the foundation for development. Steps are being taken to ensure that foundation is put in place and in a sustainable manner.

The African Union, with its various Organs, mechanisms and operational strategies provides a dynamic framework for promoting human security and for interfacing the Continental agenda and regional specificities. The challenge is how to bring this into reality. This seminar, in its focusing on the linkage between globalization and regionalism, with specific reference to security cooperation, marks an important step in contributing towards the realization of that ideal.

I thank you.