



Organization of African Unity

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. SALIM AHMED SALIM,  
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OAU, ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE LAUNCHING OF THE  
REVITALIZED IGAD**

Djibouti

25 - 26 November 1996

Mr. Chairman,  
Your Excellencies the Heads of State  
and Government of the Inter-Governmental  
Authority on Development,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express my gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency, President Hassan Gouled Aptidon, the Government and People of Djibouti for the warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded to us since our arrival here. I also wish to express my appreciation to the Hon. Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, the distinguished Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Kenya and Chairman of the Ministerial Council of IGAD and to Dr. Tekeste Ghebray, the Executive Secretary of IGAD for their kind invitation extended to me to attend this important meeting.

I wish from the outset to convey to this Summit, a message of brotherhood and solidarity on behalf of our continental organization. We, at the Organization of African Unity have welcomed the creation of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Desertification in 1986, as a new sub-regional framework to muster collective efforts aimed at addressing the then pressing issues of drought and desertification.

Since its inception, the OAU has strived within its limited means to extend its support to this new organization, and over the years, we have been able to develop fruitful cooperation. We have been following with keen interest and have been encouraged by the progress made by IGAD which resulted in the revitalization process of the organization decided by the Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in April 1995. This process of renewal culminated in the Nairobi Summit in March 1996 which approved the new Charter and Structures of the revitalized Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

At the core of this process of change, there was a realization by the Leaders of IGAD on the need to review the priorities and strategies of the Institution to enable it respond to the emerging regional challenges. At the top of these challenges, there was the burning question of peace , security and stability without which there can not be any meaningful development. In addition, it was the conviction of the IGAD Member States that their current economic problems and especially the daunting issue of poverty can be effectively addressed through closer economic cooperation, infrastructure development, food security and environment protection. In a period of 10 years therefore, the IGAD has been able to adjust itself in a serious attempt to meet the challenges facing its Member States. I personally view this capacity of IGAD to adapt to the changing realities as an indication of its increasing relevance, maturity and dynamism.



On this solemn occasion, I wish to congratulate IGAD and its leadership, both at the level of the Member States and the Executive Secretariat for these efforts aimed at providing the region with an effective and dynamic institution. As we are gathered here to witness the launching of the revitalized IGAD, I would like to state on behalf of the Organization of African Unity that we are looking forward to an enhanced and more fruitful cooperation.

In reiterating this position, I am indeed encouraged by the convergence of the objectives pursued by our two Organizations. For instance, the new emphasis by IGAD, on the search for peace, security and stability in the region is in total harmony with the objectives of our continental organization. The OAU Mechanism for Conflict Management and Resolution has clearly identified the regional organizations as the principal partners, within the continent, in our collective efforts to address the scourge of conflicts with their attendant immense destruction and suffering. The issue of peace and security is too grave and complex to be tackled by individual countries or institutions. It needs the concerted and coordinated efforts at all levels. We see in the OAU Mechanism a framework which could bring together in a partnership for peace, efforts at national, regional, continental and international levels. We also see the relations between the regional and continental efforts as a key for the success of this partnership.

socio- economic and other problems such as environmental degradation, health and education problems facing our individual countries. It is my firm belief that beyond the efforts deployed within the five regional economic communities identified in the Abuja Treaty, all integration efforts by other regional and sub-groupings should be encouraged as part of our collective and convergent efforts towards continental integration.

We shall therefore follow very closely and support the efforts at cooperation and integration being deployed within IGAD. As part of these efforts, IGAD shall be presenting to its partners in development, in the course of this Summit, a list of projects covering its three priority areas. It is my confident hope that these projects will be considered positively. The OAU on its part strongly supports these projects submitted by IGAD as projects whose ultimate goal is to encourage social economic progress and integration in the region and in the continent as a whole.

Mr. Chairman,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish in conclusion to reiterate my personal appreciation to be associated with the launching of the revitalized IGAD to which I would like to extend my best wishes for success in its endeavours to meet the various challenges ahead. I also wish to reiterate the strong support of the Organization of African Unity for the programmes and activities of IGAD. We are looking forward to forging a solid and viable partnership at the service of peace, development, cooperation and progress in our continent.

I thank you.