

Salim Ahmed Salim

THE OFFICE OF DR. SALIM AHMED SALIM

Former Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania
Former Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity

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From Quiet Diplomacy to Global Struggles: New Insights into Africa's Role at the UN and Beyond

Dar es Salaam: The [Salim Ahmed Salim Digital Archive](#) has released newly declassified notes, among others, from August 5, 1980, offering an unprecedented glimpse into the high-level diplomatic conversations surrounding Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim's potential candidacy for United Nations Secretary-General.

The private and confidential record details a late-night meeting between Dr. Salim — then President of the UN General Assembly — and Cuba's Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ricardo Alarcón, during an official visit to Havana. The discussion reveals Cuba's enthusiastic support for Dr. Salim's leadership and outlines the strategic calculations made amidst Cold War tensions and global calls for a Third World voice at the helm of the UN. In a remarkable and symbolic gesture, Cuba's Foreign Minister later publicly endorsed Dr. Salim's candidacy by inscribing it on the storied walls of Havana's iconic *Bodeguita del Medio* restaurant — a historic venue frequented by international luminaries.

In addition to the Cuba files, the SAS Digital Archive released newly declassified notes and documents that cover a range of conversations from the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict in the late 1990s as well as a candid conversation between Dr. Salim and former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere on the challenges facing Tanzania and the African continent.

Among the highlights:

- 1) [Behind-the-scenes efforts by Cuba](#) and [Iraq](#) encouraging Dr. Salim's candidacy for UN Secretary-General.
- 2) [Sensitive conversations with Anthony Lake](#), former U.S. National Security Advisor, on salvaging peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea.
- 3) [Crisis diplomacy through Italy and the OAU](#), as leaders grappled with war and peace in the Horn of Africa.
- 4) [First-hand observations between President Julius Nyerere and Dr. Salim](#) on regional dynamics, third-world solidarity, and the realpolitik shaping African and global governance.
- 5) [Dr. Salim's meeting with President Blaise Compaoré and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi](#) during the shuttle diplomacy involved to resolve the Ethiopia-Eritrea war.

The SAS Digital Archive continues to provide a unique lens through the legacy of Dr Salim that illustrates Tanzania's role in African and international affairs, sharing perspectives on the continents' political and diplomatic history.

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