



TANA HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON SECURITY IN AFRICA

Speech by H.E. Omar al-Bashir, President of the Republic of Sudan

In the name of Allah the merciful and almighty.

H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn

H.E. and good friend President Obasanjo, Chairman of the Tana High Level Forum Advisory Board

Prof. Andreas Eshete, CEO of the Tana High Level Forum

Prof. Ndioro Ndiaye Chair of this session

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen

Assalam Aleikum!

Let me at the outset express my gratitude and thanks to the Ethiopian Government for their kind invitation to participate in this important forum and for the usual warm hospitality in this beautiful city of Bahr Dar. We also value the efforts exerted by the Institute for Peace and Security Studies of the Addis Ababa University and the other organizers for the excellent preparation and arrangements for this forum.

I would like to add my voice to those who spoke before me in commenting the concept paper presented by President Mbeki; a paper which contained rich information, authentic statistics, deep analysis and useful suggestions that deserve to be considered and implemented. We must first recognize the effects of organized crime on security and governance, and secondly attempt to consolidate effective African coordination bilateral, regional and international levels to minimize and weaken the effects of organized crime and ultimately de-rooting it.

With this intervention I hope to contribute in enriching the discussion conducted by some of the eminent personalities and leaders who have vast experiences on the issue at stake. Naturally I will base my contribution on the Sudanese experience. I am confident that you are aware of the effect of organized crime on Sudan, a country with a massive and vast area which makes it extremely difficult to control its long and extended borders with its neighbors. A country that has suffered



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for years from armed conflicts, whether internally before the secession of the South, or with the neighboring countries, we learned from these bitter experiences.

We learned from these experiences that there is a nexus between the internal armed conflicts and organized crime, this nexus is like a vicious and evil circle composed of many factors all of which are fueling the inferno of crisis. The blatant example here is the way in which the Darfur issue has evolved. As we know, Darfur erupted as a result of the competition on scarce resources but aggravated by proliferation of arms and weapons in the area as a direct result of instability in the neighboring countries and exploitation by arms dealers and looters seeking poisonous profits from an already fragile situation.

We in Sudan are giving maximum priority to cementing a partnership between the state and the community groups in combatting organized crime. We have some wonderful and fruitful examples of complementarity between the law enforcement organs and the popular bodies represented by community police.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement, its matrix Abuja Accords, and the Doha Agreement for Peace in Darfur, all demonstrate our political will to realize peace through dialogue in order to create a conducive atmosphere that contributes effectively to combatting organized crime and form a strong partnership with the citizens, the real stakeholders, to achieve security and stability. We also engaged in tremendous efforts with the neighbouring states to control the border zones and transforming them on one hand to areas of mutual interest for trade and hubs for combatting organized transnational crimes on the other hand. As you may know, Sudan has success stories in this regard by forming joint monitoring forces with Chad, Central African Republic and similar ongoing efforts with Egypt. We also took the initiative to work with our brothers in Libya, after the victory in their revolution, to launch the idea of regional cooperation to restore and maintain peace in border areas, and I am glad to report that a regional meeting was convened in 2012 to this effect.

It was evident that the distortion that characterized the Afro-Libyan relations, resulted from the evil policies of the Gheddafi regime which made it a point to ignite regional and international conflicts and arming rebels in many countries, Sudan included. It is no secret the region, especially in Mali, continues to suffer from the aftershocks of the defunct regime in Libya and the proliferation of armed groups after the collapse of the Gheddafi regime. We are optimistic that the winds of change are blowing towards the realization of peace, unity and territorial integration in the countries of Sahel belt which will lead to stronger co-operation which will hopefully serve to stop the present organized crime, drug smuggling, human trafficking and illegal immigration.



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We are of the opinion that poverty and unemployment are the root causes of committing crime and the reason why young people take risks in their attempts to migrate. We also believe that the right to development and the right to employment should be given priority along with other rights. The unfair sanctions and the extended debt prove to be tools to deepen the misery of the people rather than a punishment against governments. The policies designed to control the international community and the coercive measures adopted by the United States against drug trafficking in Latin America and also by Europe against illegal immigration from Africa, all proved to be ineffective. Not only that, but the drug cartels in South America and their agents sought out safe havens in Sub-Saharan African countries to use them as corridors for drug trade, using money to corrupt government institutions and further aggravate the internal armed conflict and becoming a source for financing extremist and terrorist organizations in the area, thus activating money laundering operations. We believe that drug trafficking should be combatted by raising awareness among young people and giving them employment opportunities in order to avoid the risk of being entrapped by drug addiction.

Sudan is suffering from illegal immigration especially in its eastern part. The phenomenon of human trafficking is one of the products of this situation which is taking place in remote areas in the eastern part of the country. To combat this, Sudan has put in place administrative, financial and legal measures to monitor pre-empt and eradicate money laundering. Sudan has signed and ratified many international conventions to this effect. I would like to mention that Khartoum, this month, will host the 17th session of MENETIF, a regional body in charge of combatting money laundering and we look forward to the meeting which will further strengthen the regional and international cooperation in this field.

We think that the remedy to these issues should be based on a holistic approach, by addressing the root causes of organized crime, launching development projects, creating jobs and widening the scope of education and vocational training on one hand, and boosting the regional cooperation in border areas and capacity building measures for law enforcement and justice institutions personnel and information exchange on the other hand.

Finally I would like to thank my friend President Mbeki for his accurate characterization of our problems and for his advocacy for African solutions for African problems. In fact our problems can be solved if we manage to neutralize the external factors which usually play a negative role in the issues. We in Sudan are working as you mentioned promulgating a new constitution and it is an attempt to solve all these problems based on the wise words you mentioned Mr. President.

You have my thanks and respect.



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Assalam aleikum wa rahmat Allah