

**ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE ON "STATE OF THE UNION 2030:
SECURITY THREATS AND RESPONSES" 21 – 22 JULY 2009,
SPEKE HOTEL, MUNYONYO RESORT, KAMPALA – UGANDA.**

**Keynote Address by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs
(International Affairs) also holding the Portfolio of Minister
of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Okello Oryem Henry.**

**The Executive Director/Institute for Security Studies;
Distinguished Participants;
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I thank the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) for choosing Uganda as the venue for this Roundtable Conference; and it is with gratitude that I welcome all of you to Uganda. I hope that you will find our country conducive for the Conference. In a particular way, I commend the positive role being played by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) especially with regard to research and publication of materials on peace and security in Africa. As a human security think tank in Africa, drawing from a wealth of high caliber expertise, ISS is playing a commendable role by conceptualizing, informing and enhancing human security in Africa in order to support implementation and decision making by the various actors on matters of peace and security in Africa.

The topic of this Roundtable Conference is: "State of the Union 2030: Security Threats and Responses". It will be an attempt by this conference to forecast the state of affairs in Africa in about two decade's time and especially in as far as the security of the continent is concerned. I am happy to note that ISS has assembled some of the best brains to discuss the possibilities and impossibilities so as to come up with proposals for today and a forecast that would be of great use to African countries and our organization, the African Union. This would indeed benefit the African Union Peace and security Architecture, including its Early Warning System.

As a member of the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council, Uganda would be very much interested in the outcome of this Conference. What would impact on Africa by 2030, need to be known now so that we design and put in place early and timely responses that would guarantee a peaceful and secure continent.

Of course it may be difficult to predict the future. What is possible is to project certain trends, to assess security threats of the time and responses thereof.

This Conference may therefore wish to examine trends relating to globalization as an external factor to Africa's security; population growth as a possible factor of creating security or insecurity; democracy and good governance as pillars for national and continental cohesion; economic growth as a necessary factor for peace and security; and conflicts raging on the continent as perennial threats to peace and security in Africa. An examination of all these and other phenomena may help us determine how to shape Africa for better times in the decades to come.

Right now we have the issue of conflicts in some parts of the continent. These conflicts, whether in the Horn of Africa or in the Great Lakes region or elsewhere, constitute one of the greatest threats to security in Africa. The Conference should be able to make a projection as to whether the measures and approaches we are employing today will lead us to a conflict free Africa in the decades to come. The projection should also enable us to determine whether to review some of the methods on conflict prevention, resolution and management or intensify them.

The other agenda we have to examine is economic integration and development as it has a co-relation to peace and security. The dictum goes : "Without peace and security, economic development is not possible; and without economic development, peace and security is not durable". Therefore, examine the current level of economic integration and development in Africa, taking into account the measures and plans in place, and project it for the next two decades.

You will find out that success of economic cooperation and integration in African will mean less threat to security; and vice versa.

As long as the world exists, there will always be threats. The challenge is for us in Africa to prepare to respond to such threats – both endogenous and exogenous. The best way to prepare ourselves, is to forge a united Africa based on common ideals and aspirations. There is currently consensus for a United States of Africa (USA). The issue is whether to forge it now or later through a gradual process. Uganda supports the gradual process of integrating Africa because it is the assured way of bringing about sustainable unity in Africa. Indeed, this has been the desired option by the African Union. With step by step (gradual) integration, perhaps the United States of Africa will have been a reality by 2030; and a politically and economically unified Africa will be in a much strong position to face any security threats of the time.

In concrete terms, what are these security threats?

I have mentioned security threats emanating from the prevailing conflicts on the continent. One of the issues we are grappling-with, is finding the requisite resources to implement African-led peace support operations. How, then, are we prepared to operationalise the Africa Standby Force (ASF) which we established to address peace support operations in Africa; and ultimately, the defence of Africa? What about the role of the United Nations, especially the UN Security Council as the body mandated to ensure international peace and security? These and other questions need to be examined if we are to improve the quality of strategies and approaches to conflict prevention, management and resolution stipulated in the Africa Peace and Security Architecture.

Africa has a wealth of untapped natural resources, which may be of interest to others. Indeed, there is evidence of this interest as it has been in the past. How do we strengthen the peace and security architecture to insure against this security threat? Or, alternatively, how do we engage into cooperative arrangements for mutual benefit.

Water is one specific natural resource that is waiting to cause a security threat in Africa and among Africans. Issues relating to waters of the Nile are a classic example. We need to examine what more we must do now and in the future to ensure the right mechanisms of peaceful and harmonious harnessing of the resource.

Among many African countries, there are issues of border demarcation disputes. These issues were put under the carpet, as we were involved in other intricate conflicts. Now, they are beginning to surface. In this respect, the African Union Border Demarcation Project and current bilateral initiatives are most opportune and need to be further enhanced and supported. Sorting out the border disputes may be a necessary stage in the integration process of Africa.

Above all, a peaceful and secure Africa, either constituted by individual member states or a politically unified continent, will come about as a result of a set of things, including: strict adherence to democracy and good governance, including the holding of periodic elections; respect for human rights, including the right to development; respect for the rule of law; and building of strong institutions. This roundtable conference may therefore wish to assess the state of affairs and make policy proposals where necessary. For example, the African Union has for the last ten years been engaged in the debate on a Union Government. How wide spread and harmonized are democratic and good governance principles on the continent to warrant such a government now? Even as we have opted for the gradual process, what practical measures and approaches do we put in place now to ensure that everybody comes on board sooner than later?

With these provocative remarks, I now have the honour to declare this Roundtable Conference officially opened. I wish you fruitful deliberations and look forward to conclusions of the Conference. Feel free to explore interesting sites of this country before you return to your respective countries.

Thank you.