

SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY OBIANG NGUEMA
MBASOGO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
EQUATORIAL GUINEA, HEAD OF STATE, ON
THE OCCASION OF HIS ACCESSION TO THE
PRESIDENCY OF THE SUMMIT OF HEADS AND
GOVERNMENT OF THE AFRICAN UNION

ADDIS ABEBA, JANUARY 30TH, 2011

Your Excellency Mr. INGU WAMUTHARIKA,
President of the Republic of Malawi and outgoing
President of the Conference of Heads of State
and Government of the African Union

Your Excellency Mr. ATO MELES ZENAWI, Prime
minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of
Ethiopia,

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Governments
of the African Union,

Your Excellency Mr. Nicolas SARKOZY, Head of
State of France, President in Office of the G-20

Your Excellency Mr. Jean PING, President of the
AU commission

Your Excellency Mr. Joseph DEISS President of
the 65th session of the general assembly of the UN

Your Excellency Mr. BAN KI MOON, Secretary
General of the UN

Your Excellency Mr. Amr MOUSSA, Secretary
General of the Arab League of Nations

Your Excellency Mr. Mahamud ABBAS, President
of the Palestine Authority

Distinguished Ministers and Heads of delegations

Distinguished Ambassadors, Permanent
representatives at the AU

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

First of all, I would like to wish you all a happy and prosperous new year 2011.

I would like to address my first words of gratitude to my colleagues Heads of State of the African union and their representatives, for the trust, support and solidarity showed to me, my government and my country, to take upon the Presidency of the AU during the year 2011.

Particularly, I extend this appreciation to my brothers of the Community of the Central African states, for the unanimous trust and confidence bestowed upon the candidature of Equatorial Guinea, which is a candidature of Central Africa.

We accept this high responsibility with humility and as a challenge of our statutory obligation and we are committed to applying all of our capacity to execute with dignity the inherent duties of this office.

With your infallible support, we shall work to increase the social economic development of the continent, unity, peace and solidarity for our nations, as well as the consolidation of the political and economic independence of the whole of Africa.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

In the period in which we assume the presidency of the AU, I would like to evoke in our minds, the memory of the founding forefathers of the OAU, to whom we pay a merited homage during in event and whose remembrance is a permanent source of inspiration of our common plight. May their spirit guide us in our deliberations.

We want to give a warm welcome to the Secretary General of the UN, H.E. Ban Ki MOON, to whom we express appreciation for the current collaboration between the UN and the AU, with the view of forging more solidarity, integration and peaceful coexistence in the world.

We would like to also express our appreciation and recognition to President BINGU WA MUTJARIKA, his Government and the people of Malawi, for all their contribution provided to the AU during the period of His mandate. We are completely confident that his experience and advice will be decisive for the success of our course.

We also would like to thank Prime Minister MELESZENAWI, the Government and People of Ethiopia for their legendary hospitality and fraternal welcome, bestowed on us upon our arrival to this beautiful and historic city of Addis Abeba, a symbol of the continent and of our common combat for the political and economic emancipation of Africa.

We recognize also, the tireless efforts of the President of the Commission, His Excellency Jean Ping and his team, who make possible the implementation of our decisions, considering the present difficulties. We hope to maintain excellent work relations with the Commission during the period of our mandate.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests:

The African Union Assembly adopted during its 14th Summit, a decision to dedicate the present session at examining the theme of shared values in Africa, with the aim at achieving more unity and integration within its development process.

The shared values of Africa, considered as the ensemble of ideals of collective interests, principles, virtues and norms that seek the promotion of a sense of common destiny, an African identity and unity amongst the people of Africa, are the cornerstone of the African ideal that generates a genuine integration and development of the continent, consolidates political and economic independence and, through its cultural values, contributes to the global development of the planet.

In effect, since the creation of the OAU in 1963 to our days, Africa has passed through an exemplary journey in the identification, definition, instrumentalization and design of a constitutional framework for the operationalization of shared values, to a point that peace and security, political and social integration, institutional development, governance, democracy, human rights, migration, civil society, climate change, gender and cultural issues constitute a collection of values that guarantee peace, improve public management, strengthen the role of institutions and attain the continental and global integration of our States.

As we set these issues on our agenda, we do so, not out of unawareness of their significance in the consolidation of African personality and their contribution to human development, but especially to strengthen the achievements of the African Union as an institution that guards over the interests of the continent, reasserts the unity of Africa, its solidarity, its predisposition to become a protagonists of its own development and convert into an entity of shared responsibility in the international arena.

The lack of realization of these shared values, sustained by the essence and nature of the African culture, makes the African unity and cohesion vulnerable, as well as the efficiency of its political decisions.

Africa must assume more than ever, its own leading role, both on the continent and on the international arena, in the prevention and resolution of its conflicts, for the promotion of a sustainable development, peace keeping, stability, promotion of democracy and good governance. Therefore, the concepts of democracy, governance, human rights, good management of public affaires and others that determine the equilibrium of a nation, are not new concepts for Africa, yet these need to be adapted and applied to the cultural objective sense that determine the African essence of our nations.

In this context, family values, the determining role of women, the nationalities, the tribes, the ethnic groups, the council of the elderly wise, community leadership and other values embedded in the African society do not have the same spirit and applicability in Africa as in other parts of the world.

Therefore, governmental principles of the African society must have their roots in these cultural values to preserve social balance and safeguard the integrity of the African social context.

To close our eyes to this reality would be an incentive to internal conflicts, social imbalances and a lack of solidarity among our communities.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

The crisis of African values and cultures has diminished and continues to diminish the unity and the solidarity of our People.

In that sense, the persistence of conflicts, along with flashes of instability set off in various countries of our continent worry us, because these constitute a menace to peace, stability, promotion and development of the essential values necessary for the cohesion of our States.

Africa must always favor dialogue and negotiation for the peaceful resolution of its conflicts, in order to avoid the perpetuity of the great suffering these conflicts cause to our People.

Africa has created various legal instruments that amplify its shared values and its inclination to assure the global advancement of its nations.

In effect, the Charter of the OAU, the Constitutional Act of the AU and the Plan of Action of Lagos discern our common engagement to preserve the principles of independence, territorial independence and sovereignty of the Continent, the global development of Africa, the elimination of discriminatory barriers and the determination of the AU to become a continental exponent that contributes to world development.

On the other hand, the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa; the African Charter on the People's Participation in Development and Transformation, the Convention on the Prevention and Fight against Corruption, the NEPAD, as well as the African Evaluation Mechanism constitute valid instruments that improve economic management, poverty reduction and enhances the well being of our People.

In conclusion, the Protocol on the creation of the Peace and Security Council of the AU and other instruments pertaining to the prevention and resolution of conflicts, the promotion of democracy, human rights, good governance, gender equality, the promotion of youth and the renaissance of the African culture, among others, comprises the African commitment to the advancement of the rule of law in our States, in order to improve stability, peace, social-economic development and the boost the performance of African institutions.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen

I would like to conclude, reiterating once again, my sincere gratitude to you all for the trust and the deference entrusted upon my country as you ratified my candidature to the office of Presidency of the African Union for the present year 2011, as I ask, yet again for your firm support and resolved concourse during my mandate.

I thus, wish us all the best success of our session

May God bless and protect Africa.

Thank you