TENTH IPA SEMINAR ON PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE IN AFRICA

ADDRESS AT DINNER
by

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I INTRODUCTION

The President of the International Peace Academy,
Ambassador Terje Rod-Larsen,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to be invited to be the Guest Speaker at this dinner for the distinguished participants at this 10th Annual Seminar of the IPA whose theme is "Partnership for Peace in Africa". And since I have not been assigned any specific topic by the Organisers of the Seminar, I have taken the liberty of sharing with you my views on why and how the year 2005 may be one of "good hope" for Africa. In doing so, I would argue that the main source of such potential "good hope" and expectations for the continent, is not so much the convergence of important Reports and Summit Meetings this year (such as the Reports by the Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change; Jeffrey Sachs; Secretary-General Kofi Annan's "In Larger Freedom"; UK-led Commission on Africa; and the Summits of the G-8, European Union and the 60th Session of the General Assembly), but the growing commitment by African leaders themselves to address the continent's peace and security, development and democratisation challenges. The determination of the African leaders to make a difference in meeting these challenges is demonstrated by the progress being made in the new institutions which they have established notably the African Union and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).
In this regard, through NEPAD, 26 African governments have volunteered to subject their countries to the scrutiny of an independent high-level panel, which assesses compliance with agreed political, economic and corporate governance standards. Countries that receive high marks in the independent reviews - indicating their compliance with democratic principles, corporate standards of accountability and transparency, protection of human rights, and an independent judicial system are to be emulated for good practices and those that perform below par would be helped to raise their level of good governance.

African leaders are also expanding their diplomatic, as well as peace-keeping efforts to increase peace and security throughout the continent. The highly publicized and truly devastating conflict in Darfur tends to mask a more positive trend on the African continent. In 1998, 14 countries in Africa were experiencing armed conflict or civil strife and another 11 were under severe political crisis and turbulence. This gloomy picture has changed dramatically and positively over the past six years. In 2004, only 6 Africa countries were in a state of armed conflict and very few others were facing deep political crisis.

Recognizing that prevention is much less costly than rebuilding societies devastated by wars, disease and poverty, the African Union (AU) is developing a peace-keeping and intervention force. African peace-keeping troops in limited numbers have already been used in Burundi and Darfur; in January 2005, the AU approved a plan for sending peace-keepers to Somalia to facilitate the return of the new government.
On the economic front, many African governments are progressively increasing their budget allocations to human development oriented priorities in line with the Millennium Development Goals. In 2003, five countries - Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Equatorial Guinea and Mozambique - have already achieved the levels of economic growth needed to reach the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for halving poverty by 2015. Nevertheless the MDG budgetary goals for health (15%), agriculture (10%) and clean water and sanitation (5%) are ambitious for countries where debt repayments can account for more than 25% of the annual budget.

Now, looking through the Programme for this Seminar, I am mindful of the fact that in the course of the proceedings, the experts on the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities and of NEPAD would be making more detailed presentations on Africa's evolving security architecture; strengthening Africa's Peace Keeping Capacity and transiting from security to development via peace-building. Hence, the contribution that I wish to make this evening is based on the mandate of my Office at the United Nations which includes, inter alia, assisting the General Assembly in its deliberations on issues concerning Africa; reporting on the nexus between peace and development in the continent and serving as the focal point for NEPAD at the UN Headquarters. In this regard, I propose to do two things: first, offer my reflections on the Report of the High-Level Panel on threats, Challenges and Change which informed the Secretary-General's own Report "In Larger Freedom" and secondly, touch upon the Commission on Africa as they relate to NEPAD.
II THE REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON THREATS, CHALLENGES AND CHANGE

In his address to the last African Union Summit in Abuja (January 31 - February 1, 2005), Secretary-General Kofi Annan argued that "in no continent would the implementation of the High-level Panel's recommendations save more lives than in Africa". He said further that the Report makes the point that "poverty and infectious diseases such as AIDS, which affect so many millions every year in Africa are among the gravest threats to international peace and security" and also that "any effort to build an effective collective security system must place prevention and the fight against poverty at its heart (hence) it calls for more concerted action to achieve the Millennium Goals".

In general, the Panel identified six clusters of threats, which the international community must address now and in the future:

- War between States;
- Violence within States, including civil wars, large scale human rights abuses and genocide;
- Poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation;
- Nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons;
- Terrorism; and
- Transnational organised crime.
a) Some positive recommendations from the Report:

I. Conceptual:

*The Nexus between peace and development:* The Panel's insistence that we must see the inter-connectedness of contemporary threats to security is particularly important. Issues such as terrorism, civil war, and extreme poverty should not be treated in isolation from one another. According to the High-level Panel, "hard" and "soft" security issues should be addressed with equal seriousness. When the Panel considered the question of what constitutes a security threat, it was confronted with the political fact of diverse threat perceptions among leaders around the world. The government (or people) of the Central African Republic, for instance, is not as likely as that of the United States to consider weapons of mass destruction a palpable threat. But poverty and the associated limitations on health and life possibilities are certainly uppermost concerns for all governments and citizens alike. Poverty can, for example, lower life expectancy as dramatically as war.

Development is an “indispensable foundation” of collective security, and the eradication of poverty and disease is an essential part of the effort to achieve a safer world. Industrialized powers worried about terrorism, for instance, should also be concerned about narrowing the gap between rich and poor. Although poverty is not a direct cause of terrorism in any simple, straightforward way, factors such as minimal economic opportunity and a lack of strong governing institutions create conditions which can be more readily exploited by those seeking to recruit new members to terrorist causes.
Conflict Prevention: The Report contains many proposals to prevent conflict and other global threats, with development as the first line of response. Development, it says, “serves multiple functions. It helps combat the poverty, disease and environmental degradation that kill millions and threaten human security. It is vital in helping states prevent or reverse the erosion of State capacity, a key to meeting almost every class of threat. And it is part of a long-term strategy for preventing civil war, and for addressing the environments in which both terrorism and organized crime flourish.” The Panel members criticized the “shockingly late and shamefully ill-resourced” global response to HIV/AIDS, and called on the international community to rebuild global public health capacity, disease monitoring and response, as a defense against both naturally occurring epidemics and against terrorists using biological weapons.

Peace-building: The Report also addresses issues that arise during and after violent conflict, including the capacities needed for peace enforcement, peacekeeping, peace-building and the protection of civilians. It finds the global supply of available peacekeepers dangerously low, and calls on countries to be readier to provide and support military deployments. Developed States especially, it says, should do more to have suitable contingents ready for peace operations, and provide the financial and logistical resources to mobilize them when and where they are needed.
II. **Proposals for Institutional Change:**

*Peace-building Commission:* The Panel recommends the creation of a new UN body, the Peace-Building Commission, which would identify countries at risk of violent conflict, organize prevention efforts, and “marshal and sustain the efforts of the international community in post-conflict peace-building”. This recommendation would involve the Security Council, ECOSOC, donors and national authorities in filling a crucial gap by giving the necessary attention to countries emerging from conflict.

*Reform of the UN:* The Panel members found that the UN “has been much more effective in addressing the major threats to peace and security than it is given credit for, but that nonetheless major changes are needed” in order to be “effective, efficient and equitable in providing collective security for all” in the 21st Century. Among the most significant changes recommended is the expansion of the Security Council from 15 to 24 members. In this regard, the panel suggested two options: one involving the addition of new permanent members with no veto; the other based on new four-year, renewable seats that would be regionally distributed, also without the veto power.

In addition, the Report recommends changes in the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the Commission on Human Rights, and in the UN’s relations with regional organizations. It also proposes strengthening
the Secretary-General’s critical role in peace and security. To be more effective, it says, the Secretary-General should be given substantially more latitude to manage the Secretariat, and should be held correspondingly accountable with respect to the exercise of greater authority.

**III. Process of Cooperation:**

The report identifies the collaboration with regional organizations such as the AU as being crucial and sets out a series of principles that would govern a more structured partnership between them and the UN. The recommendation on the use of assessed contributions by the Security Council to support those peace-keeping operations undertaken under its authority and on its behalf would, for example, be particularly useful to the African Union to enhance its peacekeeping operations in Africa.

**b) Some areas that need more attention:**

I. The Report could have provided elements of a comprehensive development and humanitarian strategy, such as identifying sources for the much needed humanitarian assistance for countries in distress and specifying mechanisms to help developing countries alleviate extreme poverty and curb the spread of infectious diseases. The explanation for not doing so is that the Panel was tasked to examine economic and social issues only as they relate to peace and security.
Fortunately, the Jeffrey Sach's Report on the Millennium Declaration is expected to fill part of this gap. In this regard, according to the Secretary-General, during his address to the last African Summit in Abuja, most of the Millennium Declaration report's recommendations have Africa clearly in mind. It calls on African states to adopt development strategies bold enough to meet the Millennium Development Goal targets by 2015. It calls on donors and Africans alike to identify the external financing gaps, and to fill these through official development assistance and significant debt relief measures. It suggests that at least a dozen "MDG fast-track" countries be designated for a rapid scale-up of ODA, with more countries granted such status as soon as they are ready. It stresses the need for a major breakthrough in the Doha trade round. And it urges the immediate launching of a set of "quick win" actions - such as the free mass distribution of malaria bed nets, the expansion of school meal programmes using locally produced foods, and an end to user fees for primary schools and essential health services.

II. Africa’s special needs were not specifically addressed in the High-level Panel's Report. Nonetheless, Chapter 7 of UN Millennium Declaration and paragraphs 27 and 28 of General Assembly Resolution A/Res/55/2 (18 September 2000) make reference to the special needs of Africa. Moreover, in operative paragraph 31 of its Resolution on NEPAD, (A/59/L.33) of 21 December 2004, the General Assembly "invites the High-level Plenary Meeting which is to be held on the commencement of the 60th Session of the General
Assembly, to address the special needs of the African continent". In addressing the special situation of Africa, there is a critical need for an increase in financial commitment by the United Nations system, which is in turn dependent upon whether the UN system and its agencies receive additional financial resources for their joint programmes and new initiatives from the donor community. The High-level Panel's report did not articulate fully the ways of increasing financial resources for the United Nations system and its agencies in order to better assist African countries. Furthermore, the report did not address the issue of mutual accountability whereby both the donor community on the one hand and the developing countries in Africa and elsewhere, on the other hand, would honor their respective commitments on resources for development. However, these omissions have now been redressed by the Sach's Report, which should be seen as a compliment to the High-level Panel's Report. Both reports form the central message of the Secretary-General's "In Larger Freedom".

III. There is also a need to spell out the precise mandate of the Peace Building Commission and the sources of funds for peace-building operations and post-conflict reconstruction of war-torn areas in Africa and elsewhere. Will the funding for the Peace-Building Commission come from assessed contributions or voluntary contributions? In addition, the institutional home for the proposed Peace Building Commission continues to be the subject of vigorous debate with many Member States of the UN questioning the Security Council as the
appropriate location for the Commission. Fortunately, a supplementary or Explanatory Note from the Executive Office of the Secretary-General on these questions has now been submitted to the General Assembly.

IV. Finally, the Report of the High-Level Panel did not highlight the urgent need for policy coherence in international assistance to Africa is highlighted by the lack of complementarities in debt, aid and trade policies of the developed countries towards Africa. For example, for a period stretching back over 10 years, ODA to Africa has been almost offset by debt service payments by the Africans. Another example of incoherence is evident in trade and ODA relief whereby for nearly a quarter of a century starting from 1970, the dramatic decline in Africa’s market share amounted to an estimated income loss of $70 billion per annum, almost five times the average annual ODA to Africa. The report has not adequately addressed how such policy incoherency can be remedied.

Nonetheless, it is fair to say that the High-level Panel's report is a start, a good start, but not an end to the process of defining collective threats and challenges and designing collective responses to meeting them. Moreover, the implementation of the recommendations depends on adequate follow-up mechanisms. The 2005 General Assembly Summit is expected to provide a climax to and focus for intergovernmental debate of the High-level Panel’s recommendations, while discussions in other fora such as the G-8, the African Union and other regional summits would give further impetus.
As noted in the report, building a more secure world takes much more than a Report or a Summit. It will take resources and commitments commensurate with the scale of the challenges and which are long-term and sustained. Most of all, it will take leadership, within States, and in the intergovernmental bodies to translate recommendations and expectations into reality.

Meanwhile, at its last Summit Meeting held in Abuja, Nigeria (January 31-February 1 2005), the African Union made the following Declaration of Appreciation to the UN Secretary-General which, *inter alia*, commended his leadership of the UN during the last seven years of his tenure and particularly the process of reform of the Organisation which he has set in motion. "In that context" continued the Declaration, "we take note, with considerable satisfaction, of his appointment of a High-level Panel to consider and make recommendations on Threats, Challenges and Change, facing the United Nations". The Declaration also confirms the AU member's belief that the Panel's Report "will make a major contribution to the repositioning of the UN to respond more effectively to the demands of the present time. Africa, which expects much of the UN, is in the process of studying the recommendations in their totality and making its views known to the Secretary-General".

The AU Summit endorsed the decision made by the Executive Council of the AU, which preceded the Summit, to examine further the High-level Panel's Report and to set up a Ministerial Committee of Fifteen (15) Members, open-ended to prepare a Common African Position on it. Consequently, the meeting of the Committee was convened from 20 to 22 February 2005, followed by an Extraordinary Session of the Executive
Council, to adopt Africa's position which will then be presented to the UN Secretary-General for inclusion in his report to the UN General Assembly in March 2005; It is gratifying to note that a Common African Position has been produced, the African Group of States being the only regional group in the UN to do so, and was duly submitted to the Secretary-General.

III NEPAD AS CENTRAL TO THE REPORT OF THE AFRICA COMMISSION

The recent release of the report of the Commission for Africa in March 2001, has generated several comments concerning the significance of its findings for Africa’s development and of international support for that effort. The Report recommended, inter alia, additional $25 billion per year in ODA, to be implemented by 2010; fairer trade for Africa; debt cancellation for poor countries in Africa and relief for the others; enhance capacity for peace-keeping and conflict prevention did good governance. Much less, however, has been said about the implications of the report for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and the process of taking the recommendations forward. These are equally important.

One of the five objectives of the Commission was to support the best existing work on Africa, in particular, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and the African Union and help ensure this work achieves its goals. This objective no doubt allayed the concerns of those who feared that the Commission might divert attention from NEPAD. But, there are other significant ways in which the work of the Commission has complemented NEPAD.
First, the Commission’s report has underlined many of the priorities of NEPAD. For example, it places considerable emphasis on the need for effective governance and capacity building, peace and security, investing in human development, poverty reduction, fairer trade, and increased aid to Africa. Regarding the last point, it is significant to note that when NEPAD first estimated that Africa would need about $64 billion annually to achieve an estimated 7 per cent annual growth rate; this figure was derided as unrealistic. Yet the Commission for Africa now advocates an immediate doubling of aid to Africa, bringing it to about US$50 billion per annum and estimates that Africa will need about US$75 billion by 2010 to meet the various needs which the Commission has articulated.

Second, since NEPAD was created in July 2001, and adopted as a programme of the African Union in July 2003, one major international event or the other has cropped up every year to dominate the global agenda, threatening to eclipse international attention to Africa’s development. Fortunately, the UN General Assembly’s annual debate on NEPAD, and G8’s annual discussion on its Africa Action Plan have made Africa’s development to remain on the global agenda. The report of the Commission is a major boost to the effort at international policy dialogue and actions in support of Africa.

Third, the report’s recommendation that an effective independent monitoring mechanism should be created to be supported by a small unit within an existing African or international institution is consistent with the
orientation of NEPAD for periodically evaluating progress both by Africa and its development partners. The idea of such a unit calls for an African Union-United Nations partnership to ensure both regional legitimacy and international credibility.

Just as there was initial scepticism about the establishment of the Commission, great expectations has now been aroused by the bold and imaginative recommendations it has outlined. The hard part now is how to build international consensus on and generate momentum for action around the report’s key recommendations.

In this regard, four steps will aid that process. First, leadership by example - by the initiating government in embracing and enacting some of the key recommendations of the Commission - can help galvanize more international support. Hence, the UK government’s recent decisions to relax conditionality in its aid policy; to double its bilateral aid to Africa in 2005 and to write off 100 per cent of the debts to the poorest countries are substantively salient. Second, the Summits of the G8 in Gleneagles, Scotland, and the EU should strive to adopt the report’s main recommendations. This will be consistent with the support that these two Summit forums have expressed for African development and for NEPAD, in particular. Third, the process of considering the report will be helped greatly by some rank-ordering of the various recommendations directed at Africa’s development partners. Such a process would contribute to a productive dialogue in the summits planned for later in the year. A careful review of those recommendations indicates that they could be classified into three main categories, namely: those that entail financial commitment; those that
require change of legislation, for example in dealing with repatriation of illicitly acquired state funds and assets from developed countries to Africa; and those that require goodwill and change of attitudes, for example giving greater voice in multilateral institutions to African countries. Fourth, the report can provide fresh encouragement to African governments to deepen their policy commitments to launch Africa on the path of enhancing its productive capacity, strengthening its administrative capability and promoting accountable governance - essential ingredients for sustained growth and poverty reduction.

Concerted action on these issues is required on the part of Africa and its international partners to help overcome obstacles to Africa’s development. This will pave the way for an Africa that depends more on its competence and productive capacity than the world’s compassion to survive and succeed: in short, a strong and prosperous Africa, which is in our common interest.

IV CONCLUSION

In his Commencement Address at Harvard University, 10 June 2004, Secretary-General Kofi Annan argued that the UN matters "because the UN offers the best hope of a stable world and a broadly equitable world order based on generally accepted rules. That statement has been much questioned in the past year. But recent events have re-affirmed, and even strengthened, its reality". He went on to say that; "in devising and applying the rules, the legitimate interests of all countries are accommodated and
decisions are reached collectively that is the essence of multilateralism and the founding principle of the United Nations".

I thank you for listening.