



**Report of the Meeting of the Committee on Peace and Conflict
Resolution of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent
Councils in Africa and the Arab world
Held at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers in Abuja, Nigeria
Wednesday 12 to Thursday 13 December 2007.**

1.0 The Association at its Annual Conference held in Sana'a, Yemen from 7th to 9th May 2007 set up a Committee called the Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee.

2.0 Terms of Reference

The Conference assigned the Committee to study the origins, trends and present position of the Conflicts in Africa and the Arab world and to make appropriate recommendations to the Conference so as to enable ASSECAA to play a more effective role in the efforts to find lasting solutions to these conflicts.

3.0 Membership

The following countries opted to be members of the Committee and the Conference approved:

- a) South Africa
- b) Sudan
- c) Morocco
- d) Algeria
- e) Yemen
- f) Saudi Arabia
- g) Nigeria
- h) Ethiopia
- i) Bahrain
- j) Jordan
- k) Gabon
- l) Mauritania
- m) The Secretary-General



3.1 The Conference resolved that:

- (i) A Committee to be called the Political Committee for Peace and Conflict Resolution be set up by the Association
- (ii) The Committee shall comprise 13 member countries and the Secretary-General.
- (iii) The General Secretariat shall prepare papers specifying the Rules of Procedure of the Committee, funding arrangements, venue and period of meetings as well as modalities for the work of the Committee.

4.0 The Committee met at Abuja, Nigeria from 11th to 13th December 2007

5.0 Participating member states:

The Senates/Councils of the following member countries were presented at the meeting:

- Algeria
- Nigeria
- Yemen
- Saudi Arabia
- Burundi
- Sudan
- Mauritania
- Egypt
- Ethiopia
- Morocco

**6.0 Opening Remarks by Senator Victor Ndoma Egba (SAN),
Chairman, Local Organizing Committee, Nigeria**

Senator Ndoma Egba (SAN), expressed delight that the first meeting of the Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world was holding in Nigeria. He noted that Nigeria had played significant roles in conflict resolutions in countries such as Liberia, Congo, Burundi, Sudan and Sierra Leone to mention a few. He described the various regional and international conflicts plaguing the world as threats to global peace and sustainable human development. Against that backdrop, he considered the inauguration of the political Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world as timely to enable it achieve the objectives for which it was constituted.



**7.0 Welcome Address by the Secretary-General of the Association of
Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world,
Mr. Livinus I. Osuji**

- 7.1 The Secretary-General welcomed members of the Committee to the meeting. He noted that following the Abuja retreat of June 2006 and the importance attached to item 8 of the preamble to the Association's Statute, members of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world were seriously anxious to play a more effective role in international efforts aimed at the elimination of all causes of tensions, wars and violence as well as contribute to the establishment of security and peace in Africa, the Middle East and the rest of the world. Consequently, the Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution was constituted by the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world to study prevailing conflicts, tensions and wars in the Arab and African countries and make appropriate recommendations to the Association culminating in the inaugural meeting of the Committee in Nigeria.
- 7.2 He stated that pursuant to the resolution of the Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments in 2005, the Association was committed to the use of parliamentary resources in contributing to regional and world peace, security, democracy, human rights and development in line with internationally agreed commitments. He also noted the Association's dismay at the unabating conflicts, violence and wars in the African and Arab region and referred to the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, the Iraq/ Kuwait invasion, the intractable civil strife in Sudan and the conflict in Somalia which had put the horn of Africa in disquiet. Furthermore, he drew attention to the devastating effects of these conflicts resulting in refugee problems, instability and retarded infrastructural and human development of the African and Arab regions.
- 7.3 He expressed satisfaction with the formidable team of scholars and administrators assembled to address the meeting on their understanding of the origins and causes of regional and global conflicts, the international mediations involved, the drawbacks on the previous mediation efforts and to proffer suggestions on how conflicts could be resolved and avoided in future in the African and Arab regions. He admitted that the task of the Committee was onerous and craved the indulgence of members of the Committee to bring their maturity, statesmanship, the milk of humanity and fear of God to bear in carrying out their task of producing a body of recommendations that would contribute to the resolution of regional conflicts.



8.0 Address by the President of the Shoora Council of Yemen and Chairman of Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world.
H.E Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani

- 8.1 In his address, the President of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world apologized for the delay in commencing the meeting. He ascribed the delay to flight difficulties. He conveyed the best wishes of the President of the Republic of Yemen, Ali Abdallah Saleh, the Parliament and people of Yemen to the Government and people of Nigeria and the best wishes of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world to the Committee. He expressed the hope that the Association would become the largest and the most effective regional Association and a strong vehicle of cooperation between Africans and Arabs. He also expressed his sincere gratitude to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Umar Musa Yar Adua, the President, Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the entire Senate of Nigeria for hosting the meeting and for the wonderful reception accorded members of the Committee since their arrival in Nigeria.
- 8.2 He remarked that the first retreat of the Association hosted by the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in June 2006 was a welcome initiative as it offered members of the Association, the opportunity to discuss issues and ideas relating to global conflicts and the need for the resolution of these conflicts. The Meeting, he added, encouraged the Council of the Kingdom of Jordan to host the second Retreat of the Association in October 2006 in Jordan, all aimed at strengthening the Association as a strong organization for promoting cordial and effective relations among member countries of the Association, African and the Arab countries at large.
- 8.3 This inauguration of the Political Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution, he added, was a strong indication of the importance of the Association attached to peace in the Arab and African regions. He wished the meeting success.
- 8.4 He acknowledged that the Africa and Arab region was in dire need of peace, security and stability to achieve meaningful development and sustainable democracy but was threatened by poverty, tension and war. He condemned the terrorist attack on a Lebanese Army-General in Beirut. He described the attacks as confirmation of the danger posed by terrorism to the security of the Africa-Arab region and other nations. He therefore urged the Committee to work out a mechanism that would enable the Association contribute significantly to efforts at peace making, Conflict Resolution, checkmating



terrorism and spreading the gospel of peace and forgiveness in the Africa and Arab regions. It was against this background that the Committee was established.

- 8.5** In the light of the above, he called on Senators and Resources Persons present at the meeting to impact positively on the meeting with their contributions adding that the success of the meeting would not only underscore the value of the Committee but also elevate the Association as a body recognized in Africa and the Arab world, reputed for its strong contributions to global peace, using the machinery of parliamentary diplomacy. He therefore called on the Committee to articulate a programme of action and work plan which would enable the Association to make contacts and visits as well as coordinate with international and regional organizations, so that progress made in the resolution of global conflicts would be put in proper perspective to enable the Association achieve its overall objective of ensuring regional peace. He also advised the Committee to avoid the mistake of underestimating issues but rather to concentrate its efforts at identifying processes of resolving such issues.
- 8.6** Continuing, he advised the Committee to emphasize among other issues, the conflict in Palestine, Iraq, Darfur, Somalia and the need to check terrorism across the globe.
- 8.7** The Palestine, question, he further advised should be given priority because of its regional and international impact as a holy land, a place of heavenly messages. He added that inspite of efforts being made to address the problems in Palestine, the people were still threatened by daily air-raids and other forms of attack which militate against the establishment of the Independent Palestinian state.
- 8.8** On Iraq, the President stated that the country was still in very grave danger and its future depended on genuine peace process with regional and international support to restore its freedom, independence and sovereignty. He called for the participation of all segments of the Iraqi society to contribute to efforts at rebuilding Iraq.
- 8.9** Addressing the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan, he expressed regret that the situation in Darfur was deteriorating and remained a reference point in the Africa and Arab region, undermining the desire of the international community for the restoration of peace to that part of Sudan. He therefore called on the committee to articulate a work plan and programme of action as contained in the Abuja peace accord, to contain the conflict. He commended the efforts of the Federal Government of Nigeria at resolving the conflict in



Darfur and referred to the resolution of the Security Council of the United Nations concerning the deployment of a joint peace keeping force in the country.

8.10 In respect of Somalia, the President noted that although a legitimate Government was in place, the real threat to security was the unwillingness of the rival armies in the country to close ranks. He added that the Republic of Yemen had initiated the process of dialogue and that President Ali Abdallah Saleh had made personal efforts aimed at achieving peace among the warring Parties in the country. He commended the Republic of Ethiopia for its efforts at rebuilding constitutional institutions in Somalia at the request of that country's legitimate Government. He called on the Committee to work towards the resolution of the crisis in Somalia by recommending dialogue and fence mending among the various segments and groups involved in the crisis. He also advised the Committee to work towards combating terrorism by coordinating its work with member states.

8.11 Concluding, he stressed that the Association would rely on the work of the Committee and its recommendations, a basis for its action in the peace efforts in the Africa/Arab region. This meeting for Resolution of Conflicts, he stressed would be followed by the meetings of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of member States, Exchange Visits by member countries, Exchange of Cultural programmes and Participation of Youths in sporting event among member countries.

8.12 Finally he expressed thanks to the President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Leaders and Delegates of the member Councils for their support.

9.0 One minute in silence was observed for the repose of the souls of the victims of the recent terrorist attacks in Algeria and Lebanon.

10.0 Inaugural Speech by H.E. Senator David Mark, President of the Senate, Federal Republic of Nigeria.

10.1 Senator David Mark welcomed members of the Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world to Abuja. He observed that ASSECAA by the design and foresight of its founding fathers had become the response of Africa and Arab region to the prevailing uni -polar world political order. He remarked that the end of the cold war had created a



situation, where political direction at global level, seemed to have left a single forerunner and the reaction of other regions of the world had been to strengthen regional cooperation and coherence in order to withstand the pangs and pressure of international competition and unequal strength. He noted that the declared aims and objectives of the Association had raised hope that Arab and African countries had realized their strength in unity and the potential of becoming a formidable regional grouping in the global arena.

10.2 He also noted the desire of the Association to play a more effective role in international efforts aimed at the elimination of all causes of tension and violence and to contribute to the establishment of security and peace in the world. He added that the Abuja meeting of the Committee was remarkably timely since some countries in Africa and the Arab world were still unable to make any appreciable plan of development of their countries as a result of the prevalence of wars, conflicts and insecurity in the region.

10.3 Concluding, he expressed delight that the aim of the Association through the work of the Political Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution was the Resolution of Conflicts in the African and Arab world and the enthronement of global security for peaceful and sustainable development of humanity. He declared the inauguration of the Committee on a cheerful note of good wishes.

11.0 Amendment of Programme

11.1 The Chairman noted the gravity of the topics scheduled for presentation, discussion and resolution and the need to devote enough time to address the issues arising from the topics. He expressed regret at the delay in commencing the proceedings and the resultant time constraint imposed on the Committee. Accordingly, he proposed and it was resolved by the Committee that only the following topics would be considered at the meeting:

- (i) " Conflict in Somalia ": Causes, Effects and the Futile attempts at the Resolution
- (ii) " Conflicts in Sudan "
- (iii) Exploring the Causes and Dynamics of Armed Conflicts in Africa

11.2 Consequently, the topics on Conflict in Iraq – Contending Issues and Efforts at Resolution and the Conflict in the Middle East



- Palestinian question were postponed to the next meeting of the Committee.

12.0 Appointment of Sub-Committees:

The Committee resolved to appoint two Sub-Committees, namely the Sub-Committee on Press Release and the Sub-Committee on Mechanism of Work for the Committee.

12.1 Membership of Sub-Committee on Press Release

- Suleiman Al-Jelaini (Algeria)
- Ali Abdullah Al-Wahabi (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)
- Dr Walda Fahik Al-Amayon (Ethiopia)
- Mah Bint Samata (Mauritania)
- Arnica Marjuk (Sudan)
- Eugene Uchenna Ojogwu (Nigeria) Chairman
- Ahmed Muhammed Al-Asbahi (Yemen) Secretary

12.2 Membership of Sub-Committee on Work Plan/Mechanism

- Abdullah Bin Ahmed Alfiafi(Saudi Arabia) Chairman
- Mr. Obaid Karim (Algeria)
- Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Al-Afandi (Yemen) Rapporteur
- Dr. Issac Essien (Nigeria) Secretary
- Mr. Abdullah Ahmed Al-Hardalo (Sudan)
- Mrs. Hanorab Bolland (Burundi)
- Mr. Taleb Ben Khalifa (Mauritania)

12.3 The Sub-Committees presented their reports to the Committee and the reports were considered and accepted *mutatis mutandis*.

13.0 Motion Made: that the Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution is a brain child of and proposal from the General Secretariat of the Association in its determined efforts to realize the objectives of the Association and accordingly, the Committee shall be serviced and managed by the General Secretariat of the Association under the statutory administrative and management purview of the Secretary-General of the Association and in accordance with the terms of reference of the Committee. The motion was unanimously adopted.



14.0 Presentation of Papers and Discussions

14.1 A Paper Titled: "Conflict in Somalia Causes, Effects and Futile Attempts at Resolution by Professor Ayo Dunmoye.

14.1.1 The horn of Africa includes countries of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia. It is the setting of several long conflicts such as Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia and the Afars and Issas in Djibouti. The setting has had a contagious effect on all the countries of the sub-region and the conflict has attracted international interest and attempts at its resolution which have gone beyond the African Union.

14.1.2 Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia are the principal actors in the conflict in the horn of Africa. The Ethiopian – Somali conflict arose out of territorial and political distrust between the two countries, over the settlement which gave the Ogadden region mainly occupied by Somalis to Ethiopia in 1948. Since then, several factors, internal and external, political and social have contributed to the atmosphere of conflict in the area.

14.1.3 The Somali crisis is the reminiscence of the USA/USSR cold war between the superpowers who flooded the country with arms to fortify the Siad Barre dictatorship regime. Draughts and competition among rival clans and militias for scarce resources led to the intractable conflict which has continued till date.

14.1.4 The international community i.e. UN and OAU now AU were slow to react to the crisis until it was too late. The activities of the two rebel groups i.e. the United Somali Congress (USC) and the Somali National Movement (SNM) which overran the government of Siad Barre compounded the problem thereby splitting the country into North and South, under the control of the two rebel factions. The several attempts to resolve conflict had proved abortive. Efforts of United Nations operations in Somalia (UNOSOM), the AU troops, the League, the Organization of Islamic Conference and the Arab League have yielded no results. The situation in Somalia is still unsafe for the operation of international organizations.

14.1.5 In conclusion, the lack of a central governing institution presents serious International security challenges which have enmeshed the entire horn of Africa in the conflict.

14.1.6 The exasperation of the United Nations and its unwillingness to send



troops cannot be diverged from the unfortunate mayhem unleashed on the United States of America troops in Mogadishu by Farah Aidid in 1993 which led to the withdrawal of American troops from the United Nations peace keeping force in Somalia.

14.2 Suggestions:

- The international community should support regional African based negotiating process;
- The African Union should employ diplomatic channels to bring the warring factions to the negotiating table.
- The international community through the United Nations should enforce the embargo on arms and ammunition sales to Somalia and ensure effective implementation mechanism.
- With the emergence of the two voices i.e. the Union of Islamic Court (UIC) and the Trans-Federal Government (TFG) a less complex structure of representation should be looked at in a new attempt to reach negotiated settlement acceptable to the warring factions on power sharing which must be encouraged.
- The United Nations should give necessary support for the regional peace process since it is not willing to send a peace keeping force.

15.0 Contributions by the Representative of Burundi

15.1 Burundi was emerging from a 10 year old war and found it necessary to share its own experience at the meeting in conflict resolution and to proffer solutions to the resolution of conflicts in other war torn zones of Africa and the Middle East. Although one hundred percent (100%) peace had not been achieved, efforts made had resulted in ceasefire, the conduct of general elections and the installation of a transitional government in Burundi.

15.2 Burundi's approach to conflict resolution was encompassing and involved all national leaders, armed movements and other relevant interests. This had resulted to peaceful negotiations and a ceasefire achieved in September 2000. Burundi's experience demonstrates that in every conflict, real dialogue was the solution, hence communication and effective dialogue should be employed even with the most extremist groups. It was important to make warring groups understand that they were all part of one whole and that consensus was important to the attainment of national goals and more



importantly, that former enemies could yet be future friends for the sake of peace and human development. Concluding, Burundi advised the vigorous pursuit of the process of disarmament and reconciliation in efforts at ensuring the resolution of conflicts in the African and Arab region.

16.0 A Paper Titled: Conflicts in Sudan by Major-General CRU Ihekire (Rtd)

16.1 The conflict in Sudan, the largest country in Africa, dates back to its independence in 1955, making the country one of the most volatile areas on earth. The wars and open conflicts are caused by the lack of development due to marginalization resulting from a lack of willingness by the Arab North to share power with the African South. Rather than work to develop Sudan's economy, empower people in the other parts of the country, the elites in Khartoum "hoarded wealth and power for themselves". Successive governments in Khartoum either ignored the peripheries or sought to suppress them militarily. As a result, the Southern Sudan (and Darfur in the West) are the most war torn, poorest and underdeveloped places in the world. These conflicts have left more than 1.5 million people dead, several millions displaced, millions of others refugees and the environmental degradation of the region.

16.2 The topic is divided into two broad sections, one dealing with the conflict in Southern Sudan and the other with the conflict in Darfur.

16.3 In the Southern Sudan, the conflicts are two fold: civil wars between the North and the South and inter-communal conflicts. The conflict broke out in 1955 and has defied all attempts at mediation. The imposition of Sharia law in 1984 transformed the war into a jihad thus, throwing the full weight of northern religious passion and identity behind the political struggle to keep the people and resources of the south under tight northern control. Inter-communal conflicts which have heightened the war is caused by the heterogeneity of southern Sudan and the attendant competition for political and economic advantages. The ownership and use of fast depleting natural resources (land, water, grazing fields e.t.c), uneasy social relationships particularly between armed groups, anxiety, prejudice, stress, uncertainties, access to small arms and light weapons coupled with the collapse of traditional authority and conflict resolution mechanisms have all exacerbated the conflicts.

16.4 International intervention led to the signing of a peace charter between the government and general southern factions in 1966 when the government of



Sudan agreed to allow a referendum which would allow the people of southern Sudan, an option of either unity or independence from Sudan.

16.5 A Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in January 2005 between the Sudanese Central Government and the Southern Peoples Liberation Army intended to pave way for elections by 2009 on the basis of power sharing, boundary demarcation alongside sharing of oil wealth and civil service positions in Khartoum and the deployment of Northern troops from the South. Consequently, a Government of national unity was put in place with a Southerner as the 1st Vice President.

16.6 The Way Forward

The way forward may have been provided by Vice President Kiir when he warned that collapse of the peace deal would ripple regionally and beyond by fostering instability and extremism " and therefore preferred maintaining current political partnership with the ruling NPC despite the seeming imperfections in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

17.0 A Paper Titled: Conflict Resolution in Sudan by John Dor Majok

17.1 Sudan was occupied and colonized by the British and Egyptian powers under a system known as condominium from 1899 to first January 1956 when it gained independence. Despite its size and diversity the country was governed after independence under a unitary system until 1972. As early as 1947 the Southern part of the country opted for a federal system which was not heeded by successive governments until a second military government of Nimery signed a Peace agreement with the Southern rebels under General Joseph Lagu in Addis Ababa in 1972. The first military coup took place when the civilian government capitulated to the army as southern politicians were pressing for federal legislation in parliament.

17.2 The civil war which was waged by the South against central government lasted for seventeen years (1955 – 1972). Many internal attempts were made to resolve the conflict but all ended in vain. The most prominent attempt that deserved mentioning was the round table conference that was held in Khartoum in 1965 – 1966. Many southern rebel leaders and southern political parties and likewise many northern political parties participated in the conference though nothing remediable came out of it. The continuation of the war and the atrocities committed aroused the Sudanese and international community conscience. In 1969, the army ousted the civilian government and on 9th June, 1969, that government

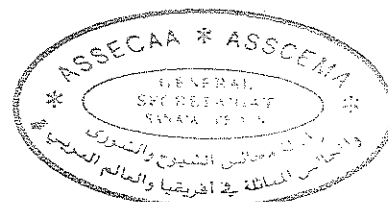


declared the principles on which peaceful negotiations with the rebels would be based. The declaration recognized the cultural diversity of the south from other regions and the underdevelopment that region had experienced since independence. The rebels were interested in that development.

17.3 While the southern region enjoyed relative freedom and democracy, the north was governed with an iron hand. Many northern politicians became envious and started dismantling the southern gains through the central institutions. On the other hand, many southern politicians who were vying for favour of the President started staging political intrigues against each other. In addition, after the peace agreement, the central government never delivered peace dividends. The southern ambition for development was shattered. Ignoring his own constitution, Nimery frequently intervened in regional affairs, dissolving regional assemblies and dismissing Presidents if they deviated from his policy. To make things worse, Nimery violated the permanent constitution of the Sudan by redividing the southern region into 3 smaller regions. All in all, many grievances were recited by the rebellious South and Sudan reverted to another civil war that lasted for twenty one years (1983-2004). But for the political and military support John Garang, the new rebel leader received from Ethiopia, the rebellion would not have succeeded. Ethiopia was applying a tit-for-tat policy. It had accused Sudan of offering safe sanctuaries and political support to the Eritrean rebel movements who were fighting for independence from Ethiopia. It is therefore, apparent from that development that for Africa to have internal stability, neighboring countries must aspire for stable regional relations.

17.4 Furthermore, regional and internal interests pushed Sudan into another ordeal. The death toll during the second civil war among civilians and fighting forces from bullets, disease, hunger and deprivation was unparalleled. Millions of southern civilians left their homes and moved to the north seeking safe sanctuaries. During this period, Sudan witnessed a popular uprising (1985) that toppled a military government and a military revolution (1989) that toppled a civilian government. Two months after the revolution, the new government organized a peace conference in Khartoum. All Sudanese political parties and groupings including the SPLM were invited to a national conference on peace issues. As expected, the SPLM never turned up in the conference. Nevertheless, the conference continued as planned and the government adopted most of its resolutions as a working paper for peace negotiations with the SPLM. The fundamental resolutions were:

- adoption of a federal system based on devolution of powers to lower levels of the government;



- wealth sharing among those levels;
- a new constitution that would exempt the south from some provisions of Islamic Hudud;
- Peaceful resolution of the conflict.

17.5 After the conference, many delegates were dispatched to neighboring countries and other parts of the world to preach the government's initiative. Some delegates met SPLM/A delegates in Addis Ababa/Ethiopia and Nairobi/Kenya. However, no official engagement was relevant until the Nigerian president, Ibrahim Babangida, called for a peace conference in Abuja in 1992. The initiative failed because the belligerents could not agree on fundamental issues. The government delegation stuck to Sharia which the SPLM/A delegation rejected and it counter proposed a secular system (separation of state and religion) or self-determination for the south. The Government rejected both proposals. Although the negotiations collapsed, the Nigerian initiative was followed by a series of regional and international initiatives that finally brought about relative peace to war-torn Sudan.

17.6 The Comprehensive Peace Agreement

As part of efforts to resolve the conflict in Sudan, a comprehensive peace agreement which focused on the Machakos protocol frame-work, power sharing, wealth sharing, security arrangements, the Abyei protocol and the resolution of the conflict in the two states of southern Kordofan and Blue Nile was reached.

17.7 The Darfur Crisis

The war in Darfur burst in 2003 and has intensified since the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement. Many donor countries have stated that they would not send needed funds to Sudan until peace prevails in the region. The reasons for the war in Darfur are similar to those in the south although many factors ignited the conflict in unprecedented scale. The root causes of the crisis can be summarized as political, historical and geographical.

17.8 Resolutions and Proposals

To avoid political and social conflict in Sudan, efforts should be made to ensure:-

- good governance – transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law and justice and equality;



- democratic transformation – fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual; peaceful transfer of power through the ballot box and institutionalization of free given consent;
- decentralization – power and wealth sharing among various levels of government;
- stable relations with neighbouring countries. This proposal is based on the assumption that stable regional relations are a prerequisite for internal stability and that the pursuit of foreign relations must reflect the broad interests of the countries concerned.
- Equitable social and economic development, poverty eradication and fight against corruption.

18.0 Contributions

18.1 Yemen:

18.1.1 Invites Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab world to liaise effectively with the African Union (AU) and the Arab League to confront the conflict in the Sudan.

18.1.2 Views the situation in Sudan as a problem of local communities and not so much as an Arab/African conflict. Calls on the international community to demonstrate genuine commitment to the resolution of the conflict in Darfur by assisting the Government and people of the country to grapple with their internal problems and find lasting solutions to issues arising from the conflict.

18.1.3 Believes that parties to the conflict also have a responsibility to determine the kind of country they want without interference from external forces and without further escalation of the conflict.

18.1.4 Also believes that the media should show understanding of the issues at stake in the conflict; social and cultural roles must be appreciated to avoid a further escalation of the conflict.

18.1.5 Also calls for an appreciation of the plight of both African and Arabs in seeking a permanent solution to the conflict.



18.1.6 Further believes that governments and non-governmental organizations should aid rebuilding efforts in Darfur and work to stop worsening the conflict.

18.1.7 Urges the Association to work with the Government of Sudan to organize a conference aimed at bringing about peace and stability in Darfur and ensuring the implementation of the United Nations approved resolution of 2006 which seeks the deployment of a peace keeping mission in Darfur.

18.2 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

18.2.1 Worried that the peace agreement signed in September, 2007 by the warring parties had not been respected neither had there been efforts to follow up on the agreement by the Somalis.

18.2.2 Believes that all the parties in the conflict must come to agreement in order to implement resolutions of peace efforts and maintains that its position on Somalia was adequately evidenced in the agreement in Jeddah on the issue to wit:

- (a) the parties in the conflict are advised to abide by the Mogadishu agreement;
- (b) international community should support the operation in Somalia;
- (c) African forces should take charge of peacekeeping under the control of the united nations;
- (d) Agreement and other plans put in place for peace must be followed and strictly applied by all the parties in the conflict.

18.3 Ethiopia:

18.3.1 Corrects 3 impressions in the paper titled: Conflicts in the Horn of Africa and states that:

- the concept of Italian colonization of Ethiopia is a fallacy. Ethiopia resisted the attempt by Italy to lay claim to Ethiopia's territory and they were finally driven away without the Italians gaining any form of control over Ethiopian territory;
- the historical development regarding the war in Darfur is distorted. Ethiopia has gone through three stages of government namely: (a)



Haille Sallesie (b) Mengistu and (c) the current federal government with autonomous regions;

- Ethiopia, by signing the African Union charter has demonstrated that it respects the territorial sovereignty of each African state and has never transgressed the territorial sovereignty of Somalia.

18.3.2 It argues that it is imperative to note that peace in the region is not only the concern of Somalia but of the whole international community as Ethiopia does not support the fermenting of trouble in Somalia despite the view of some scholars and the media. Furthermore, the problem in Ethiopia, stems from the declaration of jihad against it by Somalia and the potential of the sixteen year old war spilling over to Ethiopia territory as exemplified by terrorists who cross over from Somalia from time to time to cause havoc. A stable government in Somalia therefore, is in the best interest of the peoples of the region.

18.3.3 Concluding, it asserts that the major cause of conflict in the region is poverty while the reality on ground is most times, different from media reports.

19.0 **A Paper Titled: Exploring the Causes and Dynamics of Armed Conflicts in Africa by Ochinya O. Ojiji**

19.1 Conflict is a natural phenomenon which forms an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence as well as a natural part of life. It can be either constructive or destructive. Africa has since the end of the cold war, experienced more violent armed conflicts than any other continent of the world. Conflict and violence have been pervasive and brutal and have played a key role in inhibiting social, political and economic growth of the continent. However, it is difficult to establish causal relationship with a social phenomenon as conflict. Conflicts in Africa, reflect the diversity and complexities of the continent's historical and contemporary dynamics. These are rooted in political, economic and social inequalities and access to natural resources and social services, extreme poverty, economic stagnation, poor government services, high unemployment, environmental degradation etc.

19.2 The lingering effect of these conflicts has inhibited development and improved human development opportunities. In order to effectively address Africa's conflicts, an understanding of the root causes of conflicts and the secondary causes which enable and sustain them and also hinder their resolution is necessary. Furthermore, the use of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALIWS) brought in through porous African borders by



opportunistic arms merchants who capitalize on ineffective national government laws has compounded the situation. The result of these conflicts includes amongst others, political decay, state collapse, widespread human rights violation, famine condition, refugee problems and internally displaced persons.

19.3 Conflicts have also resulted in the diversion of scarce resources from social services to military expenditure, disruption of socio-economic activities, discouraged tourism and contribute to break down of family structures. The psychological consequences of these conflicts on women and children and the culture of violence is responsible for the child soldier phenomenon in Africa.

20.0 OBSERVATIONS

After the consideration of the presentations by the resource persons and the comments by the delegates, the committee observed that:

- a. the conflicts in the Republics of Sudan and Somalia have been so protracted that the need for the restoration of lasting peace in those countries have become urgent.
- b. in Somalia, the conflict has resulted in a devastated and fragmented country which has remained for decades without a legitimate government in place.
- c. the conflicts have resulted in daily loss of lives and property, massive damage to infrastructure, widespread poverty, disease, social and economic dislocations in the two countries.
- d. the conflicts have led to continued proliferation of arms in the sub-region to the detriment of the citizens and the neighboring countries.
- e. the resolution of the conflicts has remained a desperate challenge despite the efforts made by the United Nations, the African Union, the IGAD, the Republic of Yemen, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Federal Republic of Nigeria to mention a few.
- f. the Arab and African countries engaged in conflicts deserve peace and stability in order to divert scarce resources being wasted to incur ravages of war to productive sectors of their economy and provision of amenities to their citizens.



- g. the restoration of peace in Darfur and Somalia will demand large material support to rebuild the regions and kick start the development and productive sectors that would ensure socio-economic stability for the inhabitants and the return of refugees and displaced people.
- h. there is absolute need, in Africa and the Arab countries for democratic transformation – fundamental rights and freedoms for the individual, peaceful transfer of power through the ballot box and institutionalization of freely given consent process.
- decentralization power and wealth sharing among various levels of government
 - stable relations with neighbouring countries
 - equitable social and economic development, poverty eradication and fight against corruption.

21.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Consequent upon the observations made from the Committee's study of the Conflicts in Sudan and Somalia, the Committee recommends that:

- (1) the Association should call upon the Trans-Federal Government and other parties in the conflict in Somalia to seek redress of their grievances peacefully by engaging in dialogue with all sections of the country.
- (2) the Association should urge the international community viz: the United Nations, the African union, the IGAD, the Arab League, the Islamic Conference and the United States of America to show greater commitment to the resolution of the conflict in Somalia;
- (3) the Association should call upon the governments of African and Arab countries to contribute more financial, material and human resources for the consolidation of an effective peace-keeping force in Somalia.
- (4) the Association and the countries of Africa and the Arab world should show obvious determination and commitment to support every effort to restore peace and stability in the Republics of Sudan and Somalia
- (5) the Association should call on all parties involved in the conflicts to lay down their arms (especially in Somalia) and embrace dialogue as the surest way of resolving the conflicts as borne out by the experience of Burundi, Liberia and other countries that were formerly embroiled in civil wars and strife



- (6) in future negotiations for the resolution of the conflicts, all sections of the countries, parties, armed groups and recognizable interest groups and stake holders in the countries should be given equal opportunities to participate in the determination of the future of the countries.
- (7) the Association should seek to participate actively in all international efforts to promote peace and stability or to resolve conflicts in the affected countries of Africa and the Arab world.
- (8) the Association should show appreciation to the efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Yemen, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Republic of Uganda for their efforts in contributing to the resolution of the conflicts in Sudan and Somalia.
- (9) the Association should urge the leadership of countries in conflict to discourage tribal and social disintegration by avoiding tribal sentiments and prejudices in political appointments and nominations to parliamentary and executive positions.
- (10) the Association should express support to the government of Sudan to enable it to achieve comprehensive peace with the armed groups in Darfur in order for peace to reign in the region
- (11) the Association should condemn in very strong terms, the kidnap of some Sudanese and Chadian children by a French organization and consider the act a violation of the rights and dignity of the children and call for investigation of the incident with a view to preserving the rights of the victims ensuring payment of compensation to their families for being subjected to psychological and physical trauma and indignity.
- (12) the Association should support the people of Sudan in the efforts that would promote the country's independence and rid the country of all forms of external aggression and impositions.
- (13) the Association should call on armed groups in the conflict areas to participate in all negotiations aimed at peaceful resolution of the conflicts, as required by the international community.
- (14) the Association should express support for the position of the Sudanese government in the deployment of peace keeping troops for security of the region under the command of the African security leadership.



- (15) the Association should coordinate visiting programmes to the parties concerned in the conflicts with a view to obtaining first hand information to contribute to the resolution of the conflicts and ascertain the difficulties that will hinder the resolution of the conflicts.
- (16) the Association should seek to present initiatives which include opinions and proposals that will lead to the resolution of the conflict at regional and international fora convened to deliberate on ways and means of resolving conflicts in African and Arab nations.
- (17) the Association should utilize modern means of communication especially the internet and create a website for publicizing its activities especially on peace and conflict resolution.
- (18) the Association should enhance its budgetary provision especially for the peace and conflict resolution programme whose successful implementation will result in the realization of a fundamental objective of the Association.
- (19) the Association should urge member councils/senates to make significant contributions especially to the peace and conflict resolution activities of the association in view of the crippling effect of conflicts and wars on socio-economic and political development of African and Arab countries.
- (20) the Association should encourage a unity of purpose between the African Union and the Arab League to jointly employ diplomatic channels to bring the warring factions to a negotiating table.
- (21) the Association should explore the means of urging the international community through the United Nations to enforce the embargo on arms and ammunitions sales to Somalia and ensure effective implementation mechanism.
- (22) with the emergence of two main groups i.e. the Union of Islamic Court and the Trans-Federal Government, a less complex structure of representation should be arranged in a new attempt to reach negotiated settlement in Somalia
- (23) the Association should preach good governance, transparency, accountability, representative participation, rule of law, justice and equality to Arab and African governments to resolve conflicts and remove their root causes.



22.0 Appreciation

22.1 The Committee expressed appreciation to His Excellency, Umar Musa Yar'Adua, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Senator David Mark, President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for hosting the inaugural meeting of the Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee of the Association.

22.2 Secondly, the Committee expressed appreciation to His Excellency Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, the Speaker of the Shoorā Council of Yemen and Chairman of the Association for his support of the meeting of the Committee.

22.3 Thirdly, the Committee expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General and the General Secretariat of the Association for their tireless contributions to the organization and success of the committee meeting.

22.4 In the next place, the committee expressed appreciation to the resource persons, facilitators and paper presenters at the meeting for their excellent and most enlightening and objective presentations on the conflicts in Somalia and Sudan.

22.5 Above all, the Committee wishes to express gratitude to the Council and Conference of the Association for giving the members the opportunity to study and serve the Association and conversely Africa and Arab regions through the ASSECAA Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution.

***General Secretariat
Sana'a Yemen
15th December 2007***

