

AFRICA IN THE YEAR OF ECA GOLDEN JUBILEE

STATEMENT BY PROFESSOR ADEBAYO ADEDEJI
Executive Secretary of the United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa in Commemoration
of the 25th Anniversary of the Commission

*Made at the Winding up of the General
Debate of the 18th session/ninth Meeting
of the Conference of Ministers
(Silver Jubilee Session)
Held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
from 27 April to 3 May 1983*



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Your Excellencies the Heads of State
and Government,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since 27 April 1983 when our Silver Jubilee Session was formally opened by His Excellency Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam, Chairman of PMAC and of COPWE and Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army of Socialist Ethiopia, we have listened to most remarkable speeches from our esteemed Heads of State and Government, from the Distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, and from my brother the Distinguished Secretary-General of the OAU; we have received messages from some 30 African Heads of State and Government and 20 messages from non-African Heads of State and Government including one from His Holiness Pope John Paul II. These messages have no doubt inspired all who have listened to them as they have greatly inspired me. And they will no doubt inspire millions of people who will read them in print both now and in the years to come.

May I, therefore, seize this opportunity to express to His Excellency Comrade Mengistu, to His Excellency Rt. Honourable Arap Moi, to His Excellency Dr. David Kenneth Kaunda, to His Excellency General Juvenal Habyarimana, to His Excellency Dr. Alex Ekwueme, to His Excellency Peter Mmusi, to His Excellency Oumarou Mamane, to His Excellency Leone Mbiame, to His Excellency Citoyen Nzondonyo Lingo, to His Royal Highness Prince Bhekimpi, and to the Distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, our deepest appreciation not only

for their addresses and the messages they contain, but also and more particularly for their presence at this historic session of the Commission. We are also most grateful to all our other Heads of State and Government for the messages which they have graciously sent. We have been truly inspired by them all.

I would like to seize this opportunity to pledge, on behalf of my colleagues, before you all, our total commitment to rededicate ourselves to the task - the daunting task - that lies ahead so that when ECA celebrates its Golden Jubilee in 2008, the hope expressed in the Addis Ababa Declaration on the occasion of this Silver Jubilee, which will be read solemnly in a few minutes time by four African Ministers from the different regions of Africa, will have become an accomplishment and Africa would have, by the Golden Jubilee Year, succeeded "in establishing at the national level, subregional and regional levels ... truly dynamic, prosperous, self-reliant and interdependent economies capable of functioning as true and reliable partners in the international economic system".

Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On our 21st anniversary in 1979, I recounted with some details the relentless struggle - a struggle that spanned 10 to 11 years - that went into getting the international community to agreeing to the

setting up of the Economic Commission for Africa. I have often wondered what was the main motivation of that very small group of eight African countries, that hardly knew each other well, in persisting in their demand for the setting up of an economic commission for Africa at a time when our vast continent was dominated by the forces of colonialism and imperialism? Were they merely imitating the other regions of Asia, Latin America and Europe for which the United Nations had already established their regional commissions? Or did they have a vision of the possibilities of such an institution for our beleaguered, poverty stricken and exploited continent? Were they inspired by the potential contributions which such an institution was capable of making to Africa's socio-economic emancipation?

Whatever their reasons, that simple decision of the international community contained in ECOSOC resolution 671 (XXV) of 29 April 1958 turned out to be a historic decision of great portents. First and foremost, by that decision, our first ever pan-African organization was born. Second, the setting up of ECA in 1958 paved the way for the establishment of Africa's first pan-African political organization. Third, the ECA, right from the start, began not only to champion the economic interests of Africa, not only provided a forum for the exchange and harmonization of ideas, policies and programmes but also began to take - at first faultingly but as the years passed by and it gained confidence, aggressively - measures and programmes aimed at turning Africa from a mere geographical expression into an economically interdependent continent.

Listening to the addresses graciously delivered by our visiting Heads of State and Government during the past three days as well as to the various messages which their colleagues who are not here with us have sent and to the statements made by the different Delegations - African and non-African - there is no doubt that resolution 671 (XXV) passed 25 years ago marked a giant step for Africa.

As we celebrate the Silver Jubilee of ECA, shouldn't we, therefore, for a moment, cast our minds back to the Africa of 1958? So much has taken place during the past 25 years and so great and pressing are the problems of today that we either do not have the time to reflect on the past - its achievements and failures - or even try to remember those events vividly enough in order to put them in a proper historical perspective. And yet, today is the cumulative outcome of all our yesterdays and will be one of the determining factors as to the shape and nature of our tomorrow. Therefore, on occasions such as this we must not lose the opportunity to look back not with a view to romanticising the past but to drawing necessary lessons from experience as well as of inspiration from it. For if we could first know where we came from in relation to where we are and whither we are tending, we could do better to judge what next to do and how best to do it.

Twenty-five years ago, Africa was still the haven of colonialism. While in North Africa, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco and Tunisia had become independent States, and in Africa South of the Sahara, Ghana and the Sudan had reached the same goals to join the older sovereign states of Egypt, Ethiopia and Liberia, the rest of Africa was under colonial tutelage. Guinea

joined the rank of African sovereign states in 1959 and as far back as 1957 it had been agreed that Nigeria would become independent in 1960. But for the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa, we were made to understand and to believe that theirs was the case of "never in a thousand years" But given our determination to will our political development by first achieving a break with colonialism, the whole colonial edifice was brought down in all countries except, as of now, in Namibia and South Africa - where man's inhumanity to man is still, 38 years after the United Nations Charter has been adopted, unfortunately, the order of the day. Even in those two remaining bastions of colonialism and racism, the days of the forces of evils are numbered.

Of course, the sceptics who never thought that anything good could come out of Africa, were convinced that our hard-won independence would be short-lived! that we would make a mess of it; and, that it would, on the whole, be unmitigated disaster. Fortunately for us, in spite of all our political ups and downs, we have demonstrated and are demonstrating our capacity to hold on to our independence, to strengthen and safeguard it and even to defend it militarily against external aggressors.

Twenty-five years ago, and even for some years thereafter, Africa was new to the game of international co-operation. Intra-African technical and economic relations were virtually non-existent as the independent African member States of the Commission had no history of economic co-operation among themselves. Bilateral economic and technical agreements were in those days, therefore, a novelty and multilateral economic and technical co-operation among independent African countries, other than those

inherited from the colonial era, was unknown. We have, in spite of the difficulties and spurred by disadvantageous beginnings, succeeded in establishing networks of regional and sub-regional economic and technical co-operation in Africa. The establishment of CEAO, ECOWAS, River Niger Authority, BCEAO, Mano River Union in West Africa; of UDEAC and CEPGL in Central Africa; and of PTA and SADCC in Eastern and Southern Africa are some of the shining examples of the measure of our success and of our achievements.

In addition, under the aegis of ECA, we have established a variety of institutions in the different sectors to give necessary technical support to the development efforts at the national level, to provide the basis for technical, financial and economic co-operation among African countries, even several years before Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC) and Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries (ECDC) became fashionable. Indeed, the very first work programme of the ECA secretariat adopted by the Commission at its inaugural meeting included, inter alia, (i) a study on how West African countries could derive mutual benefits by increasing their economic contacts with each other; (ii) a study on various aspects of economic co-operation among the Maghreb ~~and~~ countries of North Africa; and, (iii) studies on the establishment of an African development financing institution and of our institution for the training of African economists and statisticians.

These were the beginnings of CEAO and ECOWAS in West Africa to which I had earlier referred and of the African Development Bank (ADB) and the

African Institute for Economic Development Planning (IDEP). So it came to pass that, encouraged particularly by the determination of the increasing number of independent States, the ECA led the way in the establishment of many inter-governmental institutions in various economic and social fields, in the spirit of what, we have since then, christened collective self-reliance. Today, we have a network of specialized institutions covering a wide spectrum of economic and social fields. It is, indeed, a most happy providential coincidence that as we celebrate our Silver Jubilee, the countries of the Maghreb - Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia - are examining ways and means of reviving economic and technical co-operation among themselves. If they can do this, it would be the greatest Silver Jubilee present they could have given to ECA which devoted all energies and attention to economic co-operation among the Maghreb countries in the late fifties and early sixties.

At the national level, what kind of economies were our inheritance from the colonial regime? We inherited not a virile economy, nor a self-reliant and dynamic one, but a colonial and dependent economy which was very much underdeveloped, with a low capacity for growth and development, severely imbalanced with a very high proportion of the population engaged in low level agricultural production. We inherited an economy with a circumscribed and fractured industrial base and with sharp bifurcation between the traditional and modern sectors. Our colonial inheritance also included a population that is overwhelmingly illiterate and undernourished and whose life

expectancy was very low and with particularly high infantile mortality. We did not even inherit an integrated national transport network nor a national communications system. On the contrary, the infrastructural base left by the departing colonial powers was not only hopelessly underdeveloped but was also geared largely to the export-import activities for the benefit of their economies.

To provide us with an objective basis for evaluating our performance at the national level since 1958, my colleagues and I have prepared a paper entitled A Review of the Socio-Economic Development in Africa, 1958-1983. It is indeed, my hope that you will all have the time to read this review which has now been incorporated as chapter III (B) of the ECA Silver Jubilee Commemorative publication entitled "25 Years of Service to African Development and Integration".

Whilst it is true that our economies still remain economically backward and that we are faced today with a menacing economic crisis that challenges our very survival, it will be a disservice to ourselves to fail to fully appreciate the solid achievement which we have made in all sectors particularly in the social sector and in the provision of infrastructural facilities. Indeed, it is almost blasphemous to compare our performance with that during the colonial era as the raison d'etre of colonialism was to subjugate, exploit, and humiliate us. As I said recently in Lusaka:

"We must reject completely the point of view which is currently held in some quarters not favourably disposed towards independent Africa that events in the continent since independence are an unmitigated disaster, and that we do not have the capacity to sustain for long a modern state let alone transform it economically and socially. Such a point of view which is put across ad nauseam by the foreign media is directed at sapping our self-confidence. Colonialism having done its worst to destroy that self-confidence, our detractors are doing everything, both subtly and openly, to make us lose whatever remains of it. The unfortunate thing is that many Africans, and one suspects, a growing number of our people are beginning to believe such propaganda.

And yet, the very foundation of development and the oil that lubricates its engine are the possession of self-confidence by a people in themselves and in their capacities to initiate and organize their own concepts, policies and instruments for development and to mobilize their human resources for the exploration of their needs. For after all is said and done, development fundamentally refers to human beings, to every man and woman. It is a human experience synonymous with the fulfilment of individual mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. The development of self-confidence by a people in themselves is one of the basic prerequisites for the initiation of the process of self-reliant and self-

sustaining socio-economic development. Therefore, the erosion of self-confidence keeps a people in abject poverty and in a perpetual state of dependence. It makes them dependent on outsiders for capital, for manpower, for technology and for virtually all else. Therefore, while we should be critical of our past performance, we must not fall victim of outside propaganda which are designed to erode our confidence in ourselves and make us permanently eternally dependent.

What I am trying to say is that looking back at the past 25 years, we do have a lot to be proud of. While it is true that given our present economic crisis there is no cause for indulging in self-congratulation, it is also true that there is no justification in indulging in self-destructive criticisms either. Mistakes we certainly have made; opportunities our governments have certainly, from time to time or perhaps more often than should have been the case, missed; we have certainly gone astray or have been led astray from time to time in the course of this period because of the novelty of it all, particularly immediately after independence; and if we must confess all on occasions such as this, our perceptions as to the nature and scope of development and how to bring it about and as to what strategy to pursue has suffered markedly

from our colonial heritage. But no one can or should doubt our genuineness, our ability to learn from the past nor our determination to march forward until we have fully achieved the objectives which we set for ourselves in the Monrovia Strategy and the Lagos Plan of Action."

One lesson of paramount importance which we must, therefore, learn and learn fast is that dependent development would lead us nowhere fast, and that Africa marching toward the future hand in hand with its colonial economic past and with the present excessively externally-oriented and dependent economy has no dignified future at all. As I said recently in a public lecture at Ibadan, we have to remove most urgently the yoke which has fastened upon us on economic system which inhibits the range of national resources we utilize; which puts us into a straight jacket of producing what we do not consume and of consuming what we do not produce and which makes us exporters of raw materials at low and, in most cases, declining prices in order to import semi-finished and finished products at high and rising prices. Therefore, what we need, and need most urgently, is the complete decolonization of our economies, a total and sharp break with our colonial dependent economic past. In such circumstances, we would need to invent or will a dignified future for ourselves - a future that will give rise to prospects of prosperity of economic self-determination, and of national and collective self-reliance and self-sustainment.

Indeed, the fact that our Heads of State and Government at their Lagos Economic Summit adopted exactly three years ago - on 29 April 1980 - the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos, is a major step in inventing such a future. That a continent as large and heterogeneous as Africa with 50 independent States which vary in size, population, and level of development and which have a variety of political ideologies could subscribe unanimously to the goals, objectives and priorities of the Plan and the Act, shows how fast we have moved since 29 April, 1958. For us in ECA secretariat, the Lagos Economic Summit with its Lagos Plan of Action was perhaps the single most important development in Africa in pursuit of a regional approach to economic decolonization since the ECA itself was established. I hope it will not be long before a second Economic Summit is held. In collaboration with my brother, the Secretary-General of the OAU, we shall take every step to ensure that regular Economic Summit meetings are held in the future.

True enough, during the past three years, our economic situation has become worse, and has been aggravated by the deepening international economic crisis. But this strengthens the case and the urgency for accelerating the process of the economic decolonization of Africa through the most rapid and effective implementation of the Plan and the Act.

Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In continuation of ECA's relentless effort to assist in bringing about such a willed and dignified future for Africa as early as possible, and definitely before its Golden Jubilee in 2008, we have produced the study entitled "ECA and Africa's Development 1983-2008" A Preliminary perspective study. As is made abundantly clear in the study, there is no alternative for us but to invent our own future if we are to rise up to the daunting challenges ahead of us. The projections shown in the study speak for themselves. Whereas our population was approximately 242 million in 1958, it is projected to be between 997 million and 1,077 million; with our urban population rising to 472 million (as against 120 million in 1980); approximately 178 million children will require primary education; 152 million will require secondary education; and 124 million will require higher education in the year 2008. The corresponding figures in 1980 were 80 million, 65 million and 53 million respectively. We will have in 2008 a labour force of between 400 million and 510 million.

Nevertheless and in order to drive home the point, we have analysed the prospects for the next 25 years under two alternative development paths - one of these being the historical trends scenario.

The main finding of the results that emerge from the historical scenario is the bitter fact that the region would continue its dependence on foreign sources of supply in practically all the critical areas after nearly half a century of independence. The region as a whole would be a net-importer of food especially cereals. The energy situation would worsen further when the region would continue to face major difficulties in meeting the potential demand especially for crude oil and electricity. The import bill of oil would grow by an average annual rate of growth of 6.1 per cent. The projections show that the African region would, if present trends continue without drastic industrial structural change, remain unindustrialized even by the year 2008. According to the projections, the African region would still have to import over 97 per cent of its tractor requirements, over 96 per cent of the region's demand of passengers and commercial vehicles, 37 per cent of fertilizers, 12.3 per cent of cement and 59 per cent of iron and steel requirements. Likewise, the increased dependency of the region for the satisfaction of consumer goods, on other region's products especially man-made fabrics, becomes a cause for concern. By the year 2008, road network and railway infrastructure will constitute the major infrastructural constraint to the development of Africa's socio-economic integration.

The projections of trade outside the region points to a dismal and disturbing balance with the rest of the world. The region's external revenues is projected to suffer from the continuous fall in world demand on its main export products owing to increased protectionism and quota restrictions,

conservations measures, development of alternative sources of energy and substitutes, trade polarization and limited market diversification. The over-all structure of exports would resume its old level without a drastic change. The 10 leading commodities would still represent over 70 per cent of the total exports in 2003 as against 75 per cent in 1960. Only minor changes would occur in the composition of exports. While the share of agricultural raw materials would increase, the share of crude oil and minerals would decrease and stagnate respectively. The projections show that the African region would still be dependent on other region's products for most of the critical and strategic commodities. Total imports would grow at an average annual rate of 5.4 per cent. At this import rate, the trade gap is projected to reach about 25 per cent of GDP. With such developments, the external finance position will worsen further with less prospects for increased inflows of foreign resources.

The gloomy over-all macro-economic picture is manifested in the meagre growth of GDP of only 5.3 per cent per annum with wide disparities in growth performance among group of sectors. The projected growth of agriculture of only 2.3 per cent per annum would be far less than the population growth rate of over 3 per cent. The services sector will continue to be the main component of GDP, with a tiny share of the manufacturing sectors. Under the historical scenario, the African growth will continue to rely mainly on external financial flows.

Such a gloomy prospect would, undoubtedly, have disastrous implications on the food and energy situation as well as on social conditions such as education, health, housing, etc. Therefore, the normative scenario has been designed to advocate explicit and implicit important and major transformations in the African economies as recommended in the Monrovia Strategy and the Lagos Plan of Action which stipulate that change is not only desirable but also possible. Moreover, the scenario sums up the picture of success of noble ventures such as the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, the Preferential Trade Area and formulation of subregional economic communities.

Along with the projections of the key variables and the macro-economic framework, an analysis of major implications is also provided especially with respect to domestic policies required. More specifically, some changes in African consumption and investment patterns have been simulated and the results analysed with respect to their implications on the growth and structure of the African economy.

A most conscientious pursuit of the normative development scenario would impel us to take all appropriate measures to achieve (i) a more than triple increase in our production of cereals; (ii) an increase by two and a half times of our production of roots, tubers and pulses; (iii) an increase of almost by 300 per cent of our meat production. (iv) our energy production, if it is to catch up with demand, will have to increase at

an annual average growth rate of 9.3 per cent; (v) in order to bring about such a level of agricultural output which will take us near food self-sufficiency, we would need 1.021 million of tractors, as against 253 million in 1980; 21.49 million tons of fertilizers per annum (as against 2.27 million in 1980); (vi) our requirements for iron and steel products will rise to 195 million tons. In 1980, our installed capacity was 6.5 million tons; and, (vii) our seaborne trade is projected to be about 1,463 million tons but African fleet capacity will be only 115.5 million. And so on and so forth.

The magnitude of what we are required to do as a people and as a continent, individually and collectively, shows starkly the challenge we have ahead of us during the next twenty-five years. And 25 years is not a long way off. It is only five five-year development plan periods. The conception of a major industrial or agricultural enterprise followed by the undertaking of pre-feasibility, feasibility and engineering studies of the project, the construction of the factory or dam as the case may be and the taking of all other processes until the enterprise actually comes on-stream usually straddles at least two development five-year plan periods. Therefore, we are terribly hard pressed for time. What is certainly not on our side, in view of the enormity of the problem which we have to face, is time. For every day that passes without urgent actions taken to bring about the willed future finds us further down the economic abyss.

If we can harness our vast potential natural resources, if we can arrest the creeping desertification of our continent, if we can launch

an aggressive scientific and technological revolution and internalize such a revolution, if we can democratize the development process by harnessing our virile and dynamic human resources and galvanize their energy for development purposes, and if we can improve the management of economies and utilize more effectively and efficiently our resources for the welfare of the broad masses of our people by ensuring a fair and equitable distribution of the benefits of such development; if we can do all these and more, the realization of the hopes and aspirations expressed in the Addis Ababa Declaration will, indeed, become a reality even before ECA Golden Jubilee. Therefore, the greatest homage we can pay on this auspiciously jubilant and historic occasion is to solemnly resolve that Africa's political independence shall be strengthened and secured through rapid socio-economic transformation so that this continent shall no longer be subjugated and exploited, so that Africa shall before long cease to be the underprivileged continent of the world and the economic underdog of the international economic system and, so that hunger, malnutrition, disease and poverty shall become a thing of the past. Let us resolve to be resolute, let us decide to be decisive and let us, with one accord, march forward in unison and unity to usher in a new economic order at the national, subregional and regional levels.

Esteemed Heads of State and Government,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates,

Whatever have been the accomplishments of ECA since its inception has been due in a large measure to ecological and environmental factors. The Government and people of Socialist Ethiopia have given the Commission every material, moral and political support. As one of the founding members of the Commission and as the trustee of Africa and the entire international community in looking after the Economic Commission at its headquarters here in Addis Ababa, the Government of Socialist Ethiopia has discharged its responsibilities more than beyond the call of duty.

The wealth of the hospitality of the Government since this Silver Jubilee Session began and, indeed, right from the very beginning of its preparation, almost a year ago is an eloquent testimony of the total commitment of the Government of Socialist Ethiopia to ECA and of what it stands for us. All these, Your Excellencies, have been possible because of the personal interest and support which His Excellency Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam, Chairman of PMAC and of COPWE and Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army of Socialist Ethiopia, has consistently given to ECA. I find words inadequate to express my personal indebtedness and that of my colleagues to him for all that he has done and continues to do in our support. May I ask you all present, Esteemed Heads of State and Government, to join me in giving a hearty ovation to His Excellency Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam, Chairman of

PMAC and of COPWE and Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army of Socialist Ethiopia, as a token, I repeat, as a token of our appreciation and gratitude.

Since this Session began and indeed during the meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole, copious references have been made to our Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) which we decided to establish at our Kinshasa Conference in 1977 and which within a pace of a little over five years have become a force to reckon with as a catalytic agent in the aggressive promotion of intra-regional economic integration in Africa, at the subregional level. These MULPOCs, as you all know, are located in Lusaka for the Eastern and Southern African sub-region; in Niamey for the West Africa subregion, i in Yaounde for Central Africa subregion; in Gisenyi for the Great Lakes countries and in Tangiers for North African countries. Their performance and their success have been made possible by the support which they have received from their respective host governments, i.e. the Governments of the Republic of Zambia, Rwanda, Niger, and the United Republic of Cameroon and the Kingdom of Morocco.

As some one who has been deeply involved in the establishment and evolution of these MULPOCs and has therefore been involved on a virtually day-to-day basis, on their progress, I can testify before all of you, Esteemed Heads of State and Government, Honourable Ministers, that without such support, these MULPOCs will not be the success story which you have all acclaimed them to be. May I, therefore take this Silver Jubilee Celebration as a unique opportunity to express once more, publicly, my most sincere appreciation to His Excellency

President Kenneth David Kaunda; to His Excellency President Juvenal Habyarimana, to His Excellency President Paul Biya; to His Excellency President Seyni Kountché and to His Majesty King Hassan II. May I invite all of you to joining me in giving a hearty ovation of appreciation and gratitude to these great sons of Africa for having sacrificed and still sacrificing so much to turn our dream for an integrated, economically interdependent and self-reliant Africa into a reality. May I also express my sincere appreciation to all the countries and all the Heads of State and Government of these countries that are hosting one or the other of the ECA's sponsored institutions.

Your Excellencies,

I did say earlier that the Lagos Economic Summit was one of the best things that has ever happened in Africa. It produced the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos. Although our leaders meet regularly at subregional levels under the auspices of the various subregional co-operation arrangements such as PTA and SADCC for Eastern and Southern Africa, the UDEAC and CEPGL for Central Africa and ECOWAS, CEAO, Mano River Union and River Niger Basin Authority for West Africa, this Silver Jubilee Session is really the first occasion since 1980 that our leaders from the different regions of Africa are meeting not only to share with us the joy of the occasion but also to give us the benefit of their views on major economic issues facing Africa and the world. They have been with us since 27 April, inspite of the thousand and one other official engagements that are crying for their attention. May I invite you, Honourable

Ministers and Distinguished Delegates to join me in giving them an ovation appropriate for an occasion such as this as a token of our sincere gratitude.

Your Excellencies, Esteemed Heads of State
and Government,

Honourable Ministers,

In a few minutes' time, the Silver Jubilee Celebration and the 18th Session of the Commission will come to a climax with the Addis Ababa Declaration and soon our esteemed leaders will leave us while we continue for another three days to consider and adopt the recommendations and resolutions of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole. As we bring this our historic Silver Jubilee Session to an end, let us reflect on all that has happened here in Addis Ababa since 27 April, 1983 on the addresses that have been delivered and the messages that have been received; on the statements that have been made and on the discussions that have been held.

Let us reflect and as we do so let us ask ourselves what do all these amount to, in the light of economic and social reality of present day Africa? If after such a reflection we become angry - very angry about our present economic situation in our respective countries and our highly marginalized position in the world economy and we are angry enough to want to change it no matter at what cost and self-confident enough that we can change it, that we have the capability and the capacity and the guts to transform the continent economically, to establish an economic order based on justice, equity and fare

play, then and only then will this historic celebration of the Silver Jubilee of ECA under the esteemed patronage of our leaders, Heads of State and Governments be deemed a success. For it will then have stirred in motion an irreversible economic revolutionary process which will save Africa before long from the humiliation of continuing to be the economic underdog of the international economic system.

May that anger hit us all and may it spread so fast among all our people so that by the time of ECA's Golden Jubilee, the economic decolonization of Africa would have become an accomplished fact.

I thank you all.

