

PRESIDENT MUSEVENI'S ADDRESS TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL, November 18, 2004



President Museveni with Secretary-General Kofi Annan. He addressed the UN Security Council in Nairobi on November 18, 2004

I greet the Security Council on behalf of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Before I talk about IGAD issues, I would like to point out that, in my opinion, wherever there is chaos in the world, one will most likely find a confluence of four factors. And what are those four factors? Factor one is parasitic, vested interests. Factor two is superficiality and obscurantism in identifying and dealing with those parasitic interests and their effects on a particular country or group of countries. Factor three is weak or disoriented local leadership. Factor four is the preindustrial character of many of the affected areas, especially in Africa, where societies are backward and preindustrial.

In my opinion, as someone who has been observing the scene for the last 40 years, those factors are always present when there is chaos in any part of the world. If I had time, I would elaborate on each of those four factors. But I do not have the time now. It is enough, however, that I have stated them today. Without correcting them, especially the first three factors, we cannot reach a solution, in my opinion.

Some of the chronic problems such as that of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are due to a combination of some of those factors. Some nationalist legitimate local leadership emerged in 1960, and the first and only elections in the history of the Congo were held. I am referring to the leadership of Patrice Lumumba and his party, the Movement National Congolese. Since there was no strong Congolese independent State, trouble broke out soon after independence. The United Nations troops came in. Instead of assisting the only legitimate leadership to emerge in the Congo up to then, and indeed since then, the United Nations took the side of illegal elements, including the famous General Mobutu. It has now been almost 45 years since the Congolese tragedy of 1961. The United Nations is back in the Congo. How can it be that a country cannot develop a capable State in 45 years? What is the problem? Who is responsible for that problem?

We are now witnessing the tragedy of Cote d'Ivoire. How can it be that a country, 47 years after independence, does not have the minimum pillars of State, such as an army capable of defending the territorial integrity of the country, political problems notwithstanding? Is the international involvement in such situations part of the solution or part of the problem? Is the analysis of those situations correct or defective? What about the incredible suffering visited on the people in those situations? I would like the Council to seriously evaluate all those factors. As the Council knows, Uganda has had a lot of problems.

Nevertheless, Uganda has never sought, nor would we ever accept, international involvement in our internal affairs, other than our collaboration with our Tanzanian brothers in getting rid of Idi Amin in 1978 and 1979. That is because we do not like to add to our own copious confusion the international supplies of the same commodity of confusion. It is not wise to add international confusion, to what is already an oversupply of local confusion.

Therefore, in my view, and following our long experience in this part of the world, our actions should be guided by the following steps. First and foremost, any political problem should be solved by the citizens of the country in question, following democratic principles and guided by belief in the equality of all persons before the law. That should be step number one.

Secondly, if the citizens of that country, for some reason, cannot solve the problem, then the region should come in. In the case of our area, the regional organizations concerned are the following; the East African Community (EAC); the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which is here; the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); and others. Thirdly, ultimately the African Union should bless the process.

Fourthly, it is only then that the international bodies, such as the United Nations, should come into the process, to provide solidarity and back-up support. The advantages are the following:

First, there is the question of knowledge of the problem; because part of the problem is the fact that the players do not know the problem. I have been Chairperson of the Burundi peace process for a very long time. In 1994-1995, when we were first coming into the process once the citizens of Burundi had failed to provide their own solution, there were many suggestions. Some people suggested that the respected former President of the United States, Jimmy Carter, should head that process. I said no. I was Chairperson of the process, and President Jimmy Carter is my very good friend, but I said no. By the time President Carter learned to pronounce Burundi names—and Burundi names are so long: Ntibantunganya, for instance—it would be 10 years later. And he would be unable to help. So I insisted that the retired President of Tanzania, the late Mwalimu Nyerere, should head that process.

Then, unfortunately Mwalimu Nyerere died, and we brought in Mr Mandela. Although South Africa is rather far away, he was supported by all of us and he has done a very good job. That is how the Burundi process is moving steadily and surely. Thus, again, the first advantage I see in this arrangement is the question of knowledge; the ability to know the problem so that one is able to provide a correct solution. One should not complicate an already difficult problem with a lack of knowledge and with superficiality.

Secondly, there is the question of stakeholders. Normally, when there is a problem in a country, the first victims are the people in that country. But the next victims are the neighbours, who are affected next by refugees and all the other problems. The neighbours are therefore stakeholders, next to the citizens of the country. Although sometimes there may be some rivalries which may complicate the issue, those can be specifically isolated and dealt with.

Thirdly, there is the question of international solidarity, especially concerning the question of resources.

So once you have the knowledge and you have all the stakeholders brought in, then the next level is international solidarity, especially with respect to resources and may be some technical contributions.

The four issues of this area are the Sudan, Somalia, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I am reversing the order, because I would have started with the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but I put it last, because the region is now out of the Congo. The region is the one which shepherded the Congo process, through the Lusaka process, stopped the war and brought about a ceasefire and the disengagement plan. But then, when the United Nations came in, it said the region is out. So the region is now out of the Congo.

That is why I am putting it last; because I do not know what is happening. I cannot speak about what I do not know about.

Regarding those four issues, I would like to give the following summarized comments. The leaders of the Sudan, who are sitting next to me here, for a long time refused to listen to the advice of the region in handling the diverse character of that great African country – that country where different African people meet.

Many in the world may not know who the Africans are. Africans fall into four major linguistic groups. Africans in all of Central Africa, Southern Africa, much of East Africa and quite a bit of West Africa are part of the Niger-Congo group of languages. It includes the Bantu languages, and also the Kwa languages, the languages spoken in some parts of West Africa.

The second group is the Nilo-Saharan people, like John Garang, and all the people in Southern Ethiopia, Chad and so on. Their languages are the Nilo-Saharan group of languages.

The third group is the Afro-Asiatic group of languages, of which those are three in Africa: Arabic, Amharic in one part of Ethiopia, and Tigray in Eritrea and in part of Ethiopia.

The fourth group of language is the Khoisan, a very small group in South Africa. Those people have somewhat Asiatic facial features, but they live in South Africa and a few in Botswana and Namibia. Those are the four linguistic group of Africa. We have now added the new European languages – I do not know whether we can also call them African: English, French, Portuguese – and even Spanish in some places. Those are the additional new languages of Africa.

Now the Sudan is where some of those language groups meet; the Arabic-speaking people meet Garang's people.

Those are very different people: they all are Africans, but they are very different. As you can see, Mr Garang's people are not only black; they are actually blue, when you look at them very carefully. Now, when you have Arabs and blue men living together under one sovereignty that is a very serious project and it should be taken seriously. But that was not taken into account. We are talking to our brothers; fortunately, I have been dealing with them for a long time, and they know my views. At one time, I went to Khartoum – I was invited to the University, and I gave my views there.

As a consequence of not dealing with the issue over the past 50 years, this is where we are today on the question of the Sudan. The six protocols, in my opinion – given what has gone on, given the loss of time in solving this problem – are a reasonable package that should give this region a chance to see peace in the Sudan and then make a fresh start.

When you want to jump, you do not stand in one position and jump. No; you go back first. English is a poor language; it does not have enough vocabulary, like my language. In my language, we have a verb for going backwards in order to jump better; we call it okusinga. Okusinga is when you go back in order to gather enough momentum to jump far. I think there is a word in English, but I do not remember it, even though I did English at an advanced level.

In the Sudan, because of lost time and lost opportunities, because of mistakes in defining the problem, we need to go backwards. We need to okusinga, to borrow my language. I think that is what the Sudan needs. That sense of okusinga is captured in these six protocols.

I hope we can implement these protocols, so that we can see what happens next. Therefore I appeal to the parties to the Sudan problem to resolve the remaining issues without delay.

When I spoke with Mr. Garang on the telephone the other day, he mentioned the issue of paying the army, and a few other issues. I hope that these can be resolved quickly, so that we can get moving.

I saw a television interview last night when I was in Arusha – we were in Arusha for the meeting on AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis – in which a Sudanese person was saying that the Khartoum Government was busy with the problem in Darfur and that therefore it was not attending to this problem. But, in my opinion, dealing with Southern Sudan is part of dealing with the question of Darfur. If you deal with Southern Sudan, correctly, then you will be able to deal with Darfur more easily.

Turning to Somalia, that country now has an agreed Transitional Government. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union, the Arab League and the United Nations should materially and technically back that Government so that it can establish its authority in Somalia within the shortest possible time. We should not lose any time, because this package in Somalia is very, very important. I must thank President Kibaki and his Government for helping IGAD to negotiate this agreement here in Nairobi, and I would appeal to everyone to support this process.

What they need is troops to assist the Transitional Government to establish its authority inside Somalia. I would propose here the use of African troops. There are troops from very far away – from Uruguay, from the North Pole, from the South Pole; there are quite a variety of them – but I think that African troops could do this work much better. First of all, they are cheaper; we pay our soldiers much less than those people are paid. And they can stand and fight; there is no problem at all.

Where African troops have been involved, we have found solutions quickly.

We solved the problem of Amin almost alone, we the Africans – Tanzania, ourselves and a few other countries. We solved the problem of Mobutu. We are the ones who dealt with the problem of genocide in Rwanda. Genocide would never have stopped if we had not taken a stand. Getting rid of the regime and enabling people to survive was done by Africans. We are the ones who fought apartheid; the Africans are the ones who fought apartheid.

I do not know why, therefore, we do not have a system whereby we have international resources and use African troops to solve these problems. If there is money, we can raise soldiers to deal with this problem of Somalia, or any problem, for that matter. The youth in Africa are doing nothing, they are not employed, they are looking for jobs. It would be very easy for me to raise any number of brigades – two, three, four, five.

Now once, when we were working with the former President Bush on the question of Somalia in 1991, I wanted to make a contribution, but I was told that I could send only one company. I said, “No, I am not going to send one company. I am not here for decoration. If you want me to make a contribution, I must send a brigade, so that you can see what Ugandan soldiers can do in order to make a contribution. But just one company from me – that would be like a jamboree, or something like that.”

Let us use Somalia as an example. I am the Chairperson of IGAD, and I have consulted the new President Abdullahi Yusuf. We can have several brigades of African soldiers go into Somalia and assist the Transitional Government to establish its authority on the ground, if we have the money. Money is the only problem. After all, these soldiers are being paid; even when they are at home they are being paid. The money we may be looking for could be money for transportation, food and so on. We are already paying those soldiers, but if we need to raise new battalions, we may need more money, including for salaries.

That is what Somalia needs now. It needs a number of brigades to escort that Government into Somalia so that they can start preparing for elections, so that they can have a legitimate Government.

The situation in Burundi is progressing quite well, mainly because the region, the internal parties of Burundi and the international community are coordinating well. Things are moving along quite well in Burundi, because all of us are there all the time. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms Carolyn McAskie, is working with all the stakeholders. We encounter all sorts of complications, but nobody can deceive us, because we know the situation. By putting our heads together, we always reach a good solution.

The only problem in Burundi is money. What is it the French word for money? “Argent.” I keep saying that *argent* is what is needed now, first of all for the elections, for printing ballots. I think some money has been raised for the ballot boxes and so forth, but we also need money to assemble the combatants, put them in one place, disarm them and disband them. If we do not do this, free elections cannot be held, because the parties that have armed groups will use them to intimidate rival parties. It is therefore very important that we get the *argent* for the purpose of demobilizing the combatants.

As regards the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I have expressed my worries to both President Kabila and the Secretary-General. I hope that those worries are taken into account. One of the problems I had with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is that it has delayed the integration of the combatants. For one and a half years, rebels in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo have been appealing to the Government to integrate them. The Government has been saying, “No, we cannot integrate you”.

When I inquired further, I was told that Western Ambassadors in Kinshasa are the ones advising the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo not to integrate the rebels. Why? Because the rebels committed atrocities, so they must be investigated first. This must be a new theory of conflict resolution. The little I know about conflict resolution is that you first establish peace. If all the troublemakers come peacefully, you accept them with open arms. We should not say, “No, I do not want to allow you in, because I think you may have committed crimes and I want to investigate you first.” If people want to come, we should welcome them with open arms.

That is why in the case of Burundi we used the method of “immunité provisoire”, provisional immunity. We assume that these people are not all criminals. They bring their guns, they all come, and we put them in the army temporarily. We then use technical standards to reduce their number to the number we want. We take out those who are over age and those who are sick. We may have a standard regarding education as well. Thus, in the end, we have a smaller number than the original number. Then we give a package to those who are not absorbed. That is where the World Bank comes in; we give them a package, and they go home with a good heart.

Now when we do that, we are solving two or three problems at once. First, people with guns come and hand in their guns. Secondly, we are helping the faction leaders. A faction leader has real problems. He has his followers, and he cannot join the transitional Government and leaves his followers out. His followers would kill him and say, “You have betrayed us; you only care about yourself and you forgot about us.” That is why some of the faction leaders are very reluctant to come; because they cannot join the process without first having a solution for their followers. When you integrate combatants, you also help the faction leaders.

The faction leader is then able to tell his followers, “Look here, my friends, the transitional process has catered for you, so do not harass me.”

I truly hope that this issue is dealt with. Only the other day, I sent a special envoy to see President Kabila to tell him about my worries, because I have heard stories of these thousands of people who are out there in that part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with guns, unaccounted for, and whom the Government wants to investigate first. If we had followed that logic of justice before peace and legitimacy, we would have had no peace process in Burundi, because I cannot vouch for most of the people in Burundi’s army. Many among the rebels may have committed crimes. But, by using the technique of “immunité provisoire,” however, we gathered all of them and we can proceed to establishing a transitional Government. From a transitional Government, we will proceed to elections, and thus to legitimacy. Then we can come back to the question of justice. That is how that issue was handled in South Africa, if the Council remembers: first negotiations, then the transitional process, elections and then the Truth and Reconciliation commission to establish questions of justice.

I am taking a lot of your time, members of the Council, but I imagine you came a long way to listen to us, so do not complain. You voluntarily came to listen to us. In my opinion and according to my experience, the magic formula to apply when internal forces have failed in dealing with the issue is the following: the internal parties, the regional players, and the international players. That is how the problem of Amin was solved, how the problem of apartheid was solved and how the problem of Mobutu was solved, to some extent, although not wholly.

In my opinion, if there is an intractable problem, that package of players should shepherd the solution through all the stages: negotiations, agreement, implementation, and guaranteeing the agreement in the post-implementation period. Because if it is not guaranteed, the internal forces will guarantee it through war – through fighting – asserting their rights themselves in the absence of anybody else to guarantee their interests. **Thank you.**