



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND  
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

**OFFICIAL REMARKS**  
**DR. WORKNEH GEBEYEHU, IGAD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**  
**ON THE 39<sup>TH</sup> EXTRAORDINARY ASSEMBLY OF**  
**IGAD HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

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**Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022,**  
**Republic of Kenya**

- Your Excellency, **GEN. ABDEL FATTAH AL-BURHAN**, President of the Transitional Sovereignty Council of The Republic of Sudan and Chairperson of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government;
- Your Excellency **ISMAEL OMAR GUELLEH**, President of the Republic of Djibouti and our Host of the IGAD Secretariat;
- Your Excellency **UHURU MUIGAI KENYATTA**, President of the Republic of Kenya and our Gracious Host;
- Your Excellency **Dr. ABIY AHMED ALI**, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia;
- Your Excellency, **DR. JAMES WANI IGGA**; Vice-President of the Republic of South Sudan;
- Your Excellency, **MAHDI MOHAMMED GULAID**, Deputy Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia;

- Your Excellency, **HON. VINCENT BAMULANGAKI SEMPIJJA;**  
Minister of Defence of the Republic of Uganda;
- Your Excellencies **IGAD Foreign Ministers;**
- Your Excellencies **Ambassadors;**
- Distinguished **IGAD Partners;**
- Ladies and Gentlemen,
- All Protocols Observed,

**Good morning,**

I am privileged on behalf of the secretariat to welcome you to the **39<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Assembly of IGAD Heads of State and Government.**

I want to start by thanking Your Excellencies for setting aside the time in your demanding schedules and **travelling to the vibrant city of Nairobi, one of our regional diplomatic hubs in order to hold this meeting in person.**

**Excellencies,**

**I am overwhelmed to receive Your Excellencies as the leadership of our region together once again after 18 months** since our last summit meeting. I thank Your Excellencies for your unwavering dedication to the cause of our regional organisation.

Although we have experienced different challenges in convening due to emerging priorities within our member states and the impact of evolving situations from other parts of the world, **I am encouraged that nevertheless, we have continued to talk to each other as one family that is inseparably connected and we have continued acting in the best interests of our people.**

Now **we come together to address the challenges that are bigger than each of us individually,** as well as grasp the opportunities that are of mutual benefit to us all.

**This summit meeting is an unmistakable sign of our solidarity and immensely improves the standing of our organisation. It also sends a clear message to the region and international community that leadership is seized of the pressing matters in the region.**

Let me at this juncture, thank our chair H.E. Gen. Burhan Al-Fattah and our host, H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta who have **been instrumental in bringing us together and for hosting this meeting at this very important time.**

I also take this opportunity to **congratulate H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on his election as the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia for the democratic and peaceful transfer of power.** It is further evidence of the positive transformation of our region.

**We are confident that this gathering of your excellencies is an opportunity for the region to benefit immensely from your insight and wisdom** as we sit to discuss matters of common concern to our people.

In the course of this meeting, **the secretariat through my office will be tabling 2 reports for your consideration,**

The **first report will focus on the Peace and Security Situation in the region**, with particular emphasis on the drivers of instability including; conflict, terrorism and violent extremism, proliferation of illicit arms and illegal weapons, as well as illegal migration and human trafficking and others.

**The second report highlights the natural disasters that are in our region** and that are in their own way, further contributing to regional fragility and instability.

At the forefront of our thoughts is the very **dire drought situation and the famine conditions it has triggered.**

This drought severely threatens the lives of our brothers and sisters across the region, threatening livelihoods and livestock as well as destroying the natural heritage we share through wildlife and vegetation.

We shall also **review the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our states and societies**, especially the struggle for our economies to recover amidst a resurgence of this global health crisis.

**Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen;**

It is my fervent hope that **today also marks a turning point for IGAD as we go back to business as usual with regularly scheduled meetings of the policy organs** and deeper engagement and participation of the leadership in the affairs of IGAD.

With the backing of our Member States, IGAD has benefited from the support of many partners across the world who are firm believers in multilateralism.

The bold steps that you have all taken to always bring us together have **won the confidence of the international community and mobilised extraordinary levels of political and material support** from our international partners, many of whom are here with us today.

I therefore take this opportunity to thank all our partners who have stood with IGAD through these difficult times and we say a **warm and sincere “Thank You” for your support.**

**Excellencies,**

As I come to the conclusion of my remarks Excellencies, once again, the region seeks your wisdom and **looks to your leadership to systematically deliberate upon the issues in our agenda for discussion and chart the way forward for the region.**

I am confident that the closed session that will be held immediately hereafter, **will be a forum in which we shall continue the tradition of originating amicable and effective solutions to the challenges affecting our region.**

**Finally, Excellencies,**

**I underscore our responsibility as stewards to ensure that our shared aspiration of peace, prosperity and regional integration is delivered intact to our future generations.**

It with this solemn duty in mind that **IGAD has embarked on establishing a leadership academy that will be hosted here in the Republic of Kenya** and we are **most grateful to H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta for accepting to serve as its patron.**

I now close my remarks with the same appeal I have made in all our meetings. **IGAD is as strong as the support it gets from its Member States and *vice versa*.**

In order to continue effectively serving the interests of our people in this region, **the Secretariat respectfully calls for the all our Member States to tangibly demonstrate your full political and material support** for our organisation.

**Your support as our leaders is what we truly need to translate the decisions that shall be made here in this room, into achievable actions** for the benefit of the region.

**With this, I look forward to our fruitful deliberations** on these important issues and **I thank you all for your kind attention.**