



**WELCOME STATEMENT**  
**H.E. Workneh Gebeyehu**  
**IGAD Executive Secretary**

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**41<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Assembly of IGAD Heads of State and  
Government**

**Republic of Djibouti**

**Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

- Your Excellency, **Ismail Omar Guelleh**, President of the Republic of Djibouti, Chair and Host of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Member of the IGAD Quartet Group of Countries;
- Your Excellency, **Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali**, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Member of the IGAD Quartet Group of Countries;
- Your Excellency, **Dr. William Samoei Ruto**, President of the Republic of Kenya and Chair of the IGAD Quartet Group of Countries;
- Your Excellency, **Hassan Sheikh Mohamud**, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia;
- Your Excellency, **Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman al-Burhan**, President of the Transitional Sovereignty Council of the Republic of Sudan;
- Amb. **James Morgan**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, representing H.E. Salva Kiir, President of the Republic of South Sudan and Member of the IGAD Quartet Group of Countries;
- Hon. **Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja**, Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs representing H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda.



- Your Excellency, **Moussa Faki Mohammed**, Chairperson of the African Union Commission;
- Your Excellency, **Ramtane Lamamra**, the UN Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for the Republic of Sudan;
- Amb. **Faisal bin Sultan Al-Qabbani**, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Republic of Djibouti;
- Amb. **Mike Hammer**, United States Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa;
- Amb. **Sylvie Tadesse**, Head of the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Djibouti;
- **Esteemed delegates;**
- **Distinguished guests;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**
- **All protocols observed.**

It is with **great honour and a deep sense of responsibility** that as the Executive Secretary of IGAD, I **welcome Your Excellencies to this 41<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Assembly of IGAD Heads of State and Government.**

As we convene in unity and solidarity in support of our IGAD family members in the Republic of Sudan, **the challenges they are facing demand our collective wisdom, commitment, and concerted efforts.**

**Our region stands at a critical juncture, with the ongoing conflict in Sudan casting a shadow over our aspirations of a peaceful and prosperous Greater Horn of Africa.**

Today, I wish to draw your attention, with cautious optimism to the recent partial agreement reached during the Jeddah talks, which made **a significant step forward in settling the issue of humanitarian access.**



This agreement, while commendable, now requires your leadership, our urgent attention and effective implementation to alleviate the immense suffering endured by the Sudanese people.

**Our fellow citizens in the Republic of Sudan continue bearing the brunt of this protracted conflict,** and it is our moral duty to expedite the implementation of the partial resolutions of the Jeddah agreement which has been co-facilitated by IGAD under your leadership, and our partners, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the USA.

**The agreement on humanitarian access is a lifeline for urgently needed assistance to reach those in desperate need,** and we must ensure that the promises made are translated into tangible relief on the ground.

IGAD is committed to fostering peace and stability under the leadership of our Chair and yourselves, **I appeal to all Your Excellencies to mobilise full political and diplomatic support, regionally, continentally and globally** for IGAD as your organisation not only to **assert ourselves as peace-makers** in our region overall, but **also to responsibly and specifically discharge our critical role in delivering a peaceful resolution to the hostilities in Sudan.**

**Peaceful and respectful dialogue remains the cornerstone of our approach,** and it is through sustained efforts in this direction that we can pave the way for lasting peace.

**We must insist on the immediate establishment of a ceasefire agreement, silencing the guns that have wreaked havoc on the lives of innocent civilians,** our brothers and Sisters in the Republic of Sudan.



**The IGAD family must stand united in its determination to bring about a cessation of hostilities, allowing for the space and conditions necessary for a comprehensive and inclusive dialogue.**

**Only through dialogue can we address the root causes of the conflict, build trust among the parties involved, and chart a course towards a sustainable peace** that respects the dignity and rights of all Sudanese people.

As I conclude, **I extend my heartfelt gratitude to you, our IGAD Heads of State and Government for dedicating your valuable time and attention to this critical matter at hand.** Your presence here underscores the unwavering commitment of our IGAD family to the principles of solidarity and collaboration.

Last but not least, I convey my **deepest appreciation on behalf of the IGAD Secretariat and the people of our region** to our Chair H.E. President **Ismail Omar Guelleh**, and the people of the Republic of Djibouti for **graciously** and **generously** hosting this very important Summit meeting.

Together, **let us work tirelessly to bring hope and alleviate the agony of the Sudanese people** and reaffirm our shared vision of a peaceful and prosperous Greater Horn of Africa region.

**Thank you very much.**