

ADDRESS BY GENERAL (RTD) LAZARO SUMBEIYWO, CBS, CHIEF GUEST DURING THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE GLOBAL CENTRE FOR POLICY AND STRATEGY (GLOCEPS) CONFERENCE ON REGIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AT THE MAY 25TH 2022, SERENA HOTEL, NAIROBI

Brigadier (Rtd), Dr Robert G. Kabage, PhD, EBS, The Executive Director, GLOCEPS,

Rtd (IG) Mr. Joseph Boinnet

GLOCEPS Board Member,

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and Heads of Missions present,

GLOCEPS Staff,

Presenters and Expert Discussants,

Distinguished guests,

Conference participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

It is indeed an honour to have been invited to deliver the closing address of this Conference, Allow me to thank the Executive Team at GLOCEPS for their consideration, For the past two days, the Conference has deliberated on changing peace and security dynamics in the region, I have been privileged to listen to the five key themes of the Conference, The Conference has deliberated on varied peace and security dynamics in the Eastern Africa region, Indeed, the region is characterized by intra-state conflicts, fragile peace environments, and human security threats such as drought, locust infestation and related effects of climate change, the problem of refugees,

internal displacement and violent extremism. Peace remains a prized possession that all humanity must collectively pursue,

Kenya and indeed regional organizations such as IGAD and the East African Community (EAC), remain committed to engaging in diplomacy, regional cooperation and mounting peace interventions for state stabilization in our region, This Conference is relevant in the context of reflecting Agenda 2063, the continental blueprint, alongside the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aspirations for peace, security, and stability.

In my closing address, I would like to draw on my own experiences in the Sudan Peace Process and offer some reflections aligned to conflict management in the region, I shall rely on our experiences of mediating the Sudanese peace process that culminated with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. One of the outcomes of the CPA was the independence of South Sudan, I will spare you the details, and instead highlights some lessons that would be relevant to this conference,

One is that peace processes are long-term, and therefore patience and resilience are important. In the Sudan peace process, our mediation under the auspices of IGAD, appreciated that peace processes are long-term and gradual, Moreover, it requires clear framing of issues to be discussed beforehand. The latter is a good mediation model. The Declaration of Principles (DOPs); the diagnosis of the conflict.

Second, the ability to win the trust of multiple conflict actors is critical in the mediation process, There is a need to build synergies and partnerships with multiple local, regional, and international partners for technical and financial support, The new and emerging conflict dynamics that occur during negotiations necessitate an honest demonstration of trust, This is due to the competing interests which include geopolitical influences; and which come with the acceptability of non-partisan mediation.

Third, mediation requires both logistics and technical expertise and indeed the contribution of think tanks and academic experts.

Fourth, mediation needs to also consider the aftermath. When we consider the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA 2005) that led to the birth of South Sudan, we notice that we did not put in place measures that would guide the young State to actualize the fruits of independence, We were not successful in the South Sudan peace process in Addis Ababa because the Mediation team was not on the same page, Regretfully, the current status of the implementation of the Revitalised Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) continues to experience delays,

As a way forward, let me reflect on strategies that think tanks like GLOCEPS, research institutes, academics, and policymakers can invest in the pursuit of global peace and prosperity with a focus on the Eastern Africa region.

The following are my thoughts in line with that pursuit.

1. We need to appreciate the value of academic and applied research in order to unravel the root causes and changing conflicts dynamics in the region, For the past two days, we have deliberated on several peace and conflict dynamics in the region, These include the Tigray crisis, the Somali state stabilization process, strengthening peace support operations, inclusive politics, and democratization challenges, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of Women in Peace and Security and Youth in Peace and Security. These are the biggest losers in conflict situations, The importance of research in this scenario cannot be understated, as it is critical in arriving at a fair assessment of conflict situations before offering conflict management interventions,
2. We need to recognize the significance of documentation, It is important every so often to document our peace-building or state stabilization interventions for the sake of our history and our future generations. These days, there are calls to decolonize knowledge and therefore the need for African-centric debates and perspectives on what works and does not work in peace stabilization interventions, Given the academic and the policy expertise in the room, there is a need to archive our multiple knowledge and contribute to scholarly and policy debates on building peace in our region,
3. We need to reflect through a comparative lens on some of the good practices of peacebuilding and stabilization interventions drawing from local, regional, and global experiences, These could be in the form of seminars, academic conferences, and publications.

Let me conclude once again by thanking the Executive Director GLOCEPS and his team for putting together such an intellectually engaging conference, I hope the insights gained here shall be used for policy, and opening new research frontiers in the peace and security frameworks.

With these few remarks, I wish to now officially close this Conference.

May God bless you

Asanteni Sana