



**THE GLOBAL CENTRE FOR POLICY AND STRATEGY DIRECTOR'S
ADDRESS BY BRIG (RTD) ROBERT KABAGE, EBS, AT THE
GLOCEPS REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON PEACE AND SECURITY
IN EASTERN AFRICA, 24TH MAY 2021, SERENA HOTEL, NAIROBI**

Our Chief Guest, Amb. Eng Maalim Mahboub, CBS, OGW,
Lt. Gen. (Rtd) Lazaro Sumbeiywo Sir,
Amb Designate Maj Gen (Rtd) George Owinow,
The Commissioner-General Prisons, Brig (Rtd) John Kibaso Warioba,
Your excellencies, ambassadors and heads of missions present,
Heads of partner institutions present,
Our Distinguished Invited Guests,
Our Board member present, Dr Nicholas Ondoro,
The GLOCEPS team, and our Non-Resident Fellows,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

I wish to take this opportunity to welcome our guests from Kenya to Serena Hotel; and our guests from outside the country, to Nairobi, Kenya. I also welcome you all to our conference on Regional Peace and Security in Eastern Africa focusing on the Future of state stability and development.

As a Centre, we are delighted that in this gathering we have diplomatic representatives, like-minded organizations, subject matter experts,

highly experienced moderators and presenters from across the continent. They have spared their precious time to join us today. We do not take it for granted. To you all, once again, on behalf of the GLOCEPS fraternity, I say thank you for honouring our invitations.

Allow me from the onset to briefly acquaint you with The Global Centre for Policy and Strategy (GLOCEPS). We are a fairly new Think Tank that is based in Nairobi. We were founded in 2020, with an overarching vision of becoming a leading global centre of excellence in action research, policy influence and strategy formulation. We have since grown into a pioneer institution of excellence that provides a strategic link between experience and inter-disciplinary research, policy formulation and action.

Our activities are underpinned by five pillars; the Defence and Security pillar, the Diplomacy and Foreign Policy Pillar, the Development Pillar, Public Policy, Ethics and Governance Pillar and the Strategic interests and Transnational Crimes pillar. Through this, we have managed to accomplish many milestones within the short time of our existence. A few months after our establishment, we were able to organize an expert workshop on Global Hydro Governance and Blue Potential Prospects; Impediments and Strategic Priorities. In early 2021, we officially commissioned the Centre and also launched our flagship bulletin, **The Influential Bulletin**. These copies are available on the display desk. We have since organized several activities including the following:

1. Experts workshop on Promoting Kenya's Strategic Interests on the Domestic and International Stances in Mar 2021,
2. Launch of the 2nd issue of **The Influential Bulletin** in May 2021,

3. Experts Workshop on Threats and Opportunities in Kenya's March to Vision 2030, among many other activities.

All these have been made possible by the diversity of expertise we have at the Center. GLOCEPS combines seasoned public policy experts and researchers with veteran practitioners and experienced academicians. This success is further attributed to the various partnerships that we have managed to establish with like-minded institutions, experts and practitioners like yourselves. We thus value your partnerships and this is in part one of the main reasons for inviting you here today.

In this regard, I wish to acknowledge and appreciate a few like-minded regional and national institutions that we collaborate with and are represented in the room. They include;

1. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) based in Addis Ababa, represented by Mr Ochanda,
2. The African Union Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), based in Algeria, represented by Mr Elias Benyu,
3. The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), from South Africa, represented by Ms Matambo,
4. The Institute for Strategic Studies(ISS) from South Africa, represented by Dr Okumu and
5. The African Peace Support Trainers Association (APSTA), based in Cameroon, who are following us virtually and will make an expert commentary in one of the sessions later today.

At the national level, we have The Horn Institute, the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA), the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF), the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) Kenya, the Partnership for African

Social and Governance Research (PASGR), the International Peace Support Training Centre(IPSTC), Tetra-Tech International, and the National Defence University Kenya, among others. To you all, we say Asante Sana for gracing our inaugural conference.

Turning to the conference itself, I wish to emphasize that this is our inaugural conference and a key milestone in our history. It could have taken place earlier but its planning was also affected by the COVID-19 menace. It is a two-day event designed to broadly address regional peace and security dynamics in Eastern Africa. It particularly focuses on aspects that impact the future of state stability and development in the region. Its setting was premised on the fact that we, as Eastern Africans, cannot partake in global prosperity, if we are yet to achieve peace and stability in our region.

And indeed...you are aware that there are a lot of unsettling conflict situations in our region that are calling for attention....the state fragility in Somalia; Ethiopia with the Tigary crisis; South Sudan and Eritrea; the recurrent terror threat in Somalia, Uganda and Kenya; and the rebel groups causing havoc in the Democratic Republic of Congo such as the Allied Democratic Forces(ADF), are also an issue of concern. Other internally and externally induced conflicts in our region that need to be addressed include the highly contested elections in Kenya; the clamour for democratic space in Uganda and Rwanda; the demand for constitutional change in Tanzania; and the maritime security concerns in the Indian Ocean. All these are impediments to the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs) and the African Union Development Blue Print-Agenda 2063.

These issues and many more stirred our concern and informed the decision to organize this conference. We grouped the issues into five sub-themes. These include Governance dynamics, Geopolitical interests, Regional Economic integration in the age of trade agreements, Conflict dynamics and Transnational organized crimes. We hence decided to use African-centric seasoned experts, diplomats, peace and security practitioners, academics, analysts, and policymakers with knowledge, and understanding of regional dynamics to use this platform; to interrogate them and provide solutions to some of the challenges, in line with the mantra of finding "African Solutions to African problems".

So, ladies and gentlemen, the outcomes of this conference will assist GLOCEPS to develop advisory opinions to policymakers across the region and beyond within our mission of contributing to global peace and prosperity. It will further assist us to harvest new ideas that will promote our policy research agenda, while also enabling us to identify topical issues that we may need to prioritize for further research.

Fellow Participants,

You have your work cut out....but with the experiences and expertise we have in this room, I have no doubt that we are up to the task and we will come up with the best approaches and models capable of sustaining the future of state stability and development in our region....and hence achieve the objectives of this conference. To this end, I wish you fruitful deliberations.

As we embark on the task ahead, allow me to introduce our chief guest this morning, Amb. Eng. Maalim Mahboub. Amb Mahboub is one of our eminent sons and a distinguished practitioner in regional peace and

security, having served as the Executive Secretary of IGAD for over 10 years; from 2008 to 2019. During his tenure, IGAD underwent significant institutional expansion. It was granted an observer status in the United Nations General Assembly; it launched the IGAD Drought Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI); the IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP) and the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE). He also oversaw the IGAD Mediation process for South Sudan (with Gen Sumbeiyu, who is with us here), while contributing to stabilization efforts in Somalia.

He has also served as PS in the office of the President and other ministries here in Kenya, among other senior appointments. Amb Mahboub is currently the Chair of the Council of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT).

Please join me in welcoming, His Excellency, Amb Mahboub, to give the keynote address and officially open this conference. Your Excellency.