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**STATEMENT ON THE TRIPARTITE TALKS CURRENTLY BEING HELD IN
WASHINGTON ON THE PALESTINIAN ISRAELI PEACE PROCESS**

We, Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, meeting at the Thirty-sixth Ordinary Session of our Assembly in Lome, Togo from 10 – 12 July, 2000 have taken note of the important tripartite meeting currently being held in the United States, to put the Middle East peace process back on track,

We welcome the participation of Chairman Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister Barak in these direct talks and hope that their efforts will create the environment for success;

In this connection, we the Heads of State and Government express the hope that the talks will lead to a comprehensive Agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis covering all pending issues in particular, Jerusalem and the refugees,

We therefore call upon the three leaders to spare no effort in bringing the talks to a successful conclusion and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and the realization of the right to self-determination by the Palestinians and the establishment of their own state in Palestine,

We wish to also express our gratitude to President Bill Clinton in particular, for his abiding interest in these talks and for showing courage and leadership at this critical junction in the Middle East peace process.

Lome, Togo

11 July, 2000

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