



AFRICA CAPABLE OF FORMING ITS UNION: OAU CHIEF

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ADDIS ABABA, Mar 4, 2002 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- Amara Essy, Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), said here on Monday that Africa has the capacity to form a union that would enable it to tackle its problems.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the 3rd African Development Forum, Essy said that a lot of measures have been taken to ensure that Africa is truly prepared to move towards regional integration.

The African Union is of capital importance for Africa's development, Essy said, adding that economic integration constitutes the greatest share of regional integration.

The forum, which will run until March 8, has gathered a wide spectrum of stakeholders including governments, parliaments, business, finance, labor, civil society, international organizations and the Diaspora.

Experts from different parts of the world and diplomatic envoys in Ethiopia also attended the forum.

"I lay trust in all the stakeholders that have gathered here, and you all have a task to accomplish to realize the African Union, " Essy was quoted as saying by the Ethiopian News Agency.

At the same function, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, K.Y. Amoako said the consensus statement that would emerge from the forum would be brought to the attention of the upcoming OAU Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and would be widely circulated.

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