

# The Weekly Review

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**OUR MAN  
FOR U.N.  
SECRETARY  
GENERAL**



Tanzania's Salim Salim

# The Weekly Review

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October 23, 1981

## A Letter from the Editor

NEXT week the United Nations security council will be meeting to consider the issue of the election of a secretary general for the organisation when the term of Dr. Kurt Waldheim expires at the end of this year. Waldheim, who has served two five-year terms, has offered himself for a third term. There is no doubt that he has been a very able secretary general. He has in particular shown great sympathy for the plight of the poor nations and worked tirelessly for international peace and understanding. Purely from a personal point of view he is an immensely qualified person to continue as secretary general. But there are other considerations which must be taken into account in choosing a secretary general this year. Since the UN was established in 1946, no African has served as secretary general of the organisation. Ten or twenty years ago, this might have been understandable. African nations were too preoccupied with internal affairs to put up competent candidates for international jobs. The situation has changed in the last decade. Africa provides the biggest single regional bloc of nations at any international gathering. Africans have involved themselves in international service in virtually every aspect of UN work. In the person of Mr. Salim Salim of Tanzania, who is challenging Waldheim for the job of secretary general of the UN, Africa has a dynamic and competent candidate who has the support of the OAU, and the non-aligned nations (including Opec countries) who constitute nearly two-thirds of the membership of the UN. As in all international affairs, Africa's turn has been slow in coming but it has come, and Africa expects the security council to recognise the will of the majority in this matter.



Hilary Ng'weno  
Editor in Chief

## The Weekly Review

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## LETTERS

**Squatters**

SIR — No one who values democratic rights can fail to be concerned about the repressive action taken by the Embu district administration police in Mwea to meet the problem of squatters a few weeks ago (WR October 16). The entire machinery of the administration police was brought into play as if to meet a state of tribal war. Already there is mounting discontent among the squatters over the hardships they have to face in consequence of the administration policies. And discontent must lead, ultimately, to hostility especially when no solution to the problems of the squatters can be found within a capitalistic framework. What is at stake here is not only the future of the squatters, but the whole question of the future of democracy in this country. The policy of the government and its attitude to squatters is inevitably linked with the question of fundamental rights and freedom of every citizen of this country. The government's noble intentions and policies of

trying to solve the squatters problem is being jeopardised by some hungry land grabbers.

*Kenny Matampash Meritey  
Lokitokitok*

SIR — It was unfortunate that the district commissioner issued orders that resulted in the burning of homes belonging to squatters in Gathegi sub-location, Mwea District. Although the DC says he acted because the squatters had defied an eviction order he should realise that forceful eviction is not a lasting solution.

*Anyona Gesure  
Kisi*

**Moi's 3rd anniversary**

SIR — Your cover story (WR October 9) was a revealing comment on the politico-economic reality in the country. We can only hope that our leaders will not treat this as just another commentary from a "disgruntled element who does not want peace." It is the wish of every Kenyan that the "dark

spots" which have led to failures in our political and economic performances be regarded as lessons which can help us face the future with optimism. This can only be done if we allow healthy criticism which will help us refrain from repeating our mistakes.

*Odera Outa  
Londiani*

**Weco**

SIR — The alleged maladministration and embezzlement of funds at Weco which climaxed recently in the closure of the college (WR October 9), comes as a disappointment to the people of Western Province whose cooking pots and babies' towels had earlier been auctioned to raise funds to build the college on a *harambee* basis. Such situations could be minimised if the people in authority realised that bosses can also go wrong sometimes, approached them accordingly. Over-protection of the heads of institutions where police riot squads are always hastily summoned to solve even trivial domestic misunderstandings

may only encourage the heads to abuse their offices.

*Masumbuko wa Macheso  
Bungoma*

**Church leaders**

SIR — Recently, Ugandan church leaders confronted President Milton Obote over the escalating insecurity in Uganda. (WR October 9). The action by those religious leaders is in itself a great challenge to religious leaders in other countries like Kenya, where churches see their mission in purely cultic terms and confine themselves to distributing sacraments as though they were magical short-cuts to change. They prefer to keep silent rather than speak out on sensitive issues. The leaders' action also challenges religious leaders in Kenya who find it impossible to take a common stand on many social issues.

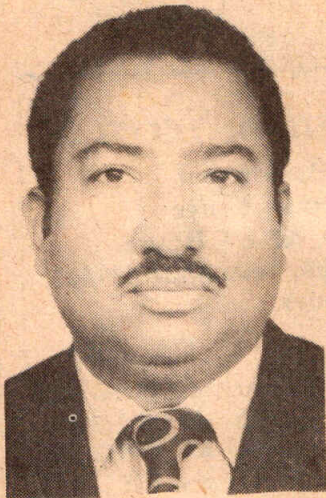
*Ndichu wa Alois  
Thika*

**MP's salaries**

SIR — Congratulations to our MPs for awarding themselves a pay rise (WR October 9). The responsibilities of MPs

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The election of the MP for Lamu East, Mr Abubakar Madhubuti is nullified by the High Court of Kenya

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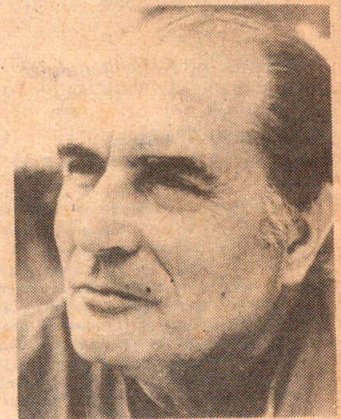
Cover story: Tanzania's foreign minister, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, who has been endorsed by two-thirds of the members of the United Nations for the post of secretary-general, is confident of winning on a "bridge-builder" platform.

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King Hassan of Morocco is indignant over the shooting down of his jet-fighters by Soviet-made anti-aircraft missiles, a sign that the Western Sahara conflict is rapidly becoming internationalised.

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As 22 nations meet in Cancun, Mexico for the north-south summit, French President Francois Mitterrand calls on rich nations to help the poor, differing with the anticipated US position.

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## AFRICA

# Salim: Third World's Man for UN Hot Seat

IN New York early next week, the United Nations will start an electoral exercise that will probably give Africa its first UN secretary-general. Tanzania's foreign minister, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Africa's candidate for the post, is up against the incumbent, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, the former Austrian foreign minister who is out for an unprecedented third five-year term.

Salim's candidature got its first major boost when it was unanimously endorsed by the African heads of state and government at their annual meeting in Nairobi this year. It was subsequently endorsed by the Arab League and the non-aligned movement. The three organisations make up two-thirds of the 154-member UN. They apparently feel it is time a secretary-general came once again from the third world. That would not only mean that there would be a man at the highest UN office who fully appreciates the aspirations and concerns of the third world, but it could create a tradition in which the office alternates between the developing and developed worlds.

The first third world man to become UN secretary-general was Mr. U Thant from Burma, who held the office for two terms between 1961 and 1971, when Waldheim took over. Thant had succeeded Scandinavian Dag Hammarskjöld who held the office between 1953 and 1961 when he died in a plane crash while enroute to Zaire, then the Congo. Before Hammarskjöld was Mr. Trygve Lie, also from the west.

Although the UN had been initially meant to work for peace mainly in Europe, the theatre of crisis has long moved into the third world. During Waldheim's 10-year tenure, for instance, all the world's political crises have been in the third world, although a number of them involved big powers. Major ones have been the Vietnam War, Indo-Pakistan War, the Middle East Yom Kippur War, the Angola civil war; Western Sahara conflict, the Rhodesian independence conflict, the Ogaden

War, the Lebanese civil war, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the subsequent Sino-Vietnamese war, Afghanistan, the Gulf War and the Israeli-Iraqi-Syrian crisis. The only major issue involving developed countries has been the arms race, which again has had reverberations in the third world. There has been the third world's clamour for a more equitable international economic order which they hope would help them break the vicious grip of underdevelopment.

The UN secretary-general cannot, on his own, solve the various conflicts, or change the present international economic order. The most he can do is offer his good offices to the conflicting parties for a mediated solution to the conflict. But third world countries seem to feel that even that limited role can be made more or less effective by the vigour and attitude of the person occupying that post. They do not flout

Waldheim's efforts, or his "quiet diplomacy", but they apparently feel the UN secretary-general should take a much higher profile. Addressing the UN General Assembly at the end of September, Salim felt "the UN must become an effective instrument for the promotion of world peace" if it has to win the confidence of people throughout the world.

Obviously, everyone will be asking how Salim would want to approach the job. In an attempt to answer that, Salim told reporters last week he sees the role of the UN secretary-general as that of an international "bridge-builder", and "consensus-molder". In the very troubled world situation today, he told reporters, "the UN has an even greater role to play . . . in reducing tensions, defusing conflicts". This, he said, would have to be done without turning the UN into a "super-government", for any attempts to do that "would be bound to failure".

The outcome of the contest with Waldheim will, however, depend less on his view of how the job should be done. Rather it will be decided on how he is perceived by permanent members of the United Nations security council and their sensitivity to third world concerns.



Salim: the UN is not a super-government

For while the secretary-general is chosen by the UN general assembly on a simple majority, he has to win at least nine of the 15 members of the security council. Any of the council's five permanent members — Great Britain, the United States, France, China and the Soviet Union — could block any candidature with a veto.

The security council vote, observers say, may turn out to be the trickiest stage for Salim. He says he does not see any reason why any super-power should veto his candidature. Actually, no super-power has said it could. But observers feel anything can happen during the secret-balloting.

Nothing in Salim's record need alarm any security council member, he says. He might have, as Tanzania's chief UN delegate for 10 years, sponsored initiatives that ran counter to western initiatives. He had also supported China's admission to the UN. But he did that in furtherance of his country's policies. As security council president in 1976, he had acted contrary to his government's policy, by meeting the then South African UN representative, Mr. Roelof 'Pik' Botha, who is now his country's foreign minister. That is testimony enough that he would "deal with anyone or go anywhere" if it was his duty. Said Salim, "If elected, I will not be an African secretary-general. . . . I will be secretary-general of the United Nations who happens to come from Africa." As such, he stressed, he would act in line with all his obligations under the UN charter, even if it involved dealing with South Africa. Saying he had been type-cast unfairly as a pro-Chinese radical black African activist, Salim declared that he had established good relations with both China and the Soviet Union while at the UN.

The Soviet Union had initially indicated it would support Waldheim, whom it strongly backed in 1971 and 1976. Chief Soviet delegate at the UN, Mr. Oleg Troyanavsky, had reportedly said that "an old shoe fits best". A Cuban official at the UN however, thought Moscow would reconsider its calculations following the endorsement of Salim by the non-aligned movement. China's backing for Salim is assured. Britain was said to be open-minded, though it was earlier thought to be leaning towards Waldheim. The United States was still considering whom to support, though it is the least sensitive to third world positions. Even France

withheld any public sign of its position, although Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere is thought to have sought its support when he visited Paris in September.

How the big powers vote will depend mainly on what kind of man they want in the UN's chief office. But the unanimous third world support given to the 39-year-old African would not be without significance. And if Salim can make it past the security council, the US\$158,000 a-year job will be his for the taking, Africa will be a proud family, and the non-aligned movement will be exalting. ■

#### WESTERN SAHARA

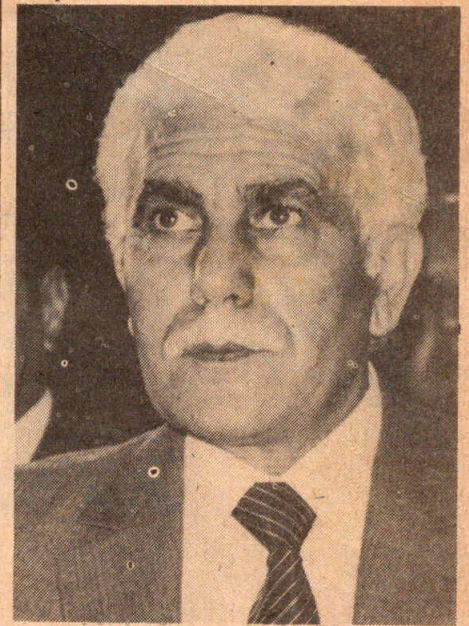
### Prompt Remonstrance

#### King Hassan is miffed

POLISARIO fighters, waging war on Morocco in Western Sahara, had on a number of past occasions brought down sophisticated French and American-built Moroccan jet-fighters reportedly with Sam-7 missiles. When they downed two more French-built Mirage jet fighters and, for the first time, US-built C-130 Hercules military transport last Tuesday, Moroccan King Hassan II could not hold back his indignation. He promptly dispatched a note to international organisations and governments involved in the search for a solution to the Saharan issue,



*Hassan: ultra-sophisticated missiles*



*Benjedid: pledge broken*

reporting the arrival on the battlefield of ultra-sophisticated anti-aircraft missiles and dozens of tracked military vehicles by the Sahrawi, who attacked the Moroccan-held Saharan town of Guelta Zemmour.

The attack, the second on the town this year, is the first in the territory since the two sides came to Nairobi for the meeting of the OAU's implementation committee to work out the modalities for a referendum and ceasefire. The machinery and conditions for a ceasefire were agreed on, but Morocco refused to sit down with the Polisario to work out a ceasefire agreement.

Hassan was not indignant at Polisario's rupture of an unofficial truce. Rather it was over what it suspected to be foreign involvement in the attack. His government said it had evidence that its planes had been shot down by Soviet-made Sam-6 anti-aircraft missiles and believed such sophisticated weaponry could not have been fired by African hands. Speaking at an emergency session of parliament, Prime Minister Maati Bouabid said that the latest developments demonstrated that the battle was "no longer an African regional problem", neither the "alleged right to self-determination of the so-called Sahrawi people". It was rather the "suppression of what now exists in this part of Africa to replace it by something foreign to our civilisation and our culture". But neither the king, nor the premier could put a name to the nationality of the technicians they suspected, though it was clear they were