

Don't expect miracles, says OAU secretary-general

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CAIRO, June 23 (AFP) - Organisation of African Unity (OAU) secretary-general Salim Ahmed Salim admitted that the pan-African body had shortcomings Wednesday, but said people expected too much.

"Don't expect miracles from this organisation," Salim told reporters after a meeting of OAU foreign ministers here to prepare next week's African summit adopted proposals for the OAU to strengthen its peace-keeping role.

Salim said the OAU, celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, had helped to mediate between Rwanda's government and its rebel foes, who he said were expected to sign a peace agreement Thursday in the Tanzanian town of Arusha.

"For the first time we have had an operation that has succeeded," Salim said, referring to the deployment of 55 OAU ceasefire observers in Rwanda.

But he admitted that the United

Nations would have to step in to monitor the peace accord.

"A much larger force will be required," Salim said, adding that only the U.N. had the resources to deploy the several hundred troops that would be needed.

"It doesn't require courage to understand one's own limitations," said Salim, seen as the architect of the OAU's new "mechanism for conflict resolution".

He said the adoption of the peace-keeping proposals marked a "major breakthrough," but added that it "will require resources."

With about 75 percent of member states' contributions unpaid, Salim admitted that the OAU's lack of funds was a "perennial problem."

But he stressed that the U.N. and other international organisations suffered the same constraint, adding: "If I were very despondent I would get out of this business."

The OAU's detractors say it has been a toothless organisation for the past three decades, hamstrung by its refusal to meddle in member states' internal affairs.

the end of the Cold War and the new mechanism for conflict resolution," said a western diplomat familiar with Africa.

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"That attitude has changed with