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PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE PUBLICATION OF THE FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN MADAGASCAR

The AU warns the Malagasy political actors tempted to undermine the electoral process against any irresponsible acts

Addis Ababa, 21 August 2013: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, welcomes the publication, today, by the Malagasy Special Electoral Court (CES), of the final list of candidates for the presidential election that would mark the restoration of constitutional order and the conclusion of the process to end the crisis. Taking place against the background of the CES decisions of 14 and 17 August 2013 concerning, respectively, the voluntary withdrawal of a candidate from the election and the removal from the list of candidates of other personalities who do not meet the conditions stipulated by the relevant Malagasy texts and the demands of Madagascar international partners, the publication of the final list of candidates for the presidential election marks a crucial step in the efforts to end the crisis.

The Chairperson of the Commission extends the AU's full support to the decisions taken by the CES, which demonstrate its professionalism and enhance its credibility. She expresses the AU's deep appreciation to those personalities who accepted the decisions of the CES, demonstrating, in so doing, a sense of responsibility and commitment to the rule of law. She reiterates the AU's gratitude to the President of the Transition, Andry Rajoelina, for the high sense of responsibility he has shown so remarkably, as well as for his commitment to successfully and impartially conclude the transition period.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates the AU's urgent appeal to all the Malagasy political and social stakeholders to contribute positively to the ongoing process for the benefit of their people who have already endured untold suffering as a result of the political crisis facing Madagascar for several years. She urges them to work towards national reconciliation in order to promote lasting peace and democracy in their country.

The Chairperson of the Commission strongly warns all those who may be tempted, in pursuit of narrow interests, to hinder the ongoing efforts and seek to challenge the decisions taken by the CES, notably by undermining public order, against all such reprehensible acts. In this regard, she underlines the determination of the AU, working with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and with the support of the international partners operating within the International Contact Group on Madagascar (ICG-M), to impose sanctions, including travel ban and asset freeze, as well as other appropriate measures, against all those concerned. The Commission

will continue to closely monitor the evolution of the situation in order to keep the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) constantly informed of developments on the ground and enable it to take appropriate decisions.

In view of the positive developments recorded in the past few days, and on the basis of the final list of candidates as determined by the CES, the Chairperson of the Commission encourages the Independent National Electoral Commission of the Transition (CENI-T), in consultation with the United Nations, to rapidly set the new dates for the presidential and legislative elections. She urges the international partners of Madagascar to immediately resume their financial, logistical and technical support to the ongoing process in order to facilitate the holding of free, transparent, fair and credible elections.

The Commission, which is making appropriate arrangements for the deployment of election observers as soon as possible, calls on all multilateral and bilateral partners to rapidly take similar steps.