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### **THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION OF THE AFRICAN UNION CONCLUDES A ONE DAY VISIT TO JUBA**

**Addis Ababa, 20 January 2014:** The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr Nkozasana Dlamini Zuma, concluded today, 20 January 2014, a one day official visit to Juba, the capital of the Republic of South Sudan.

During her visit, the Chairperson met with H.E. Salvar Kiir Mayardit, President of the Republic of South Sudan, as well as with the detainees at their detention venue.

In her remarks to both parties, the Chairperson insisted on the urgency for them to sign an agreement on the cessation of hostilities, so as to stop the senseless killings taking place in South Sudan and end the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in their country.

Addressing the issue of accountability, the Chairperson explained the decision of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), meeting in Banjul, The Gambia, on 30 December 2013, at the level of Heads of State and Government, requesting her to establish a Commission of Inquiry into the recent events in South Sudan. The Chairperson stressed that the objectives of the Commission of Inquiry will be to address the plight of the victims of human rights violations and assist the Government and people of South Sudan to identify the factors that are needed to strengthen the institutions of their young nation, while providing reconciliation and healing opportunities to its diverse people and ensure sustainable peace.

Although the parties offered different explanations on the root causes of the current crisis, both agreed that the fundamental issue is a political problem within the ruling party, which requires a political rather than a military solution. They also agreed on the urgency of an immediate and unconditional signing of a cessation of hostilities agreement to stop the killing and the suffering of the people of South Sudan. In this regard, the detainees reiterated their position that their release should not be used as a pre-condition for the conclusion of the cessation of hostilities agreement, emphasizing that no condition could morally justify the continued senseless killing of fellow South Sudanese people. Both parties also agreed on the need to address the issue of accountability. In this regard, they supported the establishment of the Commission of Inquiry along the terms described by the Chairperson, and undertook to collaborate with it.

Both parties welcomed the Chairperson's visit and encouraged the AU to continue to work closely with the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), with a view to finding a lasting solution to the ongoing crisis in South Sudan and its underlying causes.