

AFRICAN UNION

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PRESS STATEMENT

THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE LAUNCHING OF THE SPLM INTRA-PARTY DIALOGUE FORUM

Addis Ababa, 6 April 2014: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, welcomes the launching, yesterday, in Addis Ababa, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn of Ethiopia, Chairperson of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Intra-Party Dialogue Forum. She commends the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and the African National Congress (ANC) for having accepted to facilitate the Forum.

The Chairperson of the Commission underlines the importance of this process, which should enable the SPLM leadership to examine in-depth the underlying causes of the crisis facing their party and of the conflict in South Sudan. She urges all the stakeholders to take advantage of the intra-party talks, which are expected to run concurrently with the IGAD-led mediation efforts, to advance the cause of peace, security, stability, reconciliation and good governance in South Sudan.

The Chairperson of the Commission seizes this opportunity to reiterate AU's deep concern at the continued conflict in South Sudan and the untold suffering inflicted on the civilian population. She renews AU's full support to the IGAD mediation, and, once again, appeals to the parties to the conflict to put the interest of their country and people above any other consideration and to extend unreserved cooperation to the team of Special Envoys led by Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin.