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Message of the AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, H.E. Ms. Bineta Diop, on the occasion of the Launch of the African Union Campaign to Restore the Dignity of Women and to Ensure Accountability in South Sudan

As we commemorate the month of October which marks the adoption of the historic United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, I would like to ask the women, men and young people of our beloved continent, Africa, to remember our sisters and brothers in South Sudan, and in other conflict affected parts of Africa, whose bodies are being used and abused and their lives shattered, in unnecessary and unacceptable armed conflicts.

Today, we are launching the campaign to restore the dignity of the Women and Girls of South Sudan. I am joining the voice of H.E. Mme Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission to call for justice and reparations for the women and girls of South Sudan. We must do everything possible we can to give survivors of conflicts their lives and dignity back, and in the same light, punish those who have refused to respect human life, human rights and human values for peace and for social cohesion. Perpetrators should be brought to justice.

Peace necessitates that we not only silence the guns, but also secure women and girls. We are far from it. Across the continent, conflict related sexual and gender based violence continues to challenge the accomplishment of the 2063 vision of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Africa.

For the Women of South Sudan, I would like to state our deepest condemnation for the awful crimes committed by all actors, including armed militias and military forces. South Sudan Leaders have signed up to a number of commitments; they must now demonstrate concrete

actions on these. What we want for South Sudan are Hospitals, not guns. Schools and not bombs. Jobs and not bullets, responsible and accountable leadership, not power-struggles.

I call upon all of us, to join hands and support the women and girls of South Sudan, in their quest for peace, justice and accountability.

I thank you,