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African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan Convenes a Summit Meeting on Sudan

PRESS STATEMENT

Addis Ababa, 11 June 2011: The African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for Sudan will convene a Summit Meeting on Sudan, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 12-13 June, focusing on immediate issues between north and south Sudan.

President Omar Hassan al Bashir and First Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit will both participate. President Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the Panel, will preside along with Panel members President Abdusalami Abubakar and President Pierre Buyoya. The Chairperson of IGAD, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, will also participate.

The Summit will focus upon key issues facing Sudan at this historic juncture, just four weeks before the independence of South Sudan. High on the agenda is the issue of Abyei, including the withdrawal of armed forces from the area and the dispatch of an African-led international mission to provide security, the creation of conditions for the speedy return of displaced people and protection of civilians, as well as steps towards a final settlement of the status of the area.

Other items on the agenda for the Summit include the speedy establishment of mechanisms for joint security management between north and south, and the forthcoming round of negotiations on post-secession economic arrangements.

Also on 12-13 June, the Panel will convene a High Level Meeting of representatives of the Government of Sudan and leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement from the "two areas" of Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. This High Level Meeting will focus on the political and security challenges of the two areas, including the immediate challenge of an end to the armed conflict that has recently erupted in Southern Kordofan State.