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**AFRICAN UNION HIGH LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION PANEL
PRESS STATEMENT**

Addis Ababa, 13 March 2012: Following negotiations facilitated by the African Union High Level Panel (AUHIP), the Government of South Sudan and the Government of the Sudan have today initialled two agreements on the status of nationals of each State and the demarcation of their common boundary.

The initialled agreements were concluded in the context of a spirit of cooperation and partnership which was discussed and agreed by the parties. The parties have renewed their commitment to continue negotiations in good faith and to arrive at agreements which will ensure the economic, political and security viability of both states.

The initialled agreements will be signed by Presidents President Salva Kiir Mayardit of the Republic of South Sudan and Omar al-Bashir of the Republic of Sudan at a Summit of the two leaders to be held in the South Sudan capital of Juba in the very near future.

Delegations from both Governments will meet immediately to prepare the Summit. The AUHIP will also travel to both capitals to meet with the two Presidents to discuss the Summit preparatory process.

Under the initialled agreement on nationality, nationals of each State will now enjoy in the other State the following freedoms: freedom of residence; freedom of movement; freedom to undertake economic activity; and, the freedom to acquire and dispose of property.

These freedoms will enable Sudanese and South Sudanese to retain historical connections and thereby contribute to peaceful coexistence and good neighbourliness between the two States. The Parties have also agreed to form a Committee on the Status of Nationals of the Other State and Related Matters. The Committee will also immediately begin work before the Presidents sign the agreements in two weeks' time.

The initialled agreement on the Demarcation of the Boundary and Related Issues provides the basis for commencing the exercise of demarcating what is Africa's longest boundary.

The initialled agreement establishes the key joint institutions to manage and implement the demarcation exercise. These include the Joint Border Commission, a Joint Demarcation Committee and a Joint Technical Team which will be established within weeks of signing the agreement.

Further negotiations on outstanding matters relating to borders will continue under the auspices of the Panel.

The Joint Political and Security Mechanism will also meet before the Presidential Summit to discuss matters of common security concerns and challenges between the two States.

The Parties reviewed the manner in which they have been conducting the negotiations, with a view towards completion of the process. In this context, they agreed that their negotiations should continue in a renewed spirit of partnership for the construction of two viable states.

The Panel remains available to facilitate various negotiations between the two States, on a range of issues relating to security, oil, and other, committed to seeking constructive consensus between on all these matters.