



PRESS RELEASE

THE AU APPEALS FOR RENEWED EFFORTS TO HELP NORMALIZE THE RELATIONS BETWEEN ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA

Addis Ababa, 16 March 2012: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Jean Ping, is deeply concerned by the rising tension between Eritrea and Ethiopia. He appeals to the two countries to exercise restraint so as to prevent further military escalation.

The Chairperson of the Commission recalls that the AU, which facilitated the signing of the Algiers Agreements of June and December 2000, has, in the recent years, through the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government, expressed concern at the continued impasse in the peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia and made pressing calls for renewed African efforts to help the two countries overcome the current difficulties, normalize their relations and lay the foundation for lasting peace and security in the Horn of Africa.

The Chairperson of the Commission reaffirms AU's readiness to assist the two countries overcome the current difficulties and address their underlying causes, through dialogue, and help them normalize their relations, in the context of relevant AU decisions. He calls on them to extend the necessary cooperation in this respect.

The Chairperson of the Commission also recalls that the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government has called for the development of a regional approach to the challenges of peace, security and stability in the Horn of Africa, including the convening of a regional conference on peace, security, stability and development in the Horn of Africa, as envisaged in the Plan of Action adopted by the Special Session of the Assembly of the Union on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts, held on 31st August 2009. He reiterates the continued relevance of this approach and calls for its early implementation in a climate of goodwill and in observance of all the requirements of the principles of international relations governing good-neighborly relations between states.