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PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE FORMAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE AU ROADMAP BY THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN

Addis Ababa, 30 April 2012: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Jean Ping, welcomes the formal acceptance by the Government of the Republic of South Sudan of the Roadmap contained in the communiqué adopted by the 319th meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), held at ministerial level, in Addis Ababa, on 24 April 2012, including the immediate cessation of hostilities with Sudan, the immediate withdrawal of its police personnel from Abyei and the resumption of negotiations.

The Chairperson of the Commission commends the Government of South Sudan for responding promptly and positively to the call made by the PSC. He stresses that this important decision will greatly contribute to the efforts aimed at defusing tension between Sudan and South Sudan and facilitating the resumption, under the auspices of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), of negotiations between the two countries and the early resolution of all outstanding issues in their post-secession relations.

The Chairperson of the Commission, who notes the reaffirmation by some senior Sudanese officials of their country's commitment to cooperate with the AU-led efforts, looks forward to the formal acceptance by the Republic of Sudan of the Roadmap, so that steps can immediately be taken towards its full operationalization.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates AU's determination to ensure the scrupulous implementation of all aspects of the AU Roadmap as contained in the PSC communiqué, and emphasizes the need for the Parties to extend full cooperation to this end, including the urgent convening of a meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM) to address the most pressing security matters. In the meantime, he stresses the need for the Parties to refrain from any action contrary to the letter and spirit of the Roadmap and likely to further complicate the situation on the ground.