



**PRESS RELEASE**

**THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE AGREEMENT ON THE JOINT  
MILITARY OBSERVER COMMITTEE FOR ABYEI**

**Addis Ababa, 7 July 2012:** The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Jean Ping, welcomes the signing of the Terms of Reference of the Joint Military Observer Committee (JMOC) by the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) at its 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, held in Abyei town, on 5 July 2012. He commends the AJOC for this positive development which is consistent with its previous decisions.

The JMOC, made up of equal number of members of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), is a security mechanism mandated to guarantee peace and security for the Abyei residents. In this respect, the JMOC is expected to observe, monitor and report on the deployment of unauthorized forces in the Abyei area. Furthermore, it shall also monitor the prevailing security situation in Abyei area, including free movements of civilians, potential threats to social cohesion and communal clashes, criminal activities and incursions of illegal groups or militia. In its work, the JMOC shall be assisted by Joint Military Observer Teams (JMOTs).

The Chairperson of the Commission wishes to urge the two Parties to diligently establish the Abyei Police Service (APS) and the Inter-Governmental Task Force for Humanitarian Assistance, to support the work of the AJOC. He also wishes to urge both President Omar Hassan al Bashir and President Salva Kiir Mayardit to take the necessary steps towards establishing the Abyei Executive Council and the Abyei Area Administration. Indeed, these bodies are indispensable in creating a conducive atmosphere for peace and security in Abyei.

The Chairperson of the Commission expresses the AU's deep appreciation and continued support for the commendable work being done by the AJOC.