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## Press Release

### THE ELDERS RECEIVED AT THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

#### Former President of Ireland and Former President of Finland met Commissioner Lamamra

**Addis Ababa, 9 July 2012-** Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security, today received a team of Elders, made up of Mrs. Mary Robinson former President of Ireland and Mr. Martti Ahtisaari former President of Finland and Peace Nobel Prize Winner. The purpose of the visit was to discuss the outcome of the team's visit to South Sudan.

The team expressed their appreciation and full support to the AU and the AUHIP on all efforts that have been made before and after the independence of South Sudan, as well as the endeavor by the AUHIP to promote the notion of two viable States. The team valued the resumption of the negotiations between both sides in Addis Ababa under the facilitation of the AUHIP and hailed the renewed spirit of partnership displayed by the two parties.

The team noted the lack of funds to extend humanitarian assistance to affected people in South Sudan, citing UNHCR estimates according to which an amount of 186 million dollars is required for humanitarian assistance out of which only 34 million is available. Currently, only 1.2 million IDPs are catered for out of 4.7 that actually need assistance. Meanwhile, a large number of IDPs are to be relocated out of camps likely to be flooded during this rainy season.

In reply, the Commissioner expressed appreciation for the timely initiative taken by the Elders to visit South Sudan, and highlighted the commitment of the AUHIP, with the collaboration of the negotiating teams of both parties, to resolve the differences and all outstanding issues. Meanwhile, the Commissioner appealed to the international community to remain engaged with North and South Sudan by providing funds for the needed humanitarian assistance and assisting in their development. Commissioner Lamamra also valued the close partnership between AU, IGAD and the UN in fostering peace, cooperation and good neighborly relations between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, stressing that the celebration of the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of South Sudan's independence should be an opportunity to reinforce the resolve to collectively work to achieve these objectives.