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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **AU CHAIRPERSON WELCOMES THE DECLARATION OF A 4-MONTH UNILATERAL CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES BY PRESIDENT OMAR HASSAN EL-BASHIR OF SUDAN**

**Addis Ababa, 20 June 2016:** The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, welcomes the announcement of a unilateral cessation of hostilities by the President of Sudan, Omar el- Bashir, in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan States for a period of 4 months, starting from Saturday 18 June 2016.

The Chairperson welcomes this development and believes that, against the backdrop of a similar gesture made by the armed opposition group for a cessation of hostilities for a period of six months, in April 2016, this truce, if respected by both sides, will not only ease the suffering of the populations in the conflict areas but will also create a conducive environment for advancing the peace process in Sudan. The Chairperson appeals to the rebel movements in the Two Areas and Darfur to take this opportunity to join the Roadmap process facilitated by the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) and signed by the Government of Sudan on 21 March 2016. The signing of the Roadmap by all concerned will allow the parties to resume the negotiations, as soon as possible, and reach agreements on issues that are still outstanding and stalling the achievement of peace and stability in Sudan.

The Chairperson reiterates the continued support of the African Union, through the AUHIP, to the Sudanese stakeholders, and expresses hope that the various Sudan peace processes will be successfully brought to a close sooner than later.

