

## **The African Union welcomes the signing of the implementation Matrix for the Agreements signed between Sudan and South Sudan**

*Addis Ababa, 12 March 2013:* The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, welcomes the signing, in Addis Ababa, in the early hours of 12 March 2013, of the Implementation Matrix for the Agreements between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan.

This Matrix elaborates the modalities for the implementation of the nine Agreements signed by President Omar Hassan al Bashir and President Salva Kiir Mayardit in Addis Ababa, on 27 September 2012. It comes four days after the signing of the Implementation Modalities for Security Arrangements, during the extraordinary meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM) held in Addis Ababa on 8 March 2013. The Implementation Matrix confirms D-Day for the implementation of all the Agreements as 10 March 2013. Among other things, this latest Agreement paves the way for the resumption of oil production and the transit of South Sudan's oil through Sudan.

The Implementation Matrix also includes an agreement on the modalities and timelines for the implementation of the *Agreement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area*, in particular the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration, the Abyei Area Council, and the Abyei Area Police. The Chairperson of the Commission urges Sudan and South Sudan to adhere to the timelines, which are necessary to ensure that the return of displaced persons and the seasonal migration of nomadic groups can continue in a peaceful atmosphere.

The Chairperson also notes with appreciation that both governments have commenced withdrawal of their armed forces from their common border, as stipulated in the Agreement on Security Arrangements signed on 27 September 2012 and agreed in the Implementation Modalities for Security Arrangements signed on 8 March 2013. She stresses that this augurs well for the full normalization of relations between the two countries. The Chairperson of the Commission commends the leadership of the two countries for their commitment, and looks forward to the planned visit of President Al Bashir to Juba, as the next step in cementing mutually cooperative relations between them. The Chairperson of the Commission notes that the Final Status of the Abyei Area and the resolution of the Disputed and Claimed Areas are the only remaining outstanding issues, and expresses the belief that

the positive atmosphere created by the most recent Agreements, and the commitment to their implementation, provide the basis for the resolution of these outstanding matters.

The Chairperson would like to thank President Thabo Mbeki and General Abdulsalami Abubakar, for their continued commitment and unstinting efforts to assist Sudan and South Sudan to resolve their outstanding issues and build two viable and mutually cooperative states.