

AFRICAN UNION

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PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN UNION CONDEMNS THE OCCUPATION OF CITIES IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC AND DEMANDS THE WITHDRAWAL OF REBEL ELEMENTS FROM OCCUPIED LOCALITIES

Addis Ababa, 19 December 2012: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, is following with deep concern the situation in the Central African Republic, notably marked by the occupation of the cities of Ndélé (in the north-central), Sam Ouandja Bamingui (in the north-east) and Bria (centre) by a coalition of rebel forces.

The Chairperson of the Commission strongly condemns the occupation, that constitutes a flagrant violation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in Libreville, and jeopardizes all peace consolidation and disarmament, demobilization and re-integration (DDR) efforts in the north-east. She urges the rebel coalition to withdraw immediately and unconditionally from all occupied cities and to cease all armed activities. She reiterates the determination of the AU to impose sanctions against the groups and their leaders responsible for armed attacks.

The Chairperson of the Commission further urges the rebel groups to embark resolutely on the path of dialogue and to take part in the DDR process in the north-east. She calls on the Government and all political actors, as well as politico-military movements, to promote dialogue, to place the interests of their country above all considerations and to refrain from any action that might compromise the gains of the fragile peace process and post-conflict reconstruction in the country.

The Chairperson of the Commission welcomes the contribution of the Government of Chad towards the stabilization of the security situation in the CAR and encourages ECCAS member countries and the international community, as a whole, to support the CAR in its efforts to consolidate peace and extend the necessary humanitarian assistance to affected populations.