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AFRICAN UNION HIGH LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION PANEL FOR SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN

DIRECT TALKS IN ADDIS ABABA **BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN AND THE SPLM-NORTH**

Addis Ababa, 26 April 2013: Direct talks between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N) commenced in Addis Ababa on 24 April 2013 under the facilitation of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan (AUHIP), with the support of the Chairperson of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The negotiations aimed to reach a comprehensive solution to the conflict in the “Two Areas” of Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan States in the Republic of Sudan and its devastating human consequences.

The AUHIP commends the Parties for this bold initiative to return to the negotiating table.

The talks began in Addis Ababa on 24 April 2013 and marked the first time since June 2011 that the Parties had met for direct negotiations. The AUHIP convened the talks in pursuit of decisions adopted by the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

During this round of negotiations the two Parties engaged directly with each other and exchanged views on their respective positions on the issues on the agenda. Thereafter, the Panel presented them with a draft “Declaration of Common Intent,” to reconcile their initial positions, outlining its views on a Roadmap for the resolution of the conflict in the Two Areas. The Parties subsequently met bilaterally to share further their views and have agreed to adjourn so that they have the opportunity to consult with their Principals.

The Parties will continue direct talks on the matters elaborated in the agenda at the next round of talks to be held in May in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the AUHIP with the support of the Chairperson of IGAD.