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PRESS STATEMENT

THE AFRICAN UNION REITERATES ITS APPRECIATION TO CHAD FOR ITS INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE PEACE EFFORTS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The AU takes note of the decision of Chad to withdraw its contingent from MISCA

Addis Ababa, 4 April 2014: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, takes note of the decision of the Government of Chad, announced today, to withdraw its contingent from the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA).

The Chairperson of the Commission stresses that, over the past weeks, the contingents of MISCA, particularly that of Chad, had been the target of repeated attacks by anti-Balaka elements and unfounded allegations by a number of actors. She notes that the stigmatization of the Chadian contingent has contributed to the establishment of a climate of insecurity and hostility for which the nationals of that country had paid a heavy price. Under these conditions, and while regretting the envisaged departure of the Chadian contingent, the Chairperson of the Commission fully understands the reasons behind this decision and would like, at this crucial stage of the peace efforts in the Central African Republic (CAR), to express the full solidarity of the AU with the Government and the people of Chad.

The Chairperson of the Commission underscores the invaluable contribution of Chad to the peace and reconciliation efforts in the CAR, both within the framework of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), of which Chad is the Current Chair, and that of the AU. She notes the sustained efforts of President Idriss Deby Itno to facilitate the completion of the ongoing Transition process, the contribution of the Chadian contingent to the stabilization of the situation and the generous financial support that Chad gave to the CAR, despite its own challenges, thereby demonstrating a high sense of African solidarity.

The Chairperson of the Commission notes with satisfaction the commitment expressed by Chad to continue to show the same spirit of solidarity towards the CAR to help it overcome the serious challenges facing that country. She stresses that this commitment is in line with the contribution of Chad to other African peace efforts, as clearly illustrated by the crucial role

played by the Chadian contingent during the operation to liberate the northern part of Mali, a little more than a year ago.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates the strong conviction of the AU that the resolution of the crisis in the CAR requires a continuous and strong involvement of the region, particularly through the current Chairman and the Mediator of ECCAS, Presidents Idriss Deby Itno and Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo. The AU, while reiterating its full support for their role, hopes that the UN Security Council, in the resolution that will authorize the transformation of MISCA into a UN peacekeeping operation, will fully recognize this role and will affirm its central character. She also expresses the hope that the other concerns of the AU will also be adequately taken into account.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates the gratitude of the AU to the Chadian contingent of MISCA for its professionalism, and pays tribute to the Chadian soldiers and other troops who fell on the line of duty. She welcomes the commitment of Chad to continue to fully carry out its peace mission in its areas of deployment within the framework of the Mission and to actively pursue its efforts to promote peace and security in the region.