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PRESS RELEASE

THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AU COMMISSION WELCOMES THE DECISION OF THE 31ST SUMMIT OF IGAD HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT TO REVITALIZE THE PEACE PROCESS IN SOUTH SUDAN

Addis Ababa, 15 June 2017: The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, welcomes the decision by the 31st Summit of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) held on 12 June 2017 in Addis Ababa, to inter-alia, urgently convene a High-Level Revitalization Forum of the Parties to the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS), including estranged groups to discuss concrete measures, to restore permanent ceasefire, ensure full implementation of the Peace Agreement and to develop a revised and realistic timeline and implementation schedule towards a democratic election at the end of the transition period.

The Chairperson welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Ismail Wais as the IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan and looks forward to working closely with him, through the AU High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Konare, in fulfilling his mandate. Furthermore, the Chairperson wishes to reiterate his readiness to assist the Chairperson of Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) and the Executive Secretary of IGAD in preparing for the Revitalization Forum as directed by the IGAD Summit.

The Chairperson shares the IGAD view that violence and armed conflict that continue to be perpetrated by government forces, as well as by all other armed groups in South Sudan has to cease henceforth. In this context, the Chairperson welcomes the proclamations made by President Salva Kiir Mayardit, especially the unilateral ceasefire, and against this backdrop, urges the armed opposition to make similar peaceful gestures. The Chairperson wishes to note that, such announcements, if respected fully by all sides, will not only ease the suffering of the population, but will also create a conducive environment for advancing the peace process in South Sudan. This is so vital, given the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the continued challenges relating to humanitarian access.

The Chairperson joins IGAD in commending the good work done by JMEC and its Chairperson, former President Festus Mogae and appeals to the parties to cooperate with JMEC in order for it to fulfil its mandate of assisting the South Sudanese parties to fully implement the August 2015 Agreement.

The Chairperson reiterates the resolve of the African Union, to engage all the South Sudanese stakeholders, in order to address the dire political, economic and security situation unfolding in South Sudan and expresses hope that the revitalization of the peace process will be successfully undertaken sooner than later.