



PRESS RELEASE

African Union Welcomes the Return of Dr. Riek Machar to Juba

Addis Ababa, 26 April 2016: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union [AU], Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, welcomes the return of the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-In Opposition (SPLM/IO), Dr. Riek Machar, to Juba on 26 April 2016. In this context, the Chairperson equally thanks President Salva Kiir Mayardit and the Government of South Sudan for facilitating the immediate swearing-in of Dr. Machar as the First Vice President of the Republic of South Sudan. The Chairperson expresses her hope and expectation that these measures will boost the efforts towards the immediate formation of a Transitional Government of National Unity.

On this happy occasion, the Chairperson congratulates the people of South Sudan, and commends the leadership displayed by President Salva Kiir and Dr. Riek Machar, in their commitment to fully implement the Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, and their patriotic action to promote the long-term stabilization and reconstruction of the country. The Chairperson encourages the two leaders to maintain the momentum and accelerate the work of the Transitional Government of National Unity, and calls upon all South Sudanese to dedicate themselves to rebuild their country in earnest, foster strong institutions necessary for an enduring political system and revitalize their national economy. She stresses the imperative of a united South Sudan, as the country embarks on a new chapter in its history.

The Chairperson commends the work of the AU High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali, for the dedication he showed in continuously engaging with the South Sudanese, regional and international stakeholders in successfully facilitating the return of Dr. Riek Machar to Juba. In the same vein, the Chairperson commends the ongoing efforts of the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, former President Festus Gontebanye Mogae.

The Chairperson hails the IGAD Member Countries, the members of the AU High Level ad hoc Committee for South Sudan, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the international partners for their continued support in the promotion of peace and security in South Sudan. While urging all South Sudanese stakeholders to continue rebuilding their country, the Chairperson reassures the people and Government of South Sudan of the AU's unwavering support in their national endeavor.