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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
285th MEETING
13 July 2011
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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PRESS STATEMENT

PRESS STATEMENT OF THE 285th MEETING
OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 285th meeting held on 13 July 2011, was briefed by the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the accession to independence of the Republic of South Sudan and the ceremony that took place in Juba on 9 July 2011.

Council, recalling its earlier statements on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), as well as relevant decisions and declarations of the Assembly of the Union, congratulated all those who made this achievement possible. In particular, Council commended the signatories to the CPA, namely the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). It noted that, in spite of the many challenges that faced them, the parties have been able to overcome the difficulties they encountered, thanks to the outstanding leadership of President Omar Hassan Al Bashir and Vice-President and President of the Government of South Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit.

Council also paid tribute to late Dr. John Garang de Mabior, as well as to all those, from both South and North Sudan, who lost their lives in the struggle and to their commitment to freedom. Council stressed the exceptional leadership of Dr. Garang and the outstanding role he played in bringing to an end the longest civil war in Africa. Council further stressed the historic role played by President Omar Hassan Al Bashir and President Salva Kiir Mayardit, and hailed the leadership of both the National Congress Party (NCP) and the SPLM for their historic contribution to the implementation of the CPA.

Council looks forward to welcoming the Republic of South Sudan as the AU 54th Member State, and pledged its commitment to accompany the growth and the building efforts for the new Nation of South Sudan.

As a new page in the history of Sudan has been opened, with two states, Council is looking forward to the same sense of leadership. Council stressed that the destiny of the Sudanese people in both states must remain on the path of a sustained and fruitful cooperation, based on their historic and indelible ties.

Council stressed that there still exists some important CPA issues to be implemented, especially the resolution of the Abyei issue, the Popular Consultations in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, as well as the North-South border demarcation. Council called on both parties to redouble their efforts in order to resolve all the remaining issues, within the framework of the facilitation of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), comprising former Presidents Thabo Mbeki, Abdulsalami Abubakar and Pierre Buyoya.

Council seized the opportunity to, once again, pay tribute to the AUHIP members and the team supporting them for their tireless efforts and commitment. Council congratulated IGAD and its Chair, Ethiopia, for their invaluable role and contribution. Council also expressed its gratitude to the United Nations and the international community as a whole for their support and involvement.