The African Union Welcomes the Signing of a Roadmap Agreement by the Sudanese Government for Inclusive National Dialogue in Sudan

Addis Ababa: 23 March 2016: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, welcomes the signing by the Government of Sudan of the Roadmap Agreement, developed during Strategic Consultations, held from 18 to 21 March 2016 in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan (AUHIP). The Strategic Consultations brought together the Government of Sudan, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army–Minni Minawi (SLM/A-MM), the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement- North (SPLM-N), and the National Umma Party (NUP).

The Chairperson of the Commission notes that the Roadmap Agreement represents an important milestone in determining a practicable way forward towards ensuring progress in the negotiations on cessation of hostilities and a Permanent Ceasefire in the Two Areas and Darfur, and in ensuring an inclusive National Dialogue in Sudan as a basis for lasting peace in the country.

In regard to the negotiations on the Two Areas and Darfur, the Roadmap Agreement stresses that the Agreements to end the conflicts should be synchronized with Agreements on the relevant political matters and envisages the establishment of a Joint Committee/Committees to ensure the necessary synchronization between the implementation of the Permanent Ceasefire and security arrangements and the conclusion of the relevant political processes. In regard to the National Dialogue, the Roadmap Agreement acknowledges that the National Dialogue process currently underway in Sudan is not sufficiently inclusive, given that it does not include key opposition political parties and armed movements of the Sudan. Accordingly, the Agreement states that efforts should be taken to achieve inclusivity in the National Dialogue which the Parties agree is vital.

The Chairperson of the Commission commends the Government of Sudan for signing the Roadmap Agreement, as part of efforts aimed at addressing the numerous challenges facing Sudan. The Chairperson notes that the other parties to the Strategic Consultations did not sign the Roadmap Agreement. She calls upon these parties to urgently sign the Agreement, and latest by 28 March, in order to give impetus to a process that shall lead to the settlement of Sudan’s multiple conflicts. She calls on the parties who have not yet signed the agreement to desist from making any unhelpful public statements, so as to avoid jeopardizing what they have committed to achieving; namely lasting peace in Sudan.
The Chairperson further welcomes the meeting facilitated by the AUHIP between the 7+7 National Dialogue Committee and the Future Forces for Change (FFC), on 22 March 2016 in Khartoum, Sudan. This meeting presented an important opportunity for improving the working relationship between the 7+7 National Dialogue Steering Committee and the opposition parties based in Sudan. The Chairperson notes with appreciation that the meetings resulted in agreement between the Government and the FFC to establish a sub-committee tasked with developing an agenda and coordinating the future joint work.

The Chairperson of the Commission wishes to commend the Chairperson of the AUHIP, former President Thabo Mbeki, and General Abdusalami Abubakar, member of the Panel, as well as the support staff, for their outstanding commitment and support, beyond the call of duty, to the Sudanese parties in their quest for lasting peace, security, reconciliation and democracy in their country.

The Chairperson of the Commission wishes to underscore that the African Union remains steadfast in supporting the Sudanese parties, guided by the full understanding that the Sudanese parties have the capacity and the political will to address all challenges that continue to face their people.