STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. ERASTUS MWENCHA, DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION TO THE IGAD EXTRA-ORDINARY SUMMIT 5 AUGUST 2016, ADDIS-ABABA
Your Excellency, Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chair of IGAD,

Excellences Members of the IGAD Plus,

Excellency President Festus Mogae, Former President for the Republic of Botswana and Chair of JMEC

Excellency, Ellen Margrethe Løj, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and Head of UNMISS

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlmen

On behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Chair of IGAD and the entire leadership of IGAD for convening this meeting on the situation in South Sudan and for inviting the AU Commission

Excellencies, the current situation in South Sudan is extremely worrying. Accordingly, we remain grateful for the continued efforts deployed by the IGAD and the IGAD Plus. There is a strong imperative for us to come up with concrete and actionable measures to ensure the restoration of peace, security and reconstruction of South Sudan. This can only be accomplished through the full implementation of the August 2015 Peace Agreement without any further delays. We must reaffirm our full support to the Agreement as it provides an unparalleled opportunity to fully address the challenges faced by the people of South Sudan.

Excellencies, it is against this backdrop that the recently concluded ordinary session of the AU Assembly held in Kigali, Rwanda, endorsed the decisions of IGAD on the need for the deployment of a regional force. We strongly encourage the regional leaders to engage South Sudan on the deployment of the proposed force.
Pursuant to this decision, the Chairperson of the AU Commission has transmitted both the
Communiqués of IGAD-Plus Summit and the AU Assembly decision on South Sudan to the Secretary
General of the United Nations. Consultations have already begun among members of the UN Security
Council and it is our hope that the discussions will lead to a quick decision in support of the IGAD
Plus and AU efforts in South Sudan.

We support the need to reinforce the protection mandate of UNMISS, as proposed by the UN Secretary General and the UNSC as well as the deployment of a regional protection force to secure Juba and prevent the risk of reversion to war.

**Excellencies**, the deployment of the regional force should never be viewed as an invasion of South Sudan. On the contrary, it should be viewed as a way of supporting the stakeholders most notably, the Parties to the August 2015 Agreement. This would allow for the restoration of a conducive environment to address pressing national issues, in particular accountability, reconciliation and long-term nation building.

It is evident that if the August 2015 Agreement is no longer adhered to, the security situation will continue to degenerate with disastrous consequences for the civilian population.

We must therefore act collectively. And our collective efforts should be understood by the South Sudanese as part of our commitment to support the restoration of peace, security and stability in South Sudan in the spirit of Pan-Africanism and African solidarity.

Finally, I wish to once again, appeal to the leaders of South Sudan and to remind them of their obligation towards to their people. History will judge them harshly if they fail to live up the dreams and aspirations of the millions of South Sudanese. I am sure that this is not the kind of legacy they wish to leave behind.
Excellencies, I hope this Summit will provide us with concrete measures on how to address the ongoing political and security situation in South Sudan. The AU stands ready to continue providing the required support to South Sudan and IGAD including through the AU ad-hoc Committee and the High Representative, former President Alpha Konare.

I thank you for your kind attention.