PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE SIGNING OF AN AGREEMENT ON THE CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

*The AU urges the CAR stakeholders to pursue their efforts towards a lasting solution to the crisis in their country*

*Addis Ababa, 24 July 2014:* The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, welcomes the signing, yesterday, in Brazzaville, by the Central African Republic (CAR) parties, of an Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, within the framework of the Forum for National Reconciliation in the CAR, which took place from 21 to 23 July 2014. She stresses that this Agreement constitutes a significant step forward in the search for a lasting solution to the crisis facing the CAR.

The Chairperson of the Commission urges the CAR parties to scrupulously implement their commitments under the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, as well as to redouble their efforts to carry forward the peace and reconciliation process in their country. In this regard, she notes with satisfaction their commitment to continue, in Bangui, the dialogue on the aspects relating to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program, as well as the inclusive political process, through the organization of popular consultations at the level of the various prefectures of the country and the holding of the Forum for National Reconciliation and Reconstruction.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates AU’s deep appreciation to President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo, Mediator of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in the CAR crisis, for his personal commitment and the sacrifices made by his country to ensure the smooth holding of the Forum. She also reiterates her gratitude to the other leaders of the region, notably President Idriss Deby Itno, Chairman of ECCAS, for their contribution to the current efforts in the CAR. Furthermore, the Chairperson of the Commission expresses the AU’s appreciation to the international partners, both multilateral and bilateral, for their continued support. She commends the work accomplished, within the framework of the International Mediation, by the Vice-Mediators representing the AU and the United Nations, as well as by the ECCAS Secretary-General in his capacity as the Rapporteur.

The Chairperson of the Commission reaffirms the continued commitment of the AU to support the ongoing process, both through its participation in the International Mediation and through the African-led International Support Mission in the CAR (MISCA).