COMMUNIQUE

THE AFRICAN UNION STRONGLY CONDEMNS THE KILLING OF THE PARAMOUNT CHIEF OF THE NGOK DINKA COMMUNITY AND A UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPER IN ABYEI

Addis Ababa, 5 May 2013: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, has learnt with shock of the attack on the United Nations Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA) that occurred on 4 May 2013, the very day that the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) had met in Abyei. This attack led, tragically, to the killing of Chief Koul Deng Majok, the Paramount Chief of the Ngok Dinka tribe of Abyei, as well as a soldier from UNISFA. The Chairperson condemns, in the strongest possible terms, this heinous crime, which threatens the stability of Abyei, as well as the progress recently achieved by Sudan and South Sudan in addressing their common security and socio-economic challenges.

The Chairperson of the Commission urges the Government of Sudan to ensure that all those responsible for this dastardly act are brought to justice immediately. She calls on the leadership of Sudan and South Sudan to take all the steps necessary to ensure that the current situation does not spiral out of control.

The Chairperson of the Commission expresses AU's full support to the decisions adopted by AJOC, in particular that Abyei should be a ‘weapons-free area’, as per the Agreement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area, signed by Sudan and South Sudan on 20 June 2011, and urges that these decisions be implemented immediately. She also supports the subsequent call made the AJOC Co-Chairs on the local communities to exercise restraint. She calls on the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to take all steps required to assist UNISFA to exercise its mandate in Abyei, and in particular calls on the two governments not to arm their citizens.

The Chairperson of the Commission express the Commission’s condolences to the Ngok Dinka community, as well as to the Government of Ethiopia and the family of the dead Ethiopian peacekeeper.