African Union Condemns Violence in Sudan, Calls for Humanitarian Ceasefire and Urges Coordinated International Support to the Sudanese People Amidst Armed Confrontation.

The African Union (AU) has appealed to the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), engaged in armed confrontations since the 15th of April 2023, to implement an immediate ceasefire, in order to ensure the protection of civilians, health, sanitary, transport and other critical infrastructure, particularly water and electricity services, humanitarian access and assistance, as well as political dialogue. The AU Commission Chairperson convened a high-level global meeting on 20th April 2023, in which the United Nations (UN) Secretary General, the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the League of Arab States (LAS), the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council (UNSC), the African members of the UNSC (A3), Sudan's neighbouring countries, Comoros as Chair of the African Union, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, agreed to exert pressure on the belligerent SAF and RSF to silence the guns, and support Sudanese stakeholders through a jointly led AU-UN mechanism aimed at coordinating international action to end the violence and the destabilisation of Sudan, the region and continent.

H.E. Amb. Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, briefed the press on Tuesday, 26th April 2023, via the Zoom online platform, on the AU’s contributions to the Sudan peace process, detailing the AU’s support to the Sudanese stakeholders after the 2019 peaceful revolution that led to the August 2019 transitional agreement, the 2020 Juba Agreement with Sudanese armed groups, and the AU Peace and Security Council’s (PSC) suspension of Sudan in October 2021 following a coup that ousted Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.

Commissioner Bankole stated that H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission, had travelled five times to Sudan in recent years, to impress on the Sudanese military and civilian actors the need to reach a political agreement towards a return to a civilian-led government and timely elections. Chairperson Faki and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (PSC) had issued numerous public statements condemning the violence, calling for the cessation of hostilities, the implementation of de-escalation measures, humanitarian assistance and a return to political dialogue in the supreme interest of the Sudanese people. Chairperson Faki, in addition to his good offices, also convened a high-level ministerial meeting of international actors on 20 April 2023, to amplify this message of peace and to ensure a robust and coordinated international response supporting the Sudanese people.

The Communiqué of the Ministerial Special Session on Sudan of 20th April 2023 specifically condemned the violence and called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, demanded the belligerents establish humanitarian corridors, return to political dialogue and negotiation towards the establishment of an inclusive civilian-led government, and strongly rejected all forms of external interference while committing to coordinate, collaborate and harmonise joint international action on Sudan. The participants requested the Trilateral Mechanism under the
leadership of the AU Commission Chairperson be enlarged to include the LAS, the EU, the Troika and bilateral actors and immediately engage the leadership of the SAF, the RSF and other stakeholders towards consolidating peace in Sudan.

The above resolutions are underpinned by the AU’s guiding principles, namely that no military action can solve the crisis, secondly that any political process must be an inclusive Sudanese-owned process and thirdly, the strong rejection of any foreign interference in what is already a dangerous crisis in Sudan, with grave implications for the region and the continent. Commissioner Bankole concluded, “The ongoing conflict in Sudan presents a real risk of regional conflagration and internationalisation akin to the situation in Libya in 2011. There is, therefore, a compelling need for the international community to speak with one voice and in coordination with the African Union.”

A follow up meeting focused on the implementation of the communique of 20 April 2023 will be held at the AU Commission on 2 May 2023.

For further information, please contact:

Mr Paschal Chem-Langhee, Communications Coordinator | Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security | African Union Commission | E-mail: Chem-LangheeP@africa-union.org | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Information and Communication Directorate, African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@africa-union.org
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