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Press Release from IGAD Special Envoys to South Sudan peace Dialogue

3rd March 2014

1. The IGAD Special Envoys initiated Phase II of the South Sudan Peace Process in mid-February in Addis Ababa, in accordance with the instructions of the IGAD Heads of State and Government of January 31st 2014 Communiqué. The Special Envoys are pleased to declare the conclusion of two weeks of constructive consultations and negotiation, conducted in accordance with their mandate to undertake broad consultations toward resolution of the conflict and establishment of an inclusive political dialogue for the Republic of South Sudan.
2. Prior to the launching of the second phase of the dialogue, a series of shuttle diplomacy and consultations were made by the Special Envoys to engage the Parties as well as other stakeholders. These include shuttle mission to consult with President Salva Kiir Maryadit and Dr. Riek Machar. The Envoys also met with the SPLM leaders (Former Detainees) and other stakeholders including women groups, youths, and religious leaders, with a view to ensuring wide consultations. The shuttle missions provided opportunities to explore and develop framework for the negotiations.

3. The Parties shared their initial inputs on a framework and modalities for an inclusive political dialogue. Participants also made important progress towards a “Declaration of Principles” that would help to guide Phase II of the process and constitute the basis for a sustainable peace.
4. The Special Envoys completed this session by travelling to Juba to meet the Chairman of the SPLM and President of the Republic of South Sudan H.E. President Salva Kiir Mayardit and other Politburo members on 1st March 2014. They also held similar consultations with the SPLM/A (In Opposition) and SPLM Leaders (Former Detainees) in Addis Ababa on the need for an SPLM intra-party dialogue, and the positive contribution it could make to the broader political dialogue and national reconciliation.
5. Consequently, a team of SPLM leadership will convene shortly, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to develop an agenda, modalities, and timeframe for Review and Self-Assessment of the SPLM.
6. Moreover, in order to ensure that a broad-based dialogue is developed, as per the IGAD mandate, the Special Envoys adjourned discussions today until 20th March 2014. This recess will allow the parties to further reflect and consult on guiding documents of the process, as well as allow the Envoys a critical opportunity to hear from civil society and ensure their views are reflected in the Declaration of Principles and framework for dialogue. In this regard, the IGAD Special Envoys and IGAD Partners will convene a civil society conference in Addis Ababa during the second week of March 2014.

7. The Parties also made important progress toward operationalization of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM), as established by the 23rd January 2014 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. Funding has been secured for MVM operations, an advance team travelled to all planned team sites, the parties designated representatives to the MVM's technical committee, IGAD and its Partners are sending representatives to participate in monitoring operations.
8. The SPLM/A (In Opposition) has signed the Implementation Modalities in support of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities (COH) that was earlier signed by the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) on 24 February 2014 in Addis Ababa. The document on the implementation modalities was prepared by the Joint Technical Committee (JTC).
9. The Special Envoys urge the Parties to fully cooperate with the MVM and to abide by the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and show their political will and commitment to end the war. Furthermore, the Envoys call up on the international community to put necessary pressure on the Parties to this effect.
10. The Special Envoys appeal to the Parties to facilitate and support for smooth operation of humanitarian assistance and plea to the donor community to urgently provide all the necessary humanitarian assistance to avert an appalling humanitarian catastrophe.
11. Furthermore, as part of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, the Chairperson of IGAD Heads of State and Government H.E. Prime Minister Haile Mariam Dessalegn and the IGAD Special Envoys are consulting with leaders of the region, the African Union, the United Nations and IGAD Partners for the deployment of a protection and stabilization force from the region. The Joint

Technical Committee (JTC) is setting up all the necessary arrangements for the expeditious deployment of MVTs.

12. In light of the foregoing developments in South Sudan, the Special Envoys shall propose the convening of an extraordinary IGAD Summit in order to assess the achievements made thus far and to further provide directions. **END.**

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