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THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON SOUTH SUDAN HOLDS ITS INAUGURAL MEETING IN ADDIS ABABA

Addis Ababa, 12 March 2014: The African Union (AU) Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan held its inaugural meeting today. The Chairperson of the Commission of Inquiry, former President Olusegun Obasanjo, and others members of the Commission, namely Professor Mahmood Mamdani, Ms. Bineta Diop and Professor Pacifique Manirakiza, were in attendance. Lady Justice Sophia Akuffo, who is the President of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, was unavoidably absent.

The inaugural meeting followed the oath ceremony earlier in the day during which members of the Commission of Inquiry were sworn in. Speaking on behalf of the Commission of Inquiry, former President Olusegun Obasanjo expressed his determination and that of his fellow members to fully discharge their mandate.

The Commission of Inquiry seized the opportunity of its inaugural meeting to adopt its terms of reference and agree on the support required for the fulfillment of its mandate and on its work programme. In this respect, the Commission of Inquiry identified the activities to be undertaken in the coming weeks, including meetings with the Government of South Sudan, SPLM (in opposition) and other South Sudanese stakeholders; consultations with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); relevant AU bodies such as the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP); as well as international actors, notably the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant bodies.

The Commission of Inquiry agreed to reconvene on the 1st and 2nd of April in Addis Ababa with a view to visiting South Sudan.