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PRESS RELEASE

APPOINTMENT OF FORMER PRESIDENT ALPHA OUMAR KONARÉ AS AU HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOUTH SUDAN

Addis Ababa, 2 June 2015: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, has, today, appointed former President Alpha Oumar Konaré, of Mali, as the AU High Representative for South Sudan. She expresses her deep appreciation to him for accepting to undertake this important assignment.

This decision, by the Chairperson of the Commission, aims at further strengthening the AU's contribution towards ending the conflict in South Sudan and the untold suffering inflicted upon the civilian population. It is also in the same spirit that the Commission is working towards the early operationalization of the AU High-Level *ad hoc* Committee that was established by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) at its 474th meeting, held on 5 December 2014, in order to enhance Africa's support to the mediation efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The High-Level *ad hoc* Committee, which comprises the Heads of State and Government of Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa, will meet on the margins of the next AU Summit, scheduled to take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, in mid-June 2015.

In making this appointment, the Chairperson of the Commission is convinced that the outstanding experience of Mr. Konaré, who was President of the Republic of Mali from 1992 to 2002, Chairperson of the AU Commission from 2003 to 2007 and Chairperson of the AU High Level Panel for Egypt, between 2013 and 2014, and his long standing commitment to pan-Africanism will be a major asset in the search for a solution to the conflict that is tearing South Sudan apart. In the discharge of his responsibilities, the High Representative will maintain close contact with the South Sudanese parties and other stakeholders; interact with the IGAD leaders, other African stakeholders and the members of the *ad hoc* High-Level Committee, to facilitate a collective and coordinated African action, in the search for a negotiated solution; and work with the United Nations and other international actors, in support of the African-led efforts.