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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **INCLUSIVE PEACE PROCESS FOR SOUTH SUDAN BEGINS: SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS**

*7<sup>th</sup> June 2014, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:* The multi-stakeholder symposium to initiate an inclusive phase of the peace process in South Sudan successfully concluded this evening in Addis Ababa. More than 250 South Sudanese representing the government, the opposition, political parties, faith-based groups and civil society organizations participated in the two-day event.

During the symposium, renowned international experts offered overview presentations in key thematic areas, including: transitional governance arrangements and interim institutions; justice, reconciliation and healing; security arrangements; and constitutional development and reform. Later, participants informally explored and discussed the issues with the subject matter experts, in order to further advance their understanding and concept of the issues.

IGAD Special Envoy General Lazaro Sumbeiywo who chaired the two-day deliberations explained that the symposium was not a platform for negotiations, but served as a forum to educate, inform and share knowledge and experiences with participants.

Giving the keynote speech at the beginning of the symposium, H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhanom, the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia reminded delegates that the May 9<sup>th</sup> Agreement to Resolve the Crisis in South Sudan, committed all parties to the principle of inclusivity and the involvement of key stakeholders from South Sudan in the peace process.

“The region and the international community strongly believe that the only way to resolve the crisis in South Sudan is through genuine and inclusive political dialogue,” said the Minister who is also the Chairman of the IGAD Council of Ministers. He reiterated the commitment of the people and governments of the region and the development partners to assist the South Sudanese reach a solution that is sustainable, and one that reflects their common vision.

An extra-ordinary session of IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government is scheduled to take place in Addis Ababa on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014. ###