

AFRICAN UNION

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Press Statement

The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union welcomes the progress made in Darfur

1- Following the successful convening of the 5th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Mr. Alpha Oumar Konare, wishes to express satisfaction for the progress being achieved in the Peace process in Darfur. He commends the Sudanese parties, the AU Special Envoy for Darfur, the representatives of the African mediators and facilitators, as well as the AU partners for the successful conclusion of the 5th Round of the Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks, with the signing, on 5 July 2005 of the Declaration of Principles (DoP). The DoP paves the way for the substantive discussion on the important issues of power and wealth sharing, as well as on security arrangements, to consolidate peace in Darfur. The process would require serious preparations, in which the African Union will be fully engaged in the forthcoming weeks.

2- The Chairperson also hopes that the signing of the DoP will further encourage the Sudanese Parties to continue to maintain the calm, which has been prevailing in Darfur over the last weeks. He seized the opportunity to urge the Parties to exercise maximum restraint.

3- On its part the African Union continues to do its utmost to enhance AMIS' capacity. In this regard, the Chairperson of the Commission expresses his satisfaction on the progress made on the deployment of AMIS troops, with more than 600 police officers out of the 815 authorized already deployed, in addition to the full deployment of the military observers. He also expresses satisfaction on the beginning of the 24 hours police monitoring in IDP camps and on the fact that the efforts of the AU, with the strong backing and support of its partners are bearing fruits with the beginning of the deployment of the first Nigerian battalion, as part of the implementation of the decision of the 28th meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), held on 28 April 2005, which decided that AMIS strength be increased to a total of 6,171 military personnel, with an appropriate civilian component, including up to 1,560 civilian police personnel, by the end of September 2005. The Chairperson of the AU Commission would like to stress that every effort is being made to deploy the troops and police as scheduled.

4- The Chairperson of the AU Commission also wishes to express his appreciation to the AU partners for their commitment to support the AU in its efforts to achieve a lasting peace in Darfur. He wishes, however, to bring to their attention that, while logistical requirements are met, more financial contributions

are needed to sustain AMIS. The Chairperson would like to appeal to AU partners to consider providing additional support.

5- Finally the Chairperson welcomes the positive news from Khartoum, Sudan, that President Omar el-Bashir, Dr. John Garang, Leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) and Ali Osman Taha, have respectively been sworn in as President, First Vice President and Second Vice President of the Sudanese Government, as part of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed on 10 January 2005, between the Government of the Sudan, (GoS) and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). He believes that the establishment of the interim-government of the CPA will usher in an era that will lead to a new political dispensation in the country as well as create conducive conditions for the resolution of the conflict in Darfur and the rest of the Sudan.

Addis Ababa, 13 July 2005