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H.E Mr Alpha Oumar Konare, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union has appointed H.E Mrs. MAME MADIOR BOYE, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Senegal, as his Special Representative for the promotion of the protection of civilians in armed conflicts.

This is a four-year Canadian funded project aimed at supporting the African Union Commission to advocate for and promote at the highest level the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

In line with Africa's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, the AU special representative will facilitate and contribute to the work of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights as well as the relevant Special Procedures of the UN Commission on Human Rights. The AU Special Representative will therefore make use of the relevant Regional and International legal instruments including Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law and the Refugee Law and develop working relations with the Civil Society, National and International NGOs including the ICRC and relevant UN bodies dealing with civilian protection and assistance during armed conflict.

It is expected that the position of the AU Special Representative will facilitate in strengthening the institutional capacity of the African Union Commission in Peace and Security issues as they relate specifically to the promotion of protection of civilians in armed conflicts, and contribute to raise awareness among Member States of the African Union and the Non-state actors on respect for Human Rights and protection of civilians especially in countries in conflict.

The AU Commission calls on all stakeholders in the field of protection and assistance to civilians in situations of armed conflicts to extend their full cooperation to the AU Special Representative.

Addis Ababa, 07 September 2004