

Africa Union

Statement on the Occasion of the Announcement of the Results of the Referendum in Southern Sudan

The African Union congratulates the people of Sudan and their leaders on the successful outcome of the referendum on self-determination in southern Sudan. The African Union further congratulates Sudan on the fact that the referendum was held in a timely, credible, peaceful and legitimate manner.

The African Union applauds the leadership and unswerving commitment to peace of President Omar Hassan al Bashir and First Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit, which have made possible this triumph.

The African Union commends the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission, its Chairman Professor Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil and its Deputy Chairman Justice Chan Madut, for their extraordinary efforts to ensure that the referendum has proceeded in this manner.

The African Union further congratulates the Government of Sudan for its immediate acceptance of the results of the referendum and its readiness to proceed expeditiously to conclude all necessary steps to ensure the speedy and peaceable establishment of the independent state of Southern Sudan.

With the completion of this historic referendum, Sudan has decisively overcome its tragic history of division and its exceptional legacy inherited from its colonial past. In recognition of these unique political circumstances, Africa recognized the right of self-determination for the people of southern Sudan, and supported the free and fair exercise of this right. Now this has been completed in this exemplary manner, the African Union prepares to welcome the 54th state on the continent into its ranks.

The African Union expresses its confidence that the Sudanese parties will successfully conclude all outstanding matters necessary for the completion of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and agreement on all post-referendum

arrangements necessary for the establishment of two viable and mutually supportive states. The African Union commends the work of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, led by President Thabo Mbeki, for its facilitation of the negotiations between the Parties in this regard.

The African Union emphasizes that the two states will both be African states, requiring our solidarity and friendship. As the people of southern and northern Sudan face the future within two states, Africa expresses its confidence that they will face a future of peace, prosperity and democracy.