

African Union

Press Statement on the Humanitarian Situation in Southern Kordofan, Sudan

19 June 2011

The African Union is gravely concerned at the humanitarian crisis unfolding in Southern Kordofan, following the armed conflict that broke out between the Government of Sudan and the SPLA on 5 June.

Hundreds of thousands of civilians have been displaced from their homes and face hunger, disease and exposure to the elements, due to fighting, aerial bombardment and the interruption of essential supplies. The African Union has also received many reports of human rights abuses which need investigation.

The African Union calls upon both Parties to facilitate humanitarian agencies' access to the civilian population in all parts of Southern Kordofan. The AU reminds the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/SPLA of their respective obligations under international humanitarian law, and calls upon them to act immediately to enable assistance to reach the affected population, and for people in distress to be evacuated to safe areas.

The African Union calls upon the Parties to engage wholeheartedly in their negotiations towards a political settlement of the conflict in Southern Kordofan, in the talks currently under way in Addis Ababa facilitated by the AU High Level Implementation Panel. The AU insists that there is no military solution to the current political conflict and that the Parties should agree a cessation of hostilities as soon as possible.