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PRESS STATEMENT

The Commission of the African Union (AU) is pleased to announce the signing in Khartoum, by the National Congress Party (NCP) of Sudan, of the Electoral Code of Conduct. By so doing, the NCP adds its signature to the fifteen signatories, most of whom are Southern-based political parties, that signed the Code during a recent Summit meeting convened by the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) on Sudan in Juba, on 2 March 2010.

This voluntary Code, which commits the parties and candidates to common principles for free and fair elections, facilitates self-regulation by Sudan's political parties during the forthcoming elections, scheduled for 11 April 2010. The AU believes that this Code can play an important role in promoting democratization in the Sudan and in building confidence between the different political parties.

The Code was signed, on behalf of the NCP, by Professor Ibrahim Ghandour, Secretary for Political Affairs of the NCP, and was witnessed by Ambassador Mahmoud Kane, Head of the African Union Liaison Office in the Sudan (AU-LOS).

The signing by the NCP of the Code of Conduct provides further momentum for its acceptance by all national Sudanese political parties, and further enhances the chances for a peaceful electoral process in the forthcoming elections. It is expected that more parties will associate themselves with the Code within the coming days.

The NCP also signed the Declaration of Common Commitments, which supports peaceful and democratic change in the Sudan, and reiterates its commitment to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the search for peace and justice in the Darfur region of the country.

The African Union, through the AUHIP, the AU-LOS, and the AU team of election observers that will soon be deployed to the Sudan, will work closely with the Sudanese political parties to assist them to implement the Code.

Addis Ababa, 8th March 2010