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STATEMENT

**BY COMMISSIONER POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY, TO THE UN SECURITY
COUNCIL**

THE REPORT OF THE UNSG ON SUDAN: 22 MAY 2023

President of the Security Council, Distinguished members of Council, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the AU, at the outset let me assure you and, through you, this esteemed Organ of the full cooperation of the AU with you for the success of the decisions that you will have to take on the issues that engage Africa.

The worrisome situation in The Sudan, which is on your agenda today, is engaging the attention of the AU at the highest level.

You are aware how greatly we were mobilised from the very first days of the overthrow of former President Omar Al Bashir, to support efforts to resolve the post-revolution challenges. From the very beginning, the AU, with the support of its partners, worked to put in place a mediation that would lead to an inclusive, smooth and broad-based Transition.

We deployed active and effective Mediation with the support of AU MS and development partners. This Mediation role in 2019 made it possible to adopt, in general popular joy and to the satisfaction of all our partners, an Institutional Mechanism for a peaceful and balanced Transition.

Unfortunately, the acute internal contradictions of fragmentation and polarization among the Sudanese political and military actors, and the multiplicity of external interference, undermined the Transition, and led to the stalemate resulting in the irresponsible and senseless coup of 25 October 2021, which the AU condemned.

The African Union, dictated by its normative principles and shared democratic values, suspended Sudan, while continuing to work with partners for a rapid restoration of Constitutional order and a consensual Transition.

In doing so, we established the Trilateral mechanism, and collaboratively worked with the United Nations, IGAD and the AU. A Political Framework Agreement was signed in December 2022, and work was underway to ensure its extension to other actors to make it more inclusive.

Mr. President,

The outbreak of military hostilities on 15 April 2023, between the SAF and the RSF, tragically, dashed our hopes that the Framework Agreement would lead to the resumption of the Political Transition process to civilian-led democratic rule and usher in the prospects of a new Sudan

Since then, the AU has been working relentlessly to ensure an end to the conflict and the resumption of an inclusive political process.

On 16 April 2023, one day after the outbreak of hostilities, the PSC convened to consider the crisis in Sudan. It condemned the fighting, called for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, and requested the Chairperson of the Commission to use his good offices to ensure that the guns are silenced.



On 20 April 2023, the AU Commission Chairperson brought together the key actors in the international community, to coordinate and intensify efforts for an immediate Ceasefire, the organisation of humanitarian assistance and the resumption of the political process. On 2 May we reconvened this Mechanism and consultations are underway for its operationalization, because our conviction is that only well-coordinated collective action would give chance to the success of the international action. Separate, competing or rival actions would complicate and undermine the search for a solution to the crisis.

The AU has also developed a comprehensive De-Escalation Plan, which identifies 6 pillars that need to be addressed for a sustainable resolution of the Sudanese crisis:

- Co-ordinated international action to avoid a proliferation and duplication of mediation initiatives;
- Immediate, comprehensive and unconditional ceasefire;
- Urgent Humanitarian action to relieve the suffering of the Sudanese people;
- Protection of civilians, state infrastructure and ensuring accountability;
- Firm support to neighboring countries of the region impacted by the crisis; and
- Resumption of inclusive and fully representative political process towards a democratic, civilian-led government.

We are expectant that African Leaders due to meet through the auspices of AU PSC later this week, will endorse the AU De-Escalation Plan for the Republic of Sudan.

Mr. President,

The situation in Sudan is dire. The destruction of public and private institutions is systematic. This is the case with health, academic, economic, financial, social and humanitarian institutions. The sick and wounded are dying without any care, and there is no one to bury them.

Gross Human rights violations are rampant: arrests, looting and sexual assaults are on the rise. The urgency is to put an end to the fighting, without delay. There is urgent need for international mobilisation to provide humanitarian relief.

It is exigent that Council assume responsibility in the face of this intolerable and unnecessary conflict. The AU closely monitored the steps taken by Saudi Arabia and the USA in Jeddah. We welcome the commitment displayed by the 2 warring parties for signing a short term ceasefire. However we need more concerted actionable efforts towards a lasting cessation of hostilities! We urge them to go the full course of peace!

A comprehensive permanent silencing of the guns now is the only remedy for the people of Sudan! The resumption of the political transition premised on inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation that brings together all sectors of Sudanese society, fully complemented by the international community, will promote peace and stability in Sudan.

Mr. President,

We must now collectively start planning for the inclusive negotiations on a political process. While disagreements over the reform of the security sector did provide the immediate trigger for the conflict, Sudan and the Sudanese need to address the grievances that date back decades, relating to the relationship between the centre and the periphery, the state and its citizens, the Sudan that the Sudanese want!

The African Union is working to support such an inclusive political process, which would allow for the full representation of the voices of all sectors of Sudanese civil society and political parties.

The AU is also striving to ensure that States bordering Sudan, which are endlessly receiving growing numbers of traumatized Sudanese refugees, are assisted at this difficult time. The AU will be deploying special envoys to all of the neighbouring capitals in this regard.

A strong commitment by Council to a Ceasefire, the implementation of humanitarian assistance and the resumption of the political process that provides for an enhanced role for civilian voices, under the aegis of a united, coherent international coalition, is imperative at this juncture.

We must arrest Sudan's slide into complete collapse, which would have unbearable consequences for the region, the African continent and, in fact, the world.

I thank you.