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For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE

30th JUNE 2018 7, NOUAKCHOTT, MAURITANIA

The IGAD Council of Ministers, chaired by H.E. Hirut Zemene, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia today 30th June 2018 convened a meeting of IGAD Council of Ministers in Nouakchott, Mauritania, on the sideline of the 31st Ordinary Summit of the African Union to discuss progress in the High-Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) on the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

The sideline meeting was convened pursuant to the decision of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its 32nd Extra-Ordinary Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 21st June 2018 which, *inter-alia*, instructed the Council to give guidance to the Special Envoy for South Sudan on the remaining HLRF tasks at the sideline of the upcoming Ordinary Summit of the African Union in Nouakchott, Mauritania.

In attendance were: H.E Mohamoud Ali Yussuf, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Republic of Djibouti, H.E Sam Kutesa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Uganda, H.E Abdulkadir Ahmedkheyr Abdi, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Somalia, and H.E Mohammed Idris, State Minister- Foreign Affairs, Republic of Sudan.

Following a briefing by H.E Ambassador Dr. Ismail Wais, the IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan and H.E Mohammed Idris, the State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Sudan and deliberations on the status and way forward on the HLRF, the Council welcomed the progress being made by the HLRF parties in the ongoing face-to-face talks in Khartoum and the declaration of a permanent ceasefire throughout the Republic of South Sudan.

The Council noted that the ongoing face-to-face meetings taking place in Khartoum and as planned subsequently in Nairobi are a continuation of the Addis Ababa HLRF process and called for its full support.

The Council endorsed the Khartoum Declaration of 27th June 2018, the agreement on a new Transitional Period of thirty-six months to be preceded by one hundred and twenty days of Pre-Transition period, and the resolution by parties to conclude on all the outstanding governance and security issues in the IGAD bridging proposal, the opening of humanitarian corridors, release of prisoners of war and political detainees, as well as the request to African Union and IGAD members states to deploy the necessary forces to supervise the permanent ceasefire.

The Council reiterated IGAD determination to bring peace to South Sudan and observed that good progress has already been made, and resolved that the HLRF shall continue at a higher level in Khartoum and Nairobi and its outcome shall be decided in the next Summit.

The Council also observed that, given the latest developments in the peace process and the need to implement the permanent ceasefire and achieve an inclusive peace agreement, it is not helpful to pursue punitive measures at this stage. The Council appealed to the African Union Ad-Hoc Committee for South Sudan, and all international partners and friends of South Sudan, to continue supporting the region's effort to bring peace and implementation of its outcome.

The Council commended the people and Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Republic of Sudan, the Chairperson IGAD Council of Ministers and Council Members for facilitating the HLRF process, and for the progress made so far, and urged the South Sudanese parties to honor the hospitality and commitment of the region by quickly resolving all the outstanding issues.

The Council instructed the IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan and his Taskforce to continue supporting the ongoing face-to-face talks in Khartoum and subsequently in Nairobi and decided to remain seized of this matter.

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