Statement by the spokesperson of High Representative Catherine Ashton welcoming the adoption of a roadmap on Sudan and South Sudan by the African Union Peace and Security Council

The spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"The High Representative welcomes the adoption on 24 April by the African Union Peace and Security Council of a Roadmap aimed at putting an end to tensions between Sudan and South Sudan and bringing them back to negotiations.

The Roadmap sets out a series of specific steps that Sudan and South Sudan must take, with clear timelines. These steps include an immediate cessation of all hostilities, including aerial bombardments; the withdrawal of each army to its own side of the border; cessation of support to rebel groups operating in the territory of the other state; implementation of agreements already entered into, including activation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mission and withdrawal of all unauthorised forces from Abyei; and resumption of negotiations under the auspices of the AU High Level Implementation Panel, within two weeks.

EU Foreign Ministers expressed support for such steps at the Foreign Affairs Council on 23 April. The EU is ready to lend its full support to the Roadmap and calls on Sudan and South Sudan to implement it without delay, starting with an immediate cessation of hostilities.

The High Representative also reiterates the urgent need for an inclusive political solution to the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile."

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