Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton ahead of the summit between the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan

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

"I welcome news of the Presidential Summit to be held in Addis Ababa on 23 September and call on both Governments to conclude a comprehensive agreement on all outstanding issues in accordance with the AU Roadmap and UN Security Council Resolution 2046.

The negotiations between Sudan and South Sudan have already made significant progress on a number of issues, notably oil and security arrangements. It is now for the two Governments to build on the progress achieved with the help of the AU High Level Implementation Panel led by former President Mbeki and agree on the few remaining issues, including a Safe Demilitarised Border Zone. This Summit is a unique opportunity to set their countries on the path to peace and prosperity, based on the concept of two viable states.

It is equally urgent to end the ongoing conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states in Sudan and to address the humanitarian crisis caused by the fighting. I call on the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/North to enter immediately into direct talks to agree on a complete cessation of hostilities and to reach a political settlement on the basis of the 28 June 2011 Framework Agreement as stipulated in UN Security Council Resolution 2046. I also urge the Government of Sudan to facilitate the immediate implementation of the 5 August agreement for delivery of humanitarian assistance to all affected civilian populations."
Reaching a comprehensive agreement between Sudan and South Sudan and ending the conflict in the Two Areas would lay the foundation for establishing peaceful good neighbourly relations. This would open a new chapter in relations between Sudan and South Sudan and allow both their peoples to enjoy the benefits of peace and prosperity."