Statement by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the conflict in Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states

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

"The High Representative welcomes the start of direct talks in Addis Ababa last week between the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement-North under the auspices of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel. This was the first time since June 2011 that the Parties have met in direct talks to try to end the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states. The talks represented an important step forward and it is encouraging that both parties agreed to meet again in May.

The High Representative therefore condemns the most recent attacks on civilians including that by the Sudan Revolutionary Front on Um Rawaba town in Northern Kordofan as well as the ongoing fighting between Government and SPLM/North forces in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile.

She urges both Parties to commit to resume negotiations in good faith in order to agree on an immediate ceasefire, safe and unhindered humanitarian access, and on a comprehensive solution to the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile with a view to an inclusive national dialogue".

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