

**Joint statement by Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide, United Kingdom Foreign Secretary William Hague and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton**

We welcome the news that the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan are to meet in Addis Ababa on 4 January in a further effort to resolve outstanding issues between the two countries. We applaud the progress made at their Presidential Summit held in Addis Ababa at the end of September 2012, which demonstrated that a durable and equitable settlement is within reach.

We commend the continuing valuable role of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel led by former President Thabo Mbeki and the efforts of Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn.

We regret that progress in implementing the Agreements signed on 27 September has stalled and in particular that the agreed security arrangements at the border are not yet in place. We call on the two leaders now to address concretely all outstanding issues and ensure that the armed forces of the two countries immediately withdraw from the demilitarised zone and deploy the Joint Border and Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM), in line with what has been agreed.

We stress the importance of making progress in parallel on other parts of the relationship between the two countries. Full implementation of all agreements on their own terms and without preconditions or linkages between them, will help build confidence and benefit the people of the two countries. The restart of oil production and export will be particularly valuable for both economies and should not be held up by negotiation on other issues.

We underline our support for the approach taken by the African Union to the question of Abyei. The proposal made by former President Mbeki is based on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including the Abyei Protocol. The proposal, adopted by AUPSC on October 24, sets out a clear path towards determining Abyei's final status in accordance with agreements already signed by both parties, while protecting the rights of all communities and ensuring Abyei can become a model for cross-border cooperation and coexistence. We note in particular that the proposal provides for Abyei's continuing special status as a bridge between the two countries with guaranteed political and economic rights for both the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya, whatever the outcome of the referendum. We urge the two countries to meet to elaborate on these rights and to move toward agreement on Abyei's final status.

We remind the leaders of Sudan and South Sudan that the international community is fully committed to a vision of two viable countries at peace with one another, and that we stand ready to support them in realising that vision. We strongly urge them to seize the opportunity of the Summit meeting on 4 January to demonstrate their commitment to implement what they have agreed and make peaceful coexistence a reality.