Statement of the African Union Special Envoy on the Prevention of Genocide on the Situation in Sudan

29 October 2024: The African Union Special Envoy on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, H.E. Adama Dieng, is deeply concerned by the escalating violence and tragic loss of life in various parts of Sudan, and in particular the ongoing violence in Al-Jazirah, state and AL Damazein area. Reports of grave crimes including mass killings, summary execution, sexual assault, abduction, torture, and looting, have emerged, despite the continuing telecommunication blackout which makes it difficult to determine the full extent of the violence. Hate speech, racial hatred and incitement to ethnically motivated violence has reached intolerable levels.

The Special Envoy is particularly troubled by grave reports of heinous crimes committed following the defection of Abu Aqla Keikil, a commander in the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Gezira state, to the Sudanese Armed Forces on 20 October 2024. Since then, there have been reports of RSF rampages through numerous villages in Al-Jazirah state. This latest wave of violence has led to mass displacement from Al Jazirah into neighboring states. Many of those fleeing have been forced to walk for days with no food, forced to hide from armed militia, and leading to many cases of family separations. The retaliatory nature of these attacks, allegedly targeting members of the commander's ethnic community, along with incidents of extreme violence, represents a dangerous escalation. There are also reports of mass mobilization and arming of civilians, in another alarming escalation of violence and hatred.

In all of this violence, it is civilians who are most often targeted. Sudan is witnessing atrocity crimes on an unimaginable scale, and it is the duty of the international community to do all in its power to stop the fighting. The very foundations of the international system are being tested by the cruel, indiscriminate violence being experienced by the people of Sudan.

The Special Envoy urges the leaders of the two main fighting forces, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and General Mohamed Dagalo “Hemedti”, to de-escalate the fighting, to refrain from dangerous and inflammatory hate speech, to urge their fighting forces to abide by their international legal obligations and respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and to refrain from targeting civilians. He also urges the broader international community to work together to identify ways to protect civilians, to ensure the provision of humanitarian assistance, and to intensify diplomatic efforts to end the conflict.

Investigations into all alleged human rights violations must be conducted, and accountability pursued through fair and impartial processes to end the cycle of violence.

H.E. Adama Dieng, the African Union Special Envoy on the Prevention of Genocide, stands in solidarity with the people of Sudan and reaffirms the African Union’s unwavering commitment to peace, stability, and the protection of human rights across Sudan.

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