

Brussels, 19 December 2007

## European Commission to boost EU support for the peace process in Darfur with € 3 million

*The European Commission will provide € 3 million under the Instrument for Stability to support the current peace process which is seeking a resolution of the ongoing Darfur crisis. The negotiation work is led by a joint UN and African Union team of mediators. This new EC contribution, combined with bilateral allocations from EU Member States, will make the EU by far the biggest donor to the peace process in Darfur, with an expected total contribution of € 9 million. While the AU-UN led efforts to broker a peaceful resolution to this crisis are ongoing, the EC's humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable people affected by the ongoing crisis is of course continuing as is its leading support to AMIS (the current AU peacekeeping mission in Darfur). The Commission will continue to meet its responsibilities as a major donor during the post-crisis recovery period.*

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, commented: "We are very glad to provide strong support to the AU and the UN to implement the very difficult but absolutely vital mediation tasks that have been entrusted to them jointly. We will remain closely engaged with the AU and UN throughout this peace process which aims to bring a resolution to a crisis that has already gone on for too long and has caused too much loss of life and suffering in Darfur".

Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, said: "An effective peace process is central to the EU's efforts to alleviate the difficult plight of the people of Darfur. The process itself is critical and we very much support an inclusive approach which brings in all interested parties, not least the wide spectrum of civil society in Darfur. There is no development without security and development aid has a direct impact on peace and stability."

This new EC support under the Instrument for Stability will provide a major boost to the newly established and UN administered Trust Fund to support the work of the AU-UN Joint Mediation Support Team (JMST) based in Khartoum.

The EC also stands ready to support substantial rehabilitation and reconstruction work in Darfur – to add to the development assistance already accorded for the rest of Sudan - once conditions allow for the voluntary return of the many persons displaced by this tragic conflict.