

**Peacebuilding Commission**  
**Ambassadorial-Level Meeting on Guinea-Bissau**  
**24 February 2020**  
**Chair's Summary**

1. On 24 February 2020, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) held an ambassadorial-level meeting on Guinea-Bissau chaired by H.E. Mr. Ronaldo Costa Filho, Chair of the PBC Guinea-Bissau Configuration. The purpose of the meeting was to receive updates on recent developments in Guinea-Bissau, formally adopt written advice to the Security Council on the mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and explore ways for the PBC to further support the country during the transition period and beyond.
2. In his introductory remarks the Chair noted that it was his first meeting as the Configuration's Chair and thanked his predecessor, H.E. Mr. Mauro Vieira, for his outstanding commitment to peace and development in Guinea-Bissau. The Chair recalled that while Guinea-Bissau successfully held legislative and presidential elections in 2019, the political context is still volatile. He reviewed developments related to the legal challenges at the Bissau-Guinean Supreme Court on the election results, including the Court's ruling of 14 February requiring the National Election Commission (CNE) to comply with a previous ruling regarding the verification of the results. The Chair noted the drawdown of UNIOGBIS and the gradual transfer of the mission's tasks to the UN Country Team (UNCT), the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and other partners. He acknowledged the important role of regional organizations and, in particular, the Group of Five in Bissau – ECOWAS, European Union, UN, African Union and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) – in fostering dialogue and conciliation and promoting stability in the country. The Chair expressed hope that Guinea-Bissau would soon settle its electoral disputes, allowing for stakeholders to focus on the implementation of much-needed internal reforms as well as peacebuilding and development activities.
3. Ms. Rosine Sori-Coulibaly, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Guinea Bissau and Head of UNIOGBIS, provided an update on recent political developments in the country and expressed concern about the political impasse. She stressed that the international community in Bissau had been actively engaged in the electoral process and was instrumental in keeping the electoral calendar on track despite mistrust among national actors. She underscored that the lack of constructive dialogue among national political stakeholders posed a serious threat to stability and encouraged all political forces and civil society organizations in Guinea-Bissau to commit to political dialogue. She underlined the importance of a sustained collective engagement of the international community on core peacebuilding priorities including support for the implementation of urgent institutional reforms such as the constitutional review, the electoral law and political party reforms. She also noted that support for the country's commitment to fight drug trafficking and transnational organized crime was fundamental. The SRSG expressed appreciation for the PBC and \$4 million mobilized by the

Peacebuilding Fund for activities in support of the UN transition. She noted her intention to establish a high-level platform for international partners, national authorities, and civil society representatives to regularly discuss, promote and accompany Guinea-Bissau in its reform agenda and to inform the UN transition. She underscored the shared responsibility to continue promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the context of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and called for support from the international community. She also informed of a retreat convened with UNOWAS and some regional directors in Dakar from 2-3 March to coordinate and ensure a smooth transition.

4. H.E. Mr. Tanou Koné, Permanent Representative of ECOWAS, informed that ECOWAS stands ready with the international community to support Guinea-Bissau in resolving the political impasse. He expressed appreciation for the efforts of SRSG Sori-Coulibaly, in working with the Group of Five, to break the deadlock. He recalled electoral developments, including the late January mission by the ECOWAS Council of Ministers to Guinea Bissau and the Supreme Court's 14 February ruling reiterating a previous ruling to re-verify the results. He noted the intention of MADEM-15 Presidential candidate, Umaro Sissoco Embaló, to swear-in as President even without a final ruling by the Supreme Court. Acknowledging the troubling situation, Ambassador Koné reiterated that ECOWAS would continue to strive for constructive dialogue between stakeholders, and informed that ECOMIB would remain in the country for security reasons.
5. H.E. Ms. Maria Antonieta Lopes D'Alva, Chargée d'Affaires at the Permanent Mission of Guinea Bissau, welcomed the Chair and thanked the PBC for the continued engagement in Guinea Bissau. She reviewed the latest developments concerning the Supreme Court's ruling on legal challenges related to the electoral results, expressing hope that a CNE meeting planned for 25 February might help to resolve the impasse. She acknowledged that while the political situation remains a challenge, economic vulnerability in Guinea-Bissau is also a priority concern and commended the advice of the PBC to the Security Council. She expressed appreciation for the work of the Peacebuilding Fund and noted that the PBF projects were significant in ensuring the participation of Bissau-Guineans, informing that 70 percent of the population went to the polls.
6. Member States welcomed the briefings and made the following observations:
  - They expressed concern about the political impasse in Guinea-Bissau and stressed the need for the PBC's continued monitoring of the situation.
  - Some expressed concern about the return of inflammatory rhetoric along religious and ethnic lines and noted the need to redouble efforts on securing human rights.
  - Noting the importance of political accompaniment, they expressed appreciation for the good offices of SRSG Sori-Coulibaly and commended the stabilizing efforts of ECOWAS.

- They welcomed the SRSG's plans to create a high-level platform to support Guinea-Bissau in its reform agenda and to inform the UN transition, underscoring the importance of coordinated international support aligned with national priorities.
- They commended the Commission's substantial advice to the Security Council on the renewal of the mandate for UNIOGBIS and emphasized the crucial role of the PBC during the transition in mobilizing resources to avoid a financial cliff.
- They expressed continued support for PBF projects on citizen engagement and community resilience and stressed the importance of continuing to ensure the effective and meaningful participation of women and youth.