

# **SECURITY COUNCIL**

## **THE SITUATION IN GUINEA-BISSAU**

### **STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR OF THE GUINEA-BISSAU CONFIGURATION OF THE PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION**

**H. E. Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent  
Representative of Brazil to the United Nations**

19 May 2014

Mr. President,

I thank you for inviting me to address the Security Council in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Let me congratulate the people of Guinea-Bissau for the peaceful and active participation in the second round of presidential elections, a fundamental step in the country's history. I thank once again all partners of Guinea-Bissau who contributed resources, technical support and observers. Also a very special word of appreciation for the invaluable work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General José Ramos-Horta, whose personal qualities and dedication have been a privilege for the United Nations and a decisive contribution to the process.

As we wait for the proclamation of the results, let me outline some important discussions that have taken place in the Guinea-Bissau Configuration during the past months, with a view to contributing to future steps.

1) Firstly, the Configuration has been actively following the situation throughout the transitional period. By means of two press statements, it has called on all parties to respect the electoral outcome, as the expression of the democratic will of the people of Guinea-Bissau. It has served as a forum to help improve the coordination among key regional and international partners - one aspect that is likely to become even more important as we prepare to resume full international cooperation with the country.

On the basis of my January visit to Bissau, along with ASG Judy Cheng-Hopkins, the Configuration has also initiated an early planning for the post-electoral engagement. I had proposed, in this regard, to the Configuration and to this Council, that we consider three achievable medium-term peacebuilding objectives as our guidance in this process: the completion of a full democratic cycle in Guinea-Bissau; significant strides in food

security and basic social indicators; and enhanced coordination and understanding to advance on the modernization of the security and defense sector.

I also believe that the Configuration was able to strengthen its partnership with UNIOGBIS and its coordination with SRSG Ramos-Horta. The synergy with the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is also an important dimension, translated in PBF's funding of projects ranging from support to the electoral process, the establishment of the National Commission for Planning and Strategic Coordination, to the promotion of women and youth employment.

2) Secondly, Mr. President, it is important to bear in mind that the pursuit of our first medium-term strategic objective - the completion of a full democratic cycle - has just begun. In all democratic systems, the formation of a Government is a complex process. All the more for a country emerging from institutional rupture, and facing daunting social and economic challenges, such as Guinea-Bissau. We welcome the initial gestures of Prime-Minister designate Domingos Simões Pereira towards inclusion and dialogue.

As we have highlighted time and again, it is essential that international assistance be present from day one. Pressing issues, such as the payment of salaries, especially for civil servants in the education and health sectors, and food security, are also key elements for the consolidation of the democratic transition. Decisive and swift support is needed. I will remain in contact with SRSG Ramos-Horta and other partners such as the World Bank in order to make sure the PBC stands ready to help.

I believe we find ourselves today better positioned, from a technical point of view, to re-engage with Guinea-Bissau. The SRSG's proposal for a Government Efficacy Amelioration Program (GEAP), aligned with the priorities identified by the new government in order to ensure national ownership, and based on broad consultations with all international partners, can be a key element to enhance capacity and transparency. We look forward to working with elected authorities on the review of the Peacebuilding Strategic Framework and the possible cooperation with PBF on a set of national peacebuilding priorities. We can already count on an improved coordination among key partners, as well as on encouraging, skilled leadership in Bissau. A successful transition is likely to mobilize partners, traditional and new. This can well be a unique opportunity.

3) This leads me to my next consideration, Mr. President. Beyond the emergency budgetary support to keep a new Government running, we have welcomed the SRSG's proposal of a donors' conference as early as possible, so that the willingness to re-engage, on the part of the international community, can materialize in much needed concrete pledges and disbursements. At the same time, we understand conditions need to be put in place for this support to be effective.

As remarked by ASG Judy Cheng-Hopkins during our Configuration's latest informal meeting, a donor's conference should not be seen "business as usual". We must communicate and articulate, in an effective way, the improved technical basis for engagement, as well as the concrete impact that can be achieved with modest amounts in

Guinea-Bissau, the great potential of the country, in agriculture, services, tourism, and above all the people's desire to move past the cycle of poverty and instability.

4) Fourthly, Mr. President, with regard to the modernization of the security and defense sector, I believe we will now be better positioned to devise a comprehensive, and more effective strategy in support of legitimate authorities. ECOWAS has been playing an important leading role in this regard, and we should stand ready to continue to support its efforts as well as the engagement of other partners, with resources and expertise. The PBC stands available to play a coordinating role, and offer strategic advice, by providing a platform that can bring together the main partners around common objectives.

This engagement can be important to help bring about the necessary political space for such complex processes to advance. As we have noted in the past, SSR in Guinea-Bissau cannot be viewed in isolation, and it should not concentrate solely on the top-level structures. It is linked to reforms in other key sectors, to economic revitalization, to reconciliation and political dialogue, to the creation of opportunities and political alternatives with a view to consolidating democratic stability.

I stress once again that it is key to ensure that no social group is perceived to be left behind, and all are granted their due recognition. Our expectations should also be attuned to such realities, so as to help us devise the most effective strategies to advance on realistic objectives. In this connection, we look forward to the upcoming National Conference on the Modernization and Restructuring of the Security Sector, scheduled to take place next month, and welcome UNIOGBIS's efforts to promote dialogue and outreach on this issue.

5) This brings me to a final consideration, Mr. President, on the upcoming renewal of UNIOGBIS's mandate by this Council. As noted by SRSR Ramos-Horta in our latest Configuration meeting, the linkage between the PBC, including as a political body, and UNIOGBIS should remain a key building block of the Office's mandate.

Resolution 2103 (2013) of the Security Council refers to PBC's readiness to re-engage with Guinea-Bissau, once conditions allow, and to the "need to further realign the United Nations system's state-building and peacebuilding activities and the contribution of the Peacebuilding Fund to peace consolidation in Guinea-Bissau". It is my view that we have made some important strides in this direction already.

Building on such strides, this Council could consider strengthening the elements of UNIOGBIS mandate that refer to its partnership with the PBC, and the potential for this partnership to help bring about enhanced coordination, additional strategic advice on a key set of core, achievable, nationally-led peacebuilding priorities, and greater synergy with the PBF and other institutional partners.

I thank you, Mr. President.