

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

1. On 24 June 2020, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) held a virtual 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 provide an update on political developments and the COVID-19 pandemic in Guinea-Bissau, and how peacebuilding priorities, socio-economic development, and the UN transition process are being impacted. Briefers included UNIOGBIS SRSG Ms. Rosine Sori-Coulibaly; H.E. Mr. Fernando Delfim da Silva, Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau; H.E. Mr. Abdou Barry, Permanent Representative of Niger representing ECOWAS chairmanship, and Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, UN Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) for Peacebuilding Support.
2. In his introductory remarks the Chair recognized that while the COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis, it is also an economic crisis with devastating socio-economic consequences. The Chair informed that he recently met with World Bank representatives to discuss how the Bank is assisting the country in addressing economic challenges as well as the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that the World Bank mobilized \$5 million in addition to some repurposing of its existing portfolio in Guinea-Bissau in order to support a multipronged approach to COVID-19, including a direct medical response as well as support to livelihoods and post-COVID recovery needs. The Chair also briefed that the pandemic's restrictions on mobility in turn are hampering exports and the 4.5% GDP growth once projected by the World Bank in pre-COVID times, could now be a contraction of roughly 3%. As the Bank continues to work closely with the broader humanitarian and development community as well as the IMF on key macroeconomic issues, the Chair called for more rapid engagement by the international community and asked members to recommit to providing a platform for bilateral and multilateral partners, in support of socioeconomic development in Guinea-Bissau.
3. Ms. Rosine Sori-Coulibaly, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Guinea Bissau and Head of UNIOGBIS, provided an update on the deeply polarized political situation, the COVID-19 pandemic in country, and the impact of both on the implementation of the UN's mandate and its transition. She informed that the institutional crisis has limited UNIOGBIS' ability to engage with national partners in support of political dialogue and urgent reforms as well as the fight against drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. She noted that the absence of legitimate national counterparts also impacted the UN's transition planning process and called for the urgent appointment of a Prime Minister and a new government. She briefed that UNIOGBIS continues to coordinate with the international community, including ECOWAS, in appealing for constructive dialogue. The SRSG emphasized that the importance of the sustained collective engagement by the international community and noted the PBC's key role in fostering such engagement. She noted that despite the political impasse, promoting inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development in

Guinea-Bissau remains crucial and recalled that the importance of the upcoming UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and appealed to the international community to generously fund it.

4. H.E. Mr. Fernando Delfim da Silva, Permanent Representative (PR) of Guinea-Bissau, welcomed the timeliness of the meeting and expressed gratitude to partners and friends of Guinea-Bissau, including the Peacebuilding Fund for its support to women's and youth participation. The Ambassador informed that Guinea-Bissau's institutions are engaged in the search for political solutions to implement ECOWAS's recommendations of 22 April 2020, in particular the establishment of a new government. He noted that the ordinary session of the National Assembly would resume on 29 June, during which represented political parties would clarify who holds the absolute majority, thus allowing for the President to proceed in accordance with the deliberations of the National Assembly and appoint a new government accordingly. The Ambassador also briefed that President Sissoco set up a technical commission on 12 May that would be responsible for drafting a draft constitution within 90 days for submission to the National Assembly. He closed by informing that his appointment as PR to the UN was ending and thanked the Chair and Configuration members for their support to Guinea-Bissau.
5. Permanent Representative of Niger, H.E. Mr. Abdou Barry represented ECOWAS chairmanship, reiterating that ECOWAS remains fully mobilized to resolve the political crisis. He reviewed political situation in Guinea-Bissau and recalled ECOWAS' communique of 22 April recognizing the electoral victory of Umaro Sissoco Embaló and requesting the appointment of a Prime Minister and new government as well as the immediate initiation of the constitutional reforms process. In this regard, the Ambassador acknowledged the recent establishment of the constitutional review commission as an encouraging step forward. He noted the consultations with political parties in parliament regarding the nomination of the new Prime Minister and recalled that ECOWAS had extended the deadline in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ambassador recognized the progress made by the Bissau-Guinean authorities in the fight against drug trafficking and welcomed further concrete measures. He noted the impartiality of the defense and security forces and encouraged them to continue to refrain from interference. He also expressed gratitude for the PBC's commitment to Guinea-Bissau and called on the Commission to mobilize donors in support of national peacebuilding priorities, particularly with socio-economic issues such as food security and rural development.
6. Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, UN ASG for Peacebuilding Support welcomed the Chair's recent engagement with the World Bank, noting the importance of engagements needed to help secure longer-term peacebuilding priorities and socio-economic goals. He also stressed the usefulness of the PBC in providing a platform and creating space for discussions for strategic partnership between the World Bank and the UN, and other international financial institutions. In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ASG provided an update on Peacebuilding Fund projects in Guinea-Bissau, noting that several of the projects had adjusted their workplans or reoriented activities to respond to new tension triggers and to empower youth and women

leaders to play a key role in peaceful sensitization and community response. He recalled the PBF currently has peacebuilding projects that are supporting dialogue and inclusive institutional reforms from the Stability Pact as well as the fight against drug trafficking and organized crime at the institutional and community levels. The ASG expressed hope that the projects will bolster efforts by the SRSG and UNOWAS and that UNIOGBIS would work closely with implementing agencies and transfer technical knowledge before UNIOGBIS withdrawal.

7. Member States welcomed the briefings and made the following observations:

- They expressed concern about the political impasse in Guinea-Bissau and urged stakeholders to engage in constructive and inclusive political dialogue with a view to enabling the nomination of a new government in accordance with the constitution, in conformity of the March 2019 legislative elections and in alignment with the 22 April ECOWAS communique.
- They noted the leading role of ECOWAS and the continued engagement of the Group of Five in fostering dialogue and reconciliation and in promoting stability in Guinea-Bissau and encouraged UNIOGBIS to continue working closely with ECOWAS in support of mediation efforts. They stressed the importance of the international community's sustained engagement, in full respect of national ownership.
- They noted COVID-19's impact on peacebuilding and sustaining peace and emphasized the need for continued support by the international community in assisting Bissau-Guinean authorities in COVID-19 response as well as addressing the socio-economic impact of the pandemic.
- They underscored the need to ensure that important peacebuilding gains in rule of law and security sector reform, gender equality, and national reconciliation are safeguarded during the UN transition. In this regard, they reiterated the crucial role of the PBC in resource mobilization and providing a platform for coherent and coordinated support.
- They welcomed the flexibility of the PBF in the COVID-19 context and expressed continued support for PBF projects in support of community resilience and political dialogue and institutional reforms, noting the importance of supporting women in political and peacebuilding processes.