

# Mission Report of the PBC Guinea Configuration's Chairperson's Visit to Conakry (17-19 February 2013)

## I. Objectives and content of the visit

The Chairperson of the Guinea Configuration of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission visited Guinea from 17 to 19 February 2013, with the following objectives:

1. Preparing the second review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments;
2. Supporting the preparation of the upcoming legislative elections;
3. Learning about the state of preparations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP III) and discuss opportunities to link the development and peacebuilding, as well a possible role of the PBC in resource mobilisation efforts.

Ambassador Lucas was granted an audience by the President of the Republic, H.E. Professor Alpha Condé, and met with the Prime minister and a number of other Members of the government. She also met with representatives of political parties, local representatives of the Members of the Configuration and technical and financial partners (the complete list is under annex 1 of this report).

## II. Main results of the visit

### 1<sup>st</sup> objective: Preparing the second review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments

In the various meetings, the Chairperson was able to take stock together with partners on progress made in the three priority areas of peacebuilding in Guinea.

#### **National reconciliation and unity:**

The President of the Republic informed the Chairperson about progress made by the Reflection Commission on national reconciliation. Thus, the co-chairs of the Commission had been assigned offices and a programme of support for their work is being put into place by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), with the support of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

As concerns the fight against impunity, the President of the Republic underlined that the Pool of Judges in charge of investigating the violence of 28 September 2009 was making progress and had brought new charges. Support to their work was budgeted for 2013. The State Minister for Justice confirmed that the Pool of Judges had renewed the letter rogatory to Burkina Faso, with a view to interview Transition President Moussa Dadis Camara. The Prosecutor general was reported to have asked for a speedy conclusion of the investigation and for a transfer to the Indictments Chamber. Even at this later stage, civil parties can continue to be interviewed.

## **Security and Defence Sector Reform:**

Discussions on SSR took place on the background of the death of General Souleymane Kelefa Diallo, chief of staff of the Guinean Army, who was an important leader on SSR, and his team in a plane crash in Liberia on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

The President of the Republic affirmed his desire to step up the rhythm of these reforms and wishes that Lieutenant-General (ret.) Marc Caron, whose support was highly appreciated and whose mission came to an end in early February, be replaced as soon as possible. Among the successes of SSR, the Guinean partners underlined the continued computerisation of the human resources management of national defence, as well as progress made in the completion of the legal framework for defence, which aims notably to strengthen civilian control over the armed forces. They also underscored the promulgation of the Military Code of Justice, all the while insisting that considerable efforts remained to be done concerning the installation of the Military Tribunal and training for military magistrates.

Following the retirement of 3928 military personnel at the end of the year 2011, there were no future retirements in 2012, in order not to upset sensitivities in the army, given the large number of officers and non-commissioned officers due to retire. The next retirements are going to take place at regular intervals in June and December. In this context, the Guinean decision-makers would like to deepen cooperation with international partners as concerns accompanying measures in order to allow for better support and socio-economic reintegration of those who retire or are otherwise demobilised. The delegated Minister for Defence also broached the sensitive situation of some 7500 young Guineans recruited during the Transition, who received combat training, but no socio-economic reintegration programme: to integrate them into the army would set back efforts for slimming it down, while their demobilisation without accompanying measures would constitute a threat to peace.

The extension of reforms to security forces other than the army is going ahead, with the adoption of an autonomous statute for police and civil protection. A project for community policing is being elaborated with the support of the UN System, the EU and France. The completion of the national police school, which is due to become a regional reference centre, has also been highlighted, in the light of the considerable needs that remain for the training of senior police officers. The clearance given to judicial police officers is another important step.

Concerning justice reform, the President of the Republic has declared the year 2013 “the Year of Justice” and has confirmed his will to proceed with structural reform of the Judiciary in 2013, notably by launching the training of a new generation of (civil and military) magistrates, who are due to discharge their duties under better circumstances. He also emphasised that additional efforts will be made concerning the percentage of the national budget dedicated to Justice (which was raised from 0.29% in 2012 to 0.50% in 2013), notably when the annual budget adjustment is adopted during the year 2013.

The Minister of State for Justice informed that, similar for SSR, a Strategic Orientations Committee for Justice Reform is going to be set up and will be supported by a high-level adviser. Important legal texts on the statute of magistrates, as well as on the establishment of a Higher Council of the Judiciary (*Conseil*

*supérieur de la Magistrature*) are currently being discussed by the Transitional Parliament (CNT). A training plan for magistrates is being elaborated together with the European Union, the lead donor for justice reform. The Minister of State for Justice deplored that the justice budget remains well below the actual needs at the moment.

### **Employment policy for Women and youth:**

The President of the Republic underlined that women's and youth employment remained a high priority. The line Ministers welcomed progress in the execution of projects financed by the PBF, notably those with a high-labour intensive component. They confirmed that the microfinance fund for revenue-generating activities for women and youth is now operational and will be endowed with a reserve of 130 billion GNF (approx. 18.5m USD). At that moment, a first instalment of 30 billion GNF (approx. 4.3m USD) had been transferred to microfinance banks to be lent to women or young entrepreneurs. Activities in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence are based on the national strategy against gender-based violence and are executed in terms of prevention, repression and support to victims (cf. attached document underlining progress in this context). A project to accompany the most vulnerable segments of the population is being formulated together with the EU (and will include some demobilised/retired military personnel).

At the organisational level, policy documents are being elaborated by the line Ministries to improve coherence and reduce inefficiencies. Concerning women's and youths' employability in central economic sectors such as agriculture and mining, a study financed by the Peacebuilding fund has been launched. Talks are also underway with mining companies concerning training for young people in view of their later employment in the mining sector.

In the margins of the visit, the Chairperson of the Guinea Configuration also met with the Secretary-General of the Mano River Union (MRU) and touched upon cooperation in this area under the aegis of the MRU; in this framework, an approach following comparative advantages of the four member countries – Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Liberia – in terms of vocational training has recently been adopted.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> objective: Support the preparation of the parliamentary elections**

The Chairperson of the Configuration met with the main stakeholders in the preparation of the legislative elections<sup>1</sup>, announced by the President of the National independent electoral commission (CENI), M. Bakary Fofana, for 12<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

The Chairperson found a pervading sentiment of mistrust. Despite measures for confidence building undertaken over the last months, notably the restructuring of CENI, worries remain and it seems that positions have hardened, notably on the side of the opposition and centre parties. The absence of a framework for political dialogue in this context was flagged by a number of interlocutors. The President of

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1 The meeting of the Chairperson of the Configuration with the political parties of the presidential camp was cancelled because of the demonstration of 18<sup>th</sup> February.

the Republic indicated that he was about to announce the establishment of a permanent framework for dialogue<sup>2</sup> under the aegis of the Prime Minister and with the cooperation of the institutions of the Republic – the National Transitional Council, the Economic and Social Council, the National Communications Council – which should bring together the main political coalitions.

The visit coincided with demonstrations in Conakry and in the rest of the country, organised by the opposition, with the Government's permission, on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2013. Observers have concurred in saluting the largely peaceful behaviour of demonstrators and the restraint exercised by the security forces.<sup>3</sup>

Four days after the end of the visit, the main opposition parties (*Collectif/ADP*) however announced that they would withdraw from the electoral process, as long as their demands for a more transparent organisation of the elections would go unheard. The opposition demonstrations of 27 and 28 February were followed by widespread violence which left 10 dead and injured hundreds. On 6<sup>th</sup> March, the Guinea Configuration issued a statement appealing to all parties to exercise restraint and reiterated the readiness of its members to accompany the electoral process.

In this context, accompanying measures are already under way, such as the project for strengthening confidence between political parties and voters (RECOPPEL), the project for the training of polling station officers, the project for the strengthening of women's participation in the elections, as well as on-going efforts by the International Organisation of the Francophonie and the European Union to strengthen the participation of women in the elections, given that the law stipulates a 30% quota for women on the electoral lists.

**3<sup>rd</sup> objective: Learning about the state of preparations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP III) and discuss opportunities to link the development and peacebuilding, as well a possible role of the PBC in resource mobilisation efforts.**

The Configuration Chairperson met with the Minister of State for Economy and Finance, H.E. Mr Kerfalla Yansané and discussed the issue of integration of the objectives of peacebuilding and the fight against poverty. The Minister confirmed that one of the main challenges of Guinea was the establishment of a framework for good governance and that peacebuilding was of particular importance in that context. He informed the Chairperson that Guinea is planning to hold a Conference of (public and private) partners in November 2013 in Abu Dhabi and invited the Guinea Configuration to play an integral part in the organisation of this Conference.

The Chair also met with the Executive secretary of the permanent secretariat for the Poverty reduction strategy, Mr Ibrahim Sory Sangaré, together with representatives from the World Bank and UNDP. Mr Sangaré presented the main points of the draft PRSP III (which is to cover 2013-2015), stressing that the government had completed a very inclusive consultations process in its formulation, with consultation

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2 This process has been engaged since then.

3 In a separate incident in Kankan, the office of the PEDN political party was targeted by an act of political violence, which left 15 people injured.

workshops in the four natural regions of Guinea. Work is to be finalised soon in view of the adoption of the PRSP III by the National Transitional Council before the end of March 2013, in order to allow for its presentation to the Board of the World Bank in April, at which stage the World Bank is to take a decision on its next Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for Guinea. The central focus of the Paper is a fast-track, pro-poor growth approach with an annual growth rate of 10%, on the basis of structural reforms in governance, good public financial management, notably also the management of revenue from the mining sector. In order to reach this goal, the programme focuses on four strategic areas, i.e. 1) Governance and institutional and human capacities building, 2) Acceleration, diversification and sustainability of growth, 3) Development of infrastructures supporting growth and 4) Improvement of access to basic social services and to the resilience of households. The stakeholders also expressed an interest to explore the implementation of an Aid information and management system, which would have to be based at the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

### **III. Conclusions and next steps**

During the visit, the end of June 2013 was raised as a deadline for the finalisation of the second periodic review of the Statement of Mutual commitments, with a view notably to take into account the holding of the legislative elections.

The Chairperson of the Configuration proposed that a first draft report be composed until mid-May on the basis of information received during the mission in question, information received from Members of the Configuration and input from the United Nations System, as well as on the basis of the information and assessments of the Government of Guinea. The draft report, along with recommendations for the continued engagement of the PBC in Guinea, will then be shared for comments with the Government of Guinea and the Members of the Configuration. The finalised report can be adopted at a formal meeting of the Configuration in New York, for which the Chairperson foresees to invite the political and technical focal points of the Configuration, Minister for human rights and civil liberties Kalifa Gassama Diaby and Ambassador Boubacar Diallo.

The Chairperson also proposes to hold an informal meeting of the Configuration at the earliest convenience, dedicated to the legislative elections and the means for the Configuration and its Members to support them.

The Chairperson finally invites all interested Members to participate in a technical exercise with a view to making a joint contribution of the Configuration to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP III), to take a concerted approach to advocacy for the Partners' Conference foreseen for the end of the year and to discuss possible support to the establishment of an aid information and management system, following the 2012 donor mapping exercise in partnership with the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

The Chair of the Configuration would like wholeheartedly to thank the Government of Guinea, the UN Country Team and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) for their precious support during the visit, as well as all interlocutors for their availability and their commitment.

**Annex 1:**



**Mission of the Chairperson of the Guinea Configuration of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission to Conakry  
(17-19 February 2013)**

**PROGRAMME OF THE VISIT**

**Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

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|-------|--|
| 15h45 | Welcome at the airport by H.E. the Minister of Human Rights and Civil Liberties/PBC Focal point                    |
| 18h00 | Security briefing  |
| 20h00 | Working dinner with the Permanent Representative of Guinea to the United Nations and the PBF Coordinator in Guinea |

**Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

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|-------------|--|
| 08h30-09h00 | Meeting with the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Guineans Abroad   |
| 09h00-10h00 | Meeting with the UN Country Team   |
| 10h00-11h30 | Meeting with the Group of the Friends of Guinea  |
| 11h30-12h30 | Meeting with the Permanent Secretariat of the PRSP, the World Bank and UNDP  |
| 13h30-14h30 | Meeting with the President and the Commissioners of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI)   |
| 14h30-15h30 | Meeting with the delegated Minister for National Defence, the Minister of Security, Civil Protection and Security Sector Reform and the Chairperson of the SSR Follow-up Committee |
| 16h00-17h00 | Meeting with the Centre Political (CDR)  |
| 20h00-22h00 | Working dinner with Technical and Financial Partners   |

**Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

- 09h00-09h50 Audience with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Human Rights and Civil Liberties
- 10h00-11h00 Meeting with the Minister of State for Justice
- 11h00-12h00 Meeting with the Minister for Territorial Administration and Decentralisation
- 12h15-13h15 Meeting with the Ministers in charge of the priority « Women's and Youth Employment »: The Minister of Youth, Youth Employment and Sports and the Minister of Social Affairs, Women's Empowerment and Childhood
- 13h30-14h30 Working lunch with the Minister of State of Economy and Finance
- 14h30-15h30 Meeting with the opposition political parties (*Collectif pour la finalisation de la transition, ADP*)
- 16h30-17h30 Audience with the President of the Republic of Guinea
- 18h00-18h30 Press Conference

End of the mission of Ambassador Sylvie Lucas

Annex 2:

**Mission of the Chairperson of the Guinea Configuration of the  
Peacebuilding Commission to Conakry**

(17-19 February 2013)

**1. Context of the visit:**

Since the last visit, Guinea has reached the completion point of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative (HIPC), thus preparing the way for investment of considerable resources in the social sectors, which were previously reserved for debt repayments. The President of the Republic has completed a cabinet reshuffle in October 2012, which has led to the formation of the first entirely civilian government in the country's recent history. A new Independent National Election Commission (CENI) was constituted, representing an important milestone in the way towards democratic legislative elections. In terms of Security Sector Reform, a Senior Advisor, General Marc Caron, has accompanied the efforts of the Guinean Government, under the impulse and leadership of the President of the Republic.

**2. Objectives of the visit:**

1. Prepare the second review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments: the completion of the first review and the adoption of its recommendations by the Guinea Configuration on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012 has clarified and strengthened the scope of mutual commitments for peacebuilding, but it is necessary to ensure that these commitments are implemented. The visit will provide the opportunity to discuss the preparation of the second review, including the respective roles of stakeholders in Conakry [Government, Friends of Guinea, Joint Steering Group of the Peacebuilding Fund] and in New York [Configuration Members, PBSO] and a tentative calendar.
2. Support the preparation of the parliamentary elections: now that the Independent National Election Commission (CENI) is set up and has communicated a date and a chronogram for the elections, the Chair would like to take stock of the state of preparation of the elections and of outstanding issues, as well as assess the means at the disposal of the Guinea Configuration to support their organisation, notably by mobilising the support of Configuration Members in New York and in capitals, complementing efforts in Conakry.
3. Learn about the state of preparations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP III) and discuss opportunities to link the development and peacebuilding, as well a possible role of the PBC in resource mobilisation efforts. Some PBC Configurations have made successful experiences in terms of integrating development and peacebuilding objectives. The visit could also be the occasion to discuss with the Government which approach it would like to take for resource mobilisation and which role can be played in terms of advocacy and mobilisation of partners in view of a future partners' conference.