

24 February 2020

Excellency,

Through Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) the Council expressed its intention to regularly request, deliberate and draw upon the specific, strategic and targeted advice of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to ensure the longer-term perspective required for sustaining peace in the drawdown of Special Political Mission mandates. In this regard, the PBC would like to bring to the attention of the Security Council the following peacebuilding priorities in Guinea Bissau, drawing from the Commission's engagement in the country since it entered the formal agenda in 2007.

Since the establishment of the Configuration, the primary focus of the Commission's engagement in Guinea-Bissau has been to support the government in addressing its reform agenda, and tackle challenges impeding stability and long-term development. More recently, the Commission focused on the implementation of the 2016 Conakry Agreement to help bring the country out of its long political and institutional crisis.

The peaceful conduct of legislative and presidential elections in 2019 represents a critical step towards the consolidation of democracy in Guinea-Bissau. It offers, therefore, a privileged opportunity for the country to focus on the implementation of its development priorities and key reforms. However, obstacles remain in consolidating peacebuilding gains, which require the continuous attention of the international community.

As the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea Bissau (UNIOGBIS) is drawing down and transferring tasks to the UN Country Team, the United Nations Office for West Africa and Sahel (UNOWAS) and other partners by end December 2020, it will be critical that the United Nation's capacity to respond to the country's peacebuilding needs and priorities remains unimpaired.

In this regard, the PBC reiterates commitment to support UNIOGBIS and the UN Country Team during this transition and invites the Security Council to consider the following points:

- UNIOGBIS's mandate for the remainder of the year could allow for the enhanced and coordinated engagement with national stakeholders on the transition and to ensure an optimal reconfigured UN presence based on national peacebuilding priorities. In this context, UNIOGBIS' mandate could invite the Secretary-General to provide information, within the existing reporting cycle, on the implementation of the transition plan and on the monitoring of progress towards completion of the mission's tasks and the capacity of national and international partners to take over residual responsibilities.
- UNIOGBIS's mandate could maintain the peacebuilding components of Resolution 2458 (2019), including references, among others, to the importance of nationally-owned solutions, strengthening of democratic institutions, gender mainstreaming in

peacebuilding, continued engagement of women and youth in peacebuilding, and the promotion and protection of human rights.

- At this critical time of political transition, UNIOGBIS to continue to have a strong mandate to exercise good offices and to facilitate inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation, supported by UNOWAS, which would assume good offices and preventive role following UNIOGBIS withdrawal.
- UNIOGBIS to continue playing an important role in mobilizing, harmonizing and coordinating international support and resources for the implementation of key reforms outlined in the Conakry Agreement. The Security Council could consider including language on the importance of sustained international and regional engagement in strengthening national capacity and building inclusive and participatory institutions. In this regard, it would be also advisable that the Council consider maintaining language underscoring the pivotal role played by ECOWAS and recognizing the importance of the Group of Five (ECOWAS, CPLP, EU, UA, UN) in contributing to stability in Guinea-Bissau.
- In this context, the Security Council could also consider including language reflecting the crucial role of the UN Country Team, as it assumes additional tasks with the drawdown of UNIOGBIS.
- Considering the threat that drug trafficking and transnational organized crime poses to stability in Guinea-Bissau, the Council could consider emphasizing the continued provision of strategic and technical advice and support to the Government, in close coordination with UNODC.

The Peacebuilding Commission could assist UNIOGBIS in accordance with its mandate, in the following ways:

- continuing to assist UNIOGBIS in its full-scale transition planning and implementation and providing a platform for coherence between UNIOGBIS, UNOWAS, the UN Country Team, and all relevant international and regional actors;
- helping to mobilize international and regional support for Guinea-Bissau's peacebuilding priorities, particularly for national development plans and the future UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), in recognition of an anticipated funding shortfall after UNIOGBIS' closure;
- serving as a partnership forum to promote shared analysis and understanding of the multi-dimensional peacebuilding challenges in the country building upon lessons learned and experiences from recently closed UN missions in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire; and
- promoting the full, effective and meaningful participation and representation of women and youth, at all levels, as well as civil society in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

The Commission remains committed to supporting UNIOGBIS role in contributing to coordination and coherence efforts to address peacebuilding and sustaining peace priorities in Guinea-Bissau.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.