

**Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa  
“The situation in Guinea Bissau: Challenges and Way Forward”**

Statement by the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission

H. E. Ambassador Mauro Vieira, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

2 April 2018

**Mr. Chair,**

**I would like to thank you, Ambassador Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, for the invitation to address the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).**

**As I mentioned in my last “briefing” to the Security Council, on 14 February, the Guinea-Bissau Configuration is actively engaged in following the situation in Guinea-Bissau and in providing support for the country through different initiatives.**

**Brazil is also following the issue closely as the current chair of the Community of Portuguese Speaking-countries (CPLP).**

**During the last time that I addressed the Security Council, I presented a series of recommendations that reflected the opinions**

**expressed during the meeting of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration held on 12 February. These recommendations were also endorsed by the members of the CPLP.**

**On that occasion, I reaffirmed that the PBC will continue to make every effort to support Guinea-Bissau.**

**I reiterated the support of the Configuration for the Bissau Six Point Roadmap and the Conakry Agreement, as the framework for the resolution of the crisis;**

**I called upon the authorities of Guinea-Bissau and key political actors to show leadership and determination by engaging in actions that would lead to the implementation of these agreements;**

**I took note of the efforts of the region to solve the political impasse in the country;**

**I stressed the importance of holding free and fair elections in accordance with the Constitution of Guinea-Bissau, and called upon the support of the international community for this process;**

**I underlined the importance of renewing the mandate of UNIOGBIS for another year, as recommended by the Secretary-General;**

**I also recognized the effective, preventive and deterrent role of ECOMIB;**

**And finally, I commended the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Modibo Touré, for his efforts to help ensure an enabling political environment.**

**Mr. Chair,**

**Since then, as you are well aware, the Security Council issued, on 14 February, a Press Statement on the situation on Guinea-Bissau. On 28 February, the Council adopted Resolution 2404 (2018), that, among other important points, extended the mandate of UNIOGBIS for 12 months.**

**I continue to be in permanent communication with the Brazilian Ambassador in Bissau, who has maintained excellent relations with political actors and national authorities.**

**I am also in communication with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Modibo Touré.**

**On 23 February, President Vaz informed his intention to initiate political consultations in order to determine a date for the holding of legislative elections in 2018. He also stated his desire to abide by the legal and constitutional electoral framework.**

**I am also informed that the National Election Commission of Guinea-Bissau (CNE, in Portuguese) has suggested organizing these legislative elections on 18 November. The President of the Republic still needs to accept this proposal and, according to the Constitution, issue a decree confirming that.**

**In 9 March, the outgoing Minister of Finance, João Fadia, took part in the launch ceremony of the Project to Support the Organization of Legislative Elections. On that occasion, it was announced that the Government of Guinea-Bissau will contribute with US\$ 1 million to the “basket fund” of the project.**

**The estimated cost of the elections is US\$ 7.5 million. This will be the first time that the country will not entirely depend on international donors to organize and hold elections.**

**Even if the President decides to convene legislative elections in November, however, there are still significant challenges ahead. It will be necessary to update the voters' registration list, a process that was carried out for the last time in 2014.**

**There is also the fact that the position of President of the CNE currently continues to be held "ad interim", which could be problematic for the organization of the elections. The appointment of a new President for the Commission has to be approved by the National People's Assembly, and it could be difficult in view of the paralysis of the Parliament.**

**It is not clear if all political parties would accept to participate in elections organized by the current Prime-Minister.**

**However, the information that I received is that Prime Minister Artur Silva is personally committed to hold free, credible and transparent elections this year. This is an important effort that**

should receive support in order to help the stabilization of the political life of the country.

Mr. Chair,

In this context, allow me to share with you how I intend to move forward in the coming months to continue to help the Bissau-Guineans in overcoming the political crisis and to support peacebuilding efforts in the country.

Next Wednesday, 9 April, during the Quarterly briefing by the Chairs of Country-specific Configurations, I will have the opportunity to update the Organizational Committee of the PBC on the recent developments in the country. I am also planning to organize a meeting of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration in May, to follow up with the situation.

I would also like to inform that I intend to visit Bissau, in my capacity of the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the PBC in July. Of course, my mission to the country will be duly coordinated with the Government of Guinea-Bissau and I am sure that Ambassador Fernando Delfim da Silva will help me with that.

**In Bissau, I plan to consult with a broad range of stakeholders. If the organization of legislative elections starts soon, my visit will also allow me to discuss how to help with the necessary preparations.**

**Therefore, in the next months I will try to mobilize attention in order to help that legislative and presidential elections take place according to the constitutional framework.**

**This was underlined by a number of delegations during our last meeting of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration. The role of the PBC, in cooperation with UNIOGBIS, was also underlined by the Security Council in its Resolution 2404 (2018).**

**Finally, as I mentioned during my last “briefing” to the Council, I am planning a visit to the World Bank in Washington to discuss possibilities of cooperation with Guinea-Bissau. The exact details and date of the visit still need to be considered but rest assured that I will keep both the PBC and the Council informed.**

**Thank you.**