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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 408TH MEETING

13 DECEMBER 2013

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.I(CDVIII)

COMMUNIQUE

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 408th meeting held on 13 December 2013, adopted the following decision on the situation in Guinea-Bissau:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefing provided by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Guinea Bissau on the evolution of the situation in Guinea-Bissau. Council **also takes note** of statements made by the representatives of Rwanda, in its capacity as an African member of the United Nations of Security Council, as well as of Mozambique, Chair of the Community of Portuguese Language Speaking Countries (CPLP), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN);
2. **Recalls** its previous press statements and communiques on the situation in Guinea- Bissau, including communique PSC/AHG/BR/1(CCCXCVII), adopted at its 397th meeting, held at the level of Heads of State and Government, in New York, on 23 September 2013;
3. **Expresses its deep appreciation** to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), notably its Chairperson, President Alassane Dramane Ouattara, and the Chairperson of the ECOWAS Contact Group, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, for their sustained efforts towards the restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau, the promotion of sustainable peace, security, stability and development in Guinea-Bissau. Council **encourages** ECOWAS to continue its efforts;
4. **Further expresses its appreciation** to the international partners of Guinea-Bissau, for their contribution to the ongoing transition process in Guinea-Bissau, and **notes with satisfaction** the close coordination among the five concerned international organizations (ECOWAS, Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries - CPLP, International Organization of *la Francophonie* — OIF, the European Union - EU and AU). Council **encourages** the Commission, which coordinates the group of the five above-mentioned organizations, to undertake the required consultations for a new mission in Guinea-Bissau, after those undertaken in December 2012 and in July 2013;
5. **Takes note** of the postponement of the general elections to 16 March 2014. Council **encourages** the transitional authorities and all other stakeholders to make the necessary arrangements for the holding of elections that will mark the return to constitutional order by the newly-agreed date of 16 March 2014, including the conclusion of the voter registration process, which is currently underway. Council **emphasizes** that there should be no further delay in the holding of the elections. Council **also takes note** of the consensus reached by the parties in Guinea-Bissau on the fact that the transition process will end with the installation of all elected bodies. Council **commends** the President of the transition, the Prime Minister and other stakeholders for their efforts and commitment;
6. **Expresses its appreciation** to ECOWAS and its Member States, including Nigeria and other

countries of the region, as well as to the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA), for their generous contributions, in the spirit of African solidarity, to the financing of the electoral process. Council **also expresses its gratitude** to the United Kingdom, Timor Leste and the EU for their financial support to the electoral process. Council **notes with appreciation** the technical support provided by the Commission with the organization, at the request of the National Electoral Commission (CNE), of a training workshop for members of the CNE and other support measures envisaged, in particular the development of a communication strategy on the electoral process and the deployment of observers;

7. **Calls on** the transitional authorities, the political parties, the army and all other stakeholders to contribute positively to the creation of conditions propitious to the peaceful conduct of the electoral process. Council further **calls on** all Bissau Guinean actors to refrain from any act that could undermine the electoral process, and expresses its readiness to hold accountable any perpetrator of such act;

8. **Expresses concern** at the acts of violence registered in recent months against both Bissau-Guinean citizens and foreigners, repeated violations of human rights and the persistence of the culture of impunity in Guinea-Bissau. In this context, Council **calls on** Bissau-Guinean authorities to take, without delay, all necessary measures for the perpetrators of these acts to be identified and punished. Council **further requests** the Transitional Government and all other stakeholders in Guinea-Bissau, in particular the defense and security forces, to assume their responsibilities and make every effort to ensure the safety and protection of people and goods, including foreign nationals. Council **warns** all those involved in these acts that they will be held accountable and **notes**, in this respect, the relevant provisions of the presidential statement adopted by the UN Security Council, on 9 December 2013;

9. **Stresses the need** for more sustained efforts by the Bissau-Guinean actors to ensure the reform of the defense and security sector (RSDS), as a prerequisite for the sustainable promotion of democracy and the rule of law in Guinea-Bissau. Council **commends** ECOWAS for its support to this process, including through the renovation of military barracks. Council **encourages** other partners to lend their support to this reform;

10. **Calls upon** the AU Member States and the international community as a whole, in coordination with ECOWAS, to provide the needed support to the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB), including through its strengthening, to enable it to fulfill its mandate effectively, notably securing the electoral process;

11. **Stresses the need** for sustained international support to facilitate the post-conflict reconstruction and development process in Guinea-Bissau. Council **calls on** the Commission to initiate the necessary measures to ensure that Guinea-Bissau is included on the list of the countries benefiting from the African Solidarity Initiative (ASI). Council **notes with satisfaction** the intention of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission to resume its engagement with the country once appropriate conditions are in place, as well as the envisaged visit of the President of this Commission to Guinea-Bissau. Council urges the Peacebuilding Commission to accelerate the resumption of its engagement in the country;

12. **Notes with satisfaction** the actions taken on the ground by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission, Ovidio Manuel Barbosa Pequeno, which contributed, within the context

of the support to the ECOWAS efforts, to the establishment of a climate of trust and cooperation among the Bissau-Guinean stakeholders, and the creation of a new momentum. Council **expresses its appreciation** to the Special Representative for his initiatives, **encourages** him to continue his efforts and **assures** him of its full support;

13. **Expresses its gratitude** to the UN Secretary-General, in particular his Special Representative for Guinea Bissau, for the efforts they continue to deploy towards promoting sustainable peace and stability in the country;

14. **Decides** to undertake, in due course, a mission to Guinea Bissau;

15. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the situation.