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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 892<sup>ND</sup> MEETING

6 NOVEMBER 2019 ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXCII)

## COMMUNIQUE

**Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 892<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 6 November 2019, on the situation in Guinea Bissau,**

The Peace and Security Council,

**Recalling** Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCLV)], adopted at its 855<sup>th</sup> meetings held on 11 June 2019, which, inter alia, decided to dispatch the PSC Troika, which visited Guinea Bissau from 16 to 19 June 2019. **Also recalls** Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.2 (DCCC)], adopted at its 800<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 10 October 2018, in which Council reiterated the AU's readiness and determination to spare no efforts in supporting Bissau Guineans to overcome the challenges facing their country in the preparations for the legislative and presidential elections in 2019, in the implementation of the Conakry Agreement, as well as the Press Release issued by the Chairperson of the AU Commission of 30 October 2019;

**Further recalling** the Final Communiqué of the 55<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) held on 25 June 2019 in Abuja, Nigeria; the ECOWAS Communiqué of 29 October 2019; as well as the ECOWAS Press Release of 3 November 2019 after the visit of the ECOWAS Ministerial Follow-Up Committee, the Press Statement of the Joint Mission of ECOWAS, AU, United Nations (UN) and Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), issued on 7 October 2019, as well as the Declaration by the Chairperson of CPLP of 29 October 2019;

**Noting** the opening statements made by the Permanent Representative of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to the African Union, H.E. Ambassador Rachid Benlounes, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of November 2019 and by the Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui, as well as the briefing made by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Guinea Bissau, Ambassador Ovidio Pequeno; **also noting** the statements made by the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Guinea Bissau, Honorable Madam Ruth Monteiro, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Niger in his capacity as the Chairperson of the ECOWAS, and by the representatives of the African Members of the United Nations Security Council, namely, the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea; **further noting** the statements by the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU);

**Reaffirming** the solidarity of the African Union with the people of Guinea Bissau in their aspirations and efforts towards the implementation of the 2016 Conakry Agreement and Bissau Roadmap;

**Reiterating the imperative** for respecting the Constitution of Guinea Bissau;

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:

1. **Expresses deep concern** over the continued deterioration of the political and security situation, which threatens the constitutional order in Guinea Bissau, despite relentless efforts by the ECOWAS, the AU and the larger international community;

2. **Once again expresses deep concern** over the growing trend of drug-related crimes in Guinea Bissau, which remain a major security concern for the country and contributes to the instability of the country; in this regard, **urges** the Government of Prime Minister Gomes to strengthen the national laws to be able to address the drug-related crimes;
3. **Strongly deplores** the loss of life and destruction of property during the demonstrations of 26 October 2019 and **calls on** the relevant Bissau Guinean authorities to investigate and bring to justice the perpetrators, in the context of the fight against impunity;
4. **Strongly condemns** the illegal dismissal of the legitimate and internationally recognized Government of Guinea Bissau, as well as the appointment of a new Prime Minister, **declares null and void** the unconstitutional Decrees issued by President Jose Mario Vaz, on 28 and on 29 October 2019, and **requests** those who have been appointed through those decrees to recuse themselves, Council **strongly re-affirms** that the Government of Prime Minister Aristides Gomes is the only legitimate and internationally recognized Government of Guinea Bissau and, in this regard, **expresses its full support** to the legitimate Government of Prime Minister Aristides Gomes;
5. **Reiterates the call by** ECOWAS for all political actors in Guinea Bissau to fully abide by the decisions of ECOWAS of 29 June 2019 regarding institutional arrangements in Guinea Bissau until the 24 November 2019 election, in particular, the decision to extend the mandate of the President with limited powers, and the formation of the government of Prime Minister Aristides Gomes, whose program was duly endorsed by the National Popular Assembly;
6. **Underscores the imperative** for all Guinea Bissau political actors to scrupulously respect constitutionalism in the country and, in this regard, **affirms its determination**, in support of the actions by ECOWAS, and with the support of the entire international community, to take appropriate measures including targeted sanctions against individuals and entities whose actions are undermining the search for a lasting solution to the prevailing political and constitutional crises in Guinea Bissau;
7. **Calls upon** all Guinea Bissau political actors to respect the inviolability of 24 November and, in case of a possible run-off, 29 December 2019, as the scheduled dates for the presidential election and, in this respect, **also calls on** them to unconditionally support the efforts of ECOWAS, remain calm and refrain from any action that may negatively affect the successful organization and holding of the election and further aggravate the situation;
8. **Commends** the Guinea Bissau defence and security forces for maintaining their professionalism and remaining neutral in the face of the current political and constitutional crises and **encourages** them to remain resolutely apolitical, as Republican forces, and to respect the legality and legitimacy emanating from the legislative elections of 10 March 2019, and **stresses the need** for continued efforts towards security sector reform in Guinea Bissau;
9. **Underscores** the importance of ensuring conducive conditions for the successful organization and holding of presidential elections on 24 November 2019 in a transparent, credible and peaceful manner;
10. **Stresses the need** for all Guinea Bissau political stakeholders to uphold the supreme interest of the country above all other considerations and **calls on** them to work steadfastly towards creating an enabling environment for constructive dialogue among all stakeholders, in order to consolidate peace,

stability and socio-economic development in Guinea-Bissau, in this regard, **calls for** a genuine all-inclusive dialogue, among all political actors, as the only viable alternative for finding durable solutions to the current crisis;

11. **Also reiterates full support** towards the efforts being deployed by ECOWAS, particularly the current Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, H.E. President Mahamadou Issoufou of the Republic of Niger, with a view to promote the implementation of the Conakry Agreement of 2016 and the ECOWAS Six-Point Roadmap; and **expresses** appreciation to the efforts of the ECOWAS Mediator in Guinea Bissau, H.E. President Alpha Conde of the Republic of Guinea;

12. **Pays tribute** to the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB) for its continued support to efforts aimed at upholding constitutionalism in Guinea Bissau; and **stresses the need** for continued support to ECOMIB, with a view to enabling the Mission to more effectively discharge its mandate, particularly, during the electoral period;

13. **Commends** the international partners, including the UN, the EU and the CPLP for the continued support to ECOWAS and AU efforts in Guinea Bissau, and **appeals** to them to also render the necessary support for the successful organization of the upcoming presidential election;

14. **Reiterates its unwavering support** to the efforts being deployed by ECOWAS, with a view to finding a lasting solution to the situation in Guinea Bissau, in particular, the decisions as contained in the ECOWAS Communiqué issued on 29 October 2019; and **looks forward** to the outcome of the upcoming Extraordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government scheduled to take place on 8 November 2019, in Niamey, Niger;

15. **Reiterates the need** for the Chairperson of the AU Commission to pursue and intensify his efforts to assist Guinea Bissau in undertaking constitutional reforms, in accordance with the 2016 Conakry Agreement, as well as the ECOWAS Six-Point Roadmap;

16. **Agrees** to review the situation in Guinea Bissau on 18 November 2019;

17. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.