



**PRESS STATEMENT OF THE JOINT MISSION OF UNITED NATIONS,
AFRICAN UNION, ECOWAS AND CPLP TO GUINEA-BISSAU
OCTOBER 7, 2019**

- 1.** The joint mission, comprising the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) visited Bissau on 7 October 2019. The high-level delegation included:

 - Dr. Mohamed Ibn CHAMBAS, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for West Africa and the Sahel,
 - H.E. Ms. Minata SAMATE CESSOUMA, Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union Commission,
 - General Francis A. BEHANZIN, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the ECOWAS Commission, and
 - Ambassador Julio MORAIS, Director of Political, Economic and Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communities of the Republic of Cabo Verde, Representative of the CPLP.
- 2.** The objective of the joint mission was to emphasize that all efforts should be made towards holding the first round of the presidential election scheduled for 24 November 2019 and in view of completing the electoral process on 29 December 2019, in case a second round of the presidential election is needed.
- 3.** In this context, the joint mission met with the stakeholders and with the declared candidates or their representatives for the presidential election, as well as representatives of political parties.
- 4.** The joint mission also paid a courtesy visit to the Head of State, H.E. Mr. José Mario VAZ. It also met with the President of the National People's Assembly, Honourable Mr. Cipriano CASSAMA, as well as with the Prime Minister, H.E. Mr. Aristides GOMES.
- 5.** The joint mission also met, during the working session with the Prime-Minister, with officials of the electoral bodies responsible for the preparation of the election.

- 6.** In line with the decisions issued from the 55th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS Authority, the joint mission also reiterates the continuation of the current Government resulting from the legislative elections of 10 March 2019, whose main mission remains the organization of the presidential election.
- 7.** The joint mission reaffirms that, unless there is consensus, in writing and signed by all the concerned political actors, the correction which had been done regarding the omissions noted shall not be considered in the voters' register. In the absence of consensus, the voters' register used in the legislative elections of 10 March 2019 shall be maintained and used for the scheduled 24 November presidential election and 29 December 2019, in case of a second round.
- 8.** The joint mission urges the political actors to pursue their efforts towards the preparation and the adoption of a code of conduct and to commit to respecting it. It also urges the political actors, where necessary, to avail themselves of the available legal mechanisms in order to resolve any electoral disputes. Hate speech and incitement to acts of violence and aggression must be proscribed. The joint mission stresses the need to overcome mistrust in order to consolidate peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau and reassures all relevant stakeholders of all eventual technical support.
- 9.** The joint mission welcomes the stringent measures taken by the Government in response to the increase in drug trafficking in the country and encourages it to continue efforts to shed light on the recent seizure of nearly two tons of cocaine.
- 10.** The joint mission commends the professionalism shown by the security and defence forces and encourages them to maintain strict adherence regarding the electoral process.
- 11.** The joint mission also commends the various actors for their commitment to ensure a free, inclusive, transparent, credible and peaceful presidential election, and reiterates the international community's willingness to continue its partnership with the Republic of Guinea-Bissau in strengthening its democratic achievements and for its development.
- 12.** The joint mission acknowledges and commends the crucial role of ECOWAS in supporting the efforts of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau for peace and stability and the continued engagement of the international community, including the group of international partners in Bissau, known as the P5 (ECOWAS, AU, UN, EU and CPLP).
- 13.** At the end of these consultations, the joint mission reiterates the following:
 - The presidential election must be held imperatively during 2019, including the first round scheduled for 24 November and the second round, if applicable, scheduled for 29 December, in accordance with the established calendar.
 - It is imperative to ensure a peaceful environment for a free, inclusive, transparent, credible and peaceful presidential election.
 - The government must honor its financial commitment towards the effective holding of the presidential election.

- The international community must urgently disburse the committed technical and financial support; and other partners are urged to provide support.

14. Lastly, the joint mission expresses its deep gratitude to the Government and the People of Guinea-Bissau for the hospitality and the facilities provided to the joint mission during their stay.

Issued in Bissau, 7 October 2019

Dr. Mohamed Ibn CHAMBAS

Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for West Africa and the Sahel

H.E. Ms. Minata SAMATE CESSOUMA

Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union Commission

General Francis A. BEHANZIN

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Ambassador Julio MORAIS

Director of Political, Economic and Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communities of Cabo Verde, CPLP Representative