



10 May, 2013

To : Members of the PBC – Guinea Configuration

**Informal meeting of the Guinea Specific Configuration of the
PBC, New York, 03 May 2013**

Chair's Summary

An informal meeting of the Guinea Configuration chaired by H.E. Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, Chair of the Guinea Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, was held on Friday, 03 May 2013. The purpose of the meeting was to take stock of the process of political dialogue in view of the holding of legislative elections on 30 June, 2013, as well as for Members to be informed about the status of the technical preparation of the elections. The Government of Guinea was represented by H.E. Ambassador Mamadi Touré, Permanent Representative of Guinea to the United Nations.

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for West Africa, Mr Said Djinnit, briefed the Configuration via videoconference from Dakar, in his capacity as facilitator for the UN and member of the college of facilitators established to help bring about inclusive political dialogue in view of the holding of free, fair, transparent and inclusive legislative elections. Following their interaction with Mr Djinnit, members of the Configuration were briefed by Mr Tadjoudine Ali-Diabacté, Deputy Director of the UN Electoral Assistance Division, on the technical preparation of the elections and the main challenges to be addressed in this regard.

In her opening remarks, the Chair recalled the Statement of Mutual Commitments and its first review that articulate specific recommendations on elections, including the holding of politically and technically credible legislative elections in a spirit of dialogue and inclusion, and mobilising support for the elections. She noted some recent developments in this area, including the setting-up of a facilitation team to accompany the dialogue

among the political actors on the legislative elections, as well as the presidential decree issued on 13 April calling for the elections on 30 June 2013.

In his briefing, SRSG Djinnit highlighted the efforts of the facilitation team and the progress achieved so far.

Following a request by the Government of Guinea for the nomination of an international facilitator, Mr Djinnit was nominated on 13 April by the Secretary-General to be part of the facilitation team.

On 15 April, Mr Djinnit undertook his first visit in his new capacity as international facilitator. He met the key political actors, President Condé, the Prime Minister and the three main leaders of the opposition. He was assured that the date of 30 June was feasible and the presidential decree on the date of elections would not have an impact on the dialogue process; the President underlined the importance for the elections to be held before the rainy season of 2013 [note: the rainy season is at its peak from end June to end September] and that he was ready to discuss all pending issues related to elections. The three leaders of the opposition indicated that they could not continue the dialogue because they considered the date of the elections as part of the set of the preliminary issues to discuss, that also include the technical operator, the possibility for Guineans living abroad to vote and the functioning of the electoral body, CENI.

On 18 April, the opposition conducted demonstrations in Conakry, which led to one death and several injuries.

On 22-24 April, Mr Djinnit returned to Conakry. On 23 April, the Government, the opposition and the Presidential camp issued a joint declaration, calling on the security forces and sympathisers of all political parties to refrain from violence and confirming their determination to resolve outstanding issues through peaceful means. On 24 April, the President Alpha Condé made a statement in which he solemnly committed to a credible and transparent electoral process, to accepting the outcome of the elections and to taking steps necessary for the liberation of opposition sympathisers arrested in relation with political demonstrations. Building on this momentum, Mr Djinnit and his two national co-facilitators urged all political actors to sustain the spirit of openness and refrain from any act that might jeopardise the dialogue process.

On 25 April, a new demonstration was held; despite the signing of the non-violence agreement and overall restraint by security forces and political

activists alike, violence broke out after the demonstration. In a single incident, one young man was killed and a number of people were injured; in response, the Government promised a full inquiry and asked for an international ballistics expertise.

On 28-30 April, Mr Djinnit undertook his third visit in his capacity as facilitator of the dialogue. During this visit, he attended a meeting to which the Prime Minister had convened the opposition, together with the other facilitators.

From this round of visits, Mr Djinnit made the following observations: 1) while the political class is polarized, the dialogue and the facilitation have generated new positive dynamics, although they remain fragile, 2) all Guineans are mindful of the risks of further delaying the elections, 3) in parallel to the political dialogue, a technical UN-led team in Conakry is working to help address the outstanding technical issues linked to the elections. He thanked the PBC for its support to Guinea and notably to SSR efforts.

Following SRSJ Djinnit's briefing, the Permanent Representative of Guinea, H.E. Mr Mamadi Touré took the floor, thanking the Chair for the holding of a timely meeting and thanking SRSJ Djinnit for his support to Guinea. He offered a summary of steps taken by the government in view of the preparation of the elections, including a revision of the electoral law, the reconfiguration of the Electoral Commission under a new chairman, the installation of additional security measures in the electoral register, clear instructions to all representatives of the civil service to maintain neutrality, the authorisation of all political demonstrations, although it proposed safer routes; finally, he recalled the President's solemn declaration of 24 April. The Ambassador warned that a reopening of the procurement contract to find a new technical operator would push the elections to 2014. He stated the firm commitment of the Government to use the national dialogue in a peaceful and constructive manner. The Ambassador underlined that there was no precedent for Guineans abroad to vote in legislative elections; Guineans from only 17 other countries had voted in the 2010 presidential elections. In order to face down Guinea's current challenges, especially the fight against poverty, the Government sees no alternative to holding the elections on 30th June 2013.

Following the Ambassador's statement, Members of the Configuration took the floor. They thanked SRSJ Djinnit for the briefing and expressed their support to his new role as facilitator for the dialogue in Guinea, as well as to the national college of facilitators, to help create the conditions

conducive to the resumption and the success of the political dialogue with a view to hold free, fair, transparent and inclusive elections.

They expressed their concern over the on-going tension, they deplored the violence that is becoming a recurrent element of demonstrations and that has caused several deaths and numerous injuries, and they called for calm and respect of rights for demonstrations.

Members of the Guinea Configuration welcomed the different declarations made by the key Guinean players rejecting violence and committing themselves to the dialogue, to non-violent and transparent behaviour, as well as statements made by members of the international community encouraging the parties to pursue dialogue.

Some underscored the points that should be taken into consideration at this stage of the process, including further transparency by the electoral body, CENI, trust, involvement of regional organisations [note: Mr Djinnit informed that he is working closely with ECOWAS, AU, and some leaders of the region], involvement of women organisations.

Members further encouraged Guineans to continue to engage in a constructive dialogue, with a view to resolving the outstanding issues and ensuring the conditions for free, fair, transparent and inclusive elections. They took note of the date of 30 June announced for the elections. They reiterated their commitment to support the dialogue process and the facilitation work of Mr Djinnit, and to contribute to the international efforts in accompanying the elections at the technical and financial levels.

In his presentation, Mr Ali-Diabacté highlighted the progress and challenges of the technical preparation of the elections. While a finalised budget for the elections was not yet available, but is expected from CENI in the days following the Configuration meeting, the current version of the budget stands at US\$ 42 million, with a financing gap of some US\$ 13 million. Support of the United Nations is given in an integrated manner, from the political accompaniment by the SRSG, through the UNDP's technical assistance to CENI, along with guidance from DPA's Electoral Assistance Division. UNDP is executing a number of activities in support of CENI, including communications, coordination of international partners, awareness-raising and capacity building, supporting women's participation as well as civil society projects, and finally managing a basket fund for contributions to the organisation of the elections.

Overall, Mr Ali-Diabacté underscored that the holding of the legislative

elections on 30 June remains a challenge in light of the level of preparations and the political situation. A note of his presentation is attached to the present summary for easier reference.

The Chair concluded that the Configuration would remain in close contact with Senior UN leadership in the field in order to be able to inform Members about the final budgetary and security needs for the elections, so that they could take place in the best possible political and technical conditions. The Chair also underlined support of the Configuration to the efforts of the facilitation and stated that this was an important moment in the CSC's efforts to accompany Guinea on the road to consolidate peace and democracy and finalise the transition. She announced that a statement of the Configuration in support of the electoral process would be drafted with a view to its adoption in the days following the meeting.

Under Other Matters, the Chair raised three items:

1) Justice sector reform: The Chair recalled the importance of this reform process, as underlined by President Alpha Condé during the latest Chair's visit to Conakry in February. Two important presidential decrees which had been issued, putting into place a national steering committee for Justice Reform, and nominating a Special Adviser to the President in this area, had been transmitted to Members. The Chair recalled that the European Union was the lead donor in Conakry for Justice Reform and encouraged continued coherence in international support to the justice sector, notably by using the newly established national systems. The Chair also indicated that the Team of Experts of the Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict was about to finalise the preparation of a new phase of the project to support the work of the Panel of judges investigating the violence of 28 September 2009, announcing that the project would be shared with interested Members of the Configuration in view of possible contributions. The Ambassador of Guinea raised the question of the United Nations' support to Justice Reform and was assured by PBSO that a reply from the Secretary-General would soon be sent to the President of Guinea.

2) The second review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments was launched in early April and the Chair asked Members to try and stick to the proposed deadline of 15 May: contributions should cover the period of June 2012 to April 2013, and can include prospective contributions and activities for the following months. Given the date set for the elections, the Chair proposed to adopt a flexible approach for the finalisation and adoption of the second review report, which as in 2012 would be done at a

formal Configuration meeting in New York.

3) Concerning women's and youth employment policy, as well as wider development cooperation question, the Chair confirmed that engagement with international partners, including the World Bank was on-going. The Chair informed Members that the Government of Guinea had adopted its third Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for the years 2013-2015 at a recent Cabinet meeting; the PRSP could now be examined by the World Bank Executive Board in late June. Further to this, a preparatory meeting in view of the November 2013 Partner Conference had taken place in Abu Dhabi from 10-11 April 2013.
