

To : Members of the PBC – Guinea Configuration

**Informal meeting of the Guinea Country-Specific Configuration of the PBC,
New York, 18 June 2014**

Chair's Summary

An informal meeting of the Guinea Configuration chaired by H.E. Ambassador Sylvie Lucas was held on Wednesday, 18 June 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange with the political focal point of the Configuration, H.E. Mr Kalifa Gassama Diaby, Minister of Human Rights and Civil Liberties of the Republic of Guinea.

Minister Diaby recalled the eventful recent history of his country and summarised the principal milestones of peacebuilding since the beginning of the Commission's accompaniment in February 2011, on the basis of the three strategic priorities defined by the Government. According to the Minister, the Missions of the Configuration's Chair in 2012 and 2013 contributed to reducing pre-electoral tensions. The international facilitation by the United Nations allowed to unblock the crisis and to sign the political agreement of 3 July 2013: in this context, the Minister underscored that Prime Minister Mohamed Said Fofana had recently made the general policy address to the National Assembly and on this occasion had expressed the will of his government to create a framework for political dialogue with the opposition parties, as requested by them.

The Minister expressed his appreciation for the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), notably during the pre-electoral period. As political focal point of the Configuration, the Minister also chairs the Joint steering committee of the PBF on the technical level, and emphasised in particular the confidence building project aimed at political stakeholders and the population (RECOPPEL), the support to the training of 59.000 polling station officials, as well as the support to the Special force for the securing of the legislative elections (FOSSEL). He also raised the activities of the Ministry of Human Rights and Civil Liberties, the civil servants of which participate actively in peacebuilding and in the defusing of socio-political tensions. The project of national reconciliation, which has a high priority for the Minister of Human Rights, is not making progress as quickly as expected, despite the goodwill of the eminent Co-chairs of the Provisional reflection commission: it is now necessary to think about the institutional basis for the Provisional Commission.

In view of the 2015 presidential elections, accompaniment by the PBC should start right away and should be provided in a structured manner: it will be the Guinean State's responsibility to ensure that all institutions of the Republic are in place on time, notably the national human rights institution. The same expediency would be necessary in order to make progress for the strengthening and professionalization of security services, notably the police, as well as in terms of the improvement of perspective for sustainable employment for women and young people, taking into account the wider dimension of education and training on the basis of a coherent national strategy.

The Director of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), Mr Kenny Gluck, then summarised the conclusions of the technical mission led by PBSO to Guinea at the end of April 2014, to explore the possibilities of supporting capacity building of the National Assembly. According to Mr Gluck, the perspectives for cooperation are very good: even if 90% of the Members of Parliament are serving in such an office for the first time, there is a strong atmosphere of enthusiasm and professionalism in Parliament. There is a concrete opportunity here for the Configuration Members – especially those representing francophone countries – to establish links between their Parliamentarians and the new Guinean MPs, in order to exchange experience and lessons learned. A number of institutions of the Republic are being established, in particular the Constitutional Court, the National Independent Human Rights Commission and the Court of Auditors: all of these will be necessary for the good conduct of elections in 2015.

The representative of Senegal expressed the appreciation of his delegation for the positive role played by Minister Diaby, underlining the importance of his line Ministry for the protection of human rights and the rule of law: the Configuration should support the action plan for the promotion of human rights in Guinea. The general policy statement of the Prime Minister and the reactions of the Parliamentarians show how the political class is accepting responsibility for the consolidation of democracy. In this context, the Senegalese delegate shared the positive experience of his own Parliament with a system of parliamentary assistants and also recalled the ECOWAS Parliament was a tool for sharing lessons.

The representative of the European Union congratulated Minister Diaby for his indefatigable fight for human rights, together with the Minister of Justice. He also welcomed the signing of a historic investment agreement between the Guinean State and the Rio Tinto mining company. The proper operation of the National Assembly, justice reform and the proper holding of elections in 2015 are very important in the eyes of the EU: especially the presidential elections will be a litmus test for the entire country. Having observed the legislative elections of 2013 and having formulated a number of recommendations, notably to the National Independent Electoral Commission, the EU is standing ready to observe elections in 2015.

The representative of Spain expressed the satisfaction of her delegation with the compromise

found for the implementation of the political agreement of 3 July 2013: it will be important that a climate of dialogue be in place in view of the presidential election of 2015. Spain is closely following the evolution of the Ebola epidemic and continues its support to the government to eradicate this threat.

Before concluding, the Configuration Chair announced that she would circulate a revised draft of the second review report of the Statement of Mutual Commitments, as soon as the Government's comments had been received, with a view to its adoption as soon as possible. The Chair also proposed to have the PBSO's mission report circulated in view of possible bilateral support from the Configuration Members to the new National Assembly.
