

26 Mar 2008

## **26 MARCH 2008 - SECURITY COUNCIL PRESS STATEMENT ON GUINEA-BISSAU**

The following Security Council press statement on Guinea-Bissau was read out today by Council President Vitaly Churkin (Russian Federation):

Members of the Security Council heard a briefing on 26 March 2008 by the Representative of the Secretary-General, Shola Omoregie, on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, on the basis of the latest Secretary-General's report. Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Permanent Representative of Brazil and Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission's Country-Specific Configuration on Guinea-Bissau, also briefed the Council on the Peacebuilding Commission's engagement with the country.

Members of the Security Council reaffirmed their support for the continuing efforts made by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, working in close cooperation with its partners, to consolidate peace in the country.

Members of the Council noted with satisfaction the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission Country-Specific Configuration on Guinea-Bissau to develop a strategic peacebuilding framework, aiming at setting key priorities for consolidating peace and therefore allowing progress towards sustainable development in Guinea Bissau. Members of the Security Council looked forward to further advice from the Peacebuilding Commission as requested.

Members of the Council welcomed the outcome of the Lisbon International Conference on Drug Trafficking held on 19 December 2007, and supported the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) initiative to convene a regional conference on the subject. Members of the Security Council appealed to the international community to assist the Government and provide enhanced support and training for Guinea-Bissau's law enforcement and criminal justice system within the wider framework of security-sector reform and the fight against organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism.

Members of the Security Council welcomed the launch of the security-sector reform programme in January 2008 and the efforts made by donor countries and regional organizations, in particular the European Union and ECOWAS, to assist in implementing the programme.

Members of the Security Council noted with satisfaction the announcement made by President Joao Bernardo Vieira to hold legislative elections on 16 November 2008. They called on the Government to accelerate the preparations for these elections. They further appealed to the international community to provide the financial and material resources necessary to ensure the effective and timely organization of the polls.

Members of the Security Council recognized and commended the important role played by the Representative of the Secretary-General and the staff of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau, as well as by the United

Nations Country Team, and in this regard recall the request to the Secretary-General contained in presidential statement S/PRST/2007/38 to present proposals on how best the United Nations could provide effective assistance in an integrated and holistic manner to national efforts.