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SECURITY COUNCIL STATEMENT ON SITUATION IN GUINEA-BISSAU

28 June 2011 - The members of the Security Council were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Joseph Mutaboba, and the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti. The following Security Council press statement was issued today by Council President Noël Nelson Messone (Gabon):

The members of the Security Council were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Joseph Mutaboba, and the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti.

The members of the Security Council appreciated the presence of Aristides Ocante Da Silva, Minister of Defence of Guinea-Bissau, Manuel Domingos Augusto, Secretary of State for Political Affairs at the Ministry of External Relations of Angola and Chair of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), and Domingos Simoes Pereira, Executive Secretary of the CPLP.

The members of the Security Council note the progress made by the Government of Guinea-Bissau towards the maintenance of stability and the important steps taken in achieving economic reform and encourage it to continue such efforts. They welcome the work of the National Assembly in taking forward national political dialogue among all parties as a way of enhancing efforts to promote national reconciliation.

The members of the Security Council stress the need for the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to intensify efforts to create the enabling environment for enhanced civilian control over the security forces of Guinea-Bissau, in particular the armed forces, and to make progress on security-sector reform. In this regard, they reiterate their call upon the security forces, in particular their senior officers, to abide by civilian control. They further call upon the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the security forces to participate fully in national efforts to implement current programmes for security-sector reform on schedule in order to create effective, professional and accountable security forces that respect the rule of law as part of the Government's commitments to its international partners.

The members of the Security Council welcome the endorsement by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Authority of the ECOWAS/CPLP road map on security-sector reform. They further welcome the commitment by the Government of Guinea-Bissau to its implementation, and underline the importance of full national ownership of the process. They acknowledged the security-sector reform initiatives already being implemented by international partners and further encourage external assistance to national authorities in order to ensure its successful implementation.

The members of the Security Council take note of the assessment by the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), in consultation with ECOWAS and CPLP, of the requirements to support the rapid implementation of the ECOWAS/CPLP road map,

including those relating to the military leadership, and call for the swift implementation of its recommendations.

The members of the Security Council underline the need to operationalize the Pension Fund for the Armed Forces, which is a key part of the security-sector reform process and, in this context, welcome the allocation by ECOWAS and Angola of funds to it. They call upon other partners to participate in these efforts and encourage the Government of Guinea-Bissau to make provisions to ensure the sustainability of the Pension Fund in the long term.

The members of the Security Council call upon the Government of Guinea-Bissau to ensure the prosecution, with full respect for due process, of those responsible for criminal acts, such as political assassinations and drug trafficking, and call on the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union, CPLP and bilateral partners to support these efforts.

The members of the Security Council remain concerned at the persistence of transnational organized crime, including illicit drug trafficking, which threatens peace and security in Guinea-Bissau and the subregion. In this regard, they reiterate the need to tackle the problem of illicit drug trafficking in the countries of origin, transit and final destination as a common and shared responsibility. They reiterate their call for the Government to continue taking steps to create an environment conducive to the implementation of the West African Coast Initiative and the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organised Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa, and urge the United Nations, ECOWAS, CPLP, European Union and the African Union to step up assistance for this.

The members of the Security Council welcome the strategic work plan and benchmarks developed by UNIOGBIS and the United Nations country team, and affirm their strong commitment to a stable political, security and socio-economic environment in Guinea-Bissau, which is conducive to peace and development.