

29 Mar 2007

MARCH 29, 2007 - SECURITY COUNCIL PRESS STATEMENT ON GUINEA-BISSAU

New York - Following is today's statement to the press on Guinea-Bissau by Security Council President Dumisani S. Kumalo (South Africa):

Members of the Security Council heard a briefing on 29 March 2007 from the Secretary-General's Representative in Guinea-Bissau, Shola Omoregie, on the developments in Guinea-Bissau, as contained in the latest Secretary-General's report.

Members of the Council expressed concern about the continuing political and social tensions, in particular conflicts between the National Assembly and the Government, which has led to the resignation of the Prime Minister yesterday. The Security Council calls on the parties to resolve their differences through dialogue and strict respect for the constitutional framework.

Members of the Council expressed serious concern at the drug and human trafficking, and organized crime, and call on the Government to do all it can to combat these problems, and calls on the international community to provide the necessary assistance to Guinea-Bissau, so as to strengthen the security institutions, to ensure the independence of State powers, particularly the judiciary and legislature.

Members of the Council appealed to the Government of Guinea-Bissau to take appropriate actions to put an end to the proliferation of small arms.

Members of the Council reiterated the importance of the donor community, the United Nations system, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries continuing to play an active role in Guinea-Bissau, so as to alleviate the suffering of the people of Guinea-Bissau, and stressed the need for continued engagement by the international financial institutions. In this regard, they expressed the readiness of the United Nations presence on the ground to work with them.

Members of the Council encouraged the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau and the International Contact Group to continue to play their constructive roles in Guinea-Bissau.

Members of the Council expressed continued support to the Representative of the Secretary-General and the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) and its coordinating role with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the ground regarding the implementation of the security sector reform following the Geneva round table.

Members of the Council welcomed the communiqué issued by the International Contact Group on Guinea Bissau at its second meeting held in Lisbon on 26 March 2007.

Members of the Council noted the benchmarks on UNOGBIS presented to the Council, and called on partners to cooperate in the implementation of programs towards an exit strategy.