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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL  
623<sup>RD</sup> MEETING  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA  
8 SEPTEMBER 2016

PSC/PR/BR.(DCXXIII)

**PRESS STATEMENT**

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 623<sup>rd</sup> meeting held on 8 September 2016, received a briefing on the situation in the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Council took note of the briefings made by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Guinea-Bissau, Ambassador Ovidio Manuel Barbosa Pequeno, as well as of the statement made by the Secretary of State for International Cooperation of Guinea Bissau. Council also took note of the statements made by the representatives of Senegal, the Economic Community of West African States Commission (ECOWAS), the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU).

Council recalled its previous communiqués and press statements on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, particularly, Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM/2.(DLXXXVI) adopted at its 586<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 31 March 2016 and Press Statement PSC/PR/BR.(DCIV) adopted at its 604<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 9 June 2016, respectively.

Council expressed deep concern over the continued political stalemate in Guinea Bissau. In this regard, Council re-affirmed AU's strong conviction that only a genuine and inclusive dialogue, based on mutual respect, would enable the Bissau-Guinean stakeholders to find a consensual solution to the crisis facing their country and successfully establish conducive conditions for the consolidation of democracy, peace and stability, as well as post-conflict reconstruction.

Council underscored the importance of respect for constitutionalism in Guinea Bissau and urged all Bissau-Guinean stakeholders to adhere to the provisions of the country's Constitution in addressing any challenges at hand. In this context, Council commended the Guinea Bissau national defence and security forces for their exemplary behaviour of refraining from any involvement in the prevailing political and institutional crisis in the country.

Council also emphasized the importance of coordination of efforts between and among international actors providing support to Guinea Bissau. In this context, Council requested the AU Commission to urgently initiate consultations with ECOWAS, the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), the UN and the EU, in order to expedite the implementation of the decisions contained in its Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM/2.(DLXXXVI) adopted at its 586<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 31 March 2016.

Council commended ECOWAS, in particular, its current Chairperson, President Hellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and former President Olusegun Obasanjo, as well as the neighboring countries for their relentless efforts in the process of finding a solution to the current political and institutional crisis in Guinea Bissau. In the same context, Council commended the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission for Guinea-Bissau and the UN Special Representative in Guinea-Bissau for their relentless efforts and urged them to persevere.

Council further expressed appreciation to the CPLP, the EU and the UN for their continued support to the efforts aimed at finding a lasting solution to the political and institutional crisis facing Guinea Bissau.

Council, once again, recognized the important role being played by the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB) in stabilizing the country. Council also recognized the challenges being faced by the Mission, particularly financial constraints. In this regard, Council appealed to AU Member States, in a position to do so, as well as to the rest of the international community, to assist in the mobilization of financial resources in support of ECOMIB, with a view to enabling the Mission to more effectively discharge its mandate.

Council stressed the importance of remaining vigilant and requested the AU Commission to continue to provide regular updates on Guinea Bissau to Council.

Council agreed to remain seized of the matter.