



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

AFRICAN UNION, ECOWAS, EUROPEAN UNION AND UNITED NATIONS JOINT SECURITY SECTOR ASSESSMENT MISSION TO GUINEA-BISSAU

Bissau, 12 March 2015: An African Union (AU) led Joint Security Sector Assessment Mission (JAM) to Guinea-Bissau was conducted on 2 - 12 March 2015. The mission was carried out upon request by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, and comprised of representatives from the AU, the United Nations (UN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union (EU), the African Security Sector Network (ASSN) and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP). The mission was led by Ambassador Ovidio Pequeno, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission (SRCC) and Head of the AU Liaison Office to Guinea-Bissau.

The mission offered an opportunity to assess the current status of security sector reform initiatives with a view to arriving at a common understanding of the fundamental sectors involved in the reform process. In particular, the mission aimed at making recommendations on the gaps, deficiencies as well as opportunities to assist the Government of Guinea-Bissau in its efforts towards the reform of the country's security institutions in line with national priorities, the AU Policy Framework on SSR and UN Security Council resolution 2203 (2015). The mission observed that the Government and people of Guinea Bissau are committed to security sector reform, and noted the important steps already taken by the Government and the international community in this regard. The recommendations of the mission will align with existing security sector reform guidance developed by the AU, the UN and ECOWAS to improve accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness to democratic control of security institutions in Guinea-Bissau.

In the course of its work, the mission consulted with a wide range of national authorities and international partners, including President Jose Mario Vaz and Prime Minister Domingos Simões Pereira, other high-level Government officials and the civil society, including traditional leaders. The President highlighted the need for security and justice to reinforce socio-economic development. The Prime Minister commended the support already being extended to Guinea Bissau by the international community in this regard. The mission also met with high level officials in the defence, security and justice sectors.

On 11 March, the mission conducted a one-day combined consultation workshop with representatives of all security sector stakeholders to brainstorm and consolidate the findings and recommendations. The workshop was opened by the Minister of National Defence, Cadi Seide. The JAM was considered to be timely as it coincides with the final stages of the country's preparation for an International Roundtable with partners scheduled for 25 March 2015 in Brussels, at which security sector reform will feature prominently.

The Joint Security Sector Reform Team is now in the process of preparing the mission report that will be shared with the Government of Guinea-Bissau for consideration on the way forward, and with the various partners for their support. The AU remains committed to work with the international community to support security sector reform as one of the key components for building sustainable peace and development in the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

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Peace and Security

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