

**Country-Specific Configuration on Guinea-Bissau
of the Peacebuilding Commission**

**India Intervention
by
Ambassador K. Nagaraj Naidu
Deputy Permanent Representative**

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Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for your comprehensive briefing on the situation in Guinea Bissau and on the Peacebuilding Commission's engagement. We also thank the other speakers for their briefings on the challenges facing the country.

Your efforts as the Chair to encourage action by all stakeholders to facilitate implementation of the Bissau and Conakry Agreements reached in the mediation process led by ECOWAS is well noted. We also appreciate your efforts in reaching out to the international financial institutions to address the financial crisis afflicting the country.

Mr. Chairman,

Guinea Bissau has been in political crisis since August 2015. Security Council members last visited Guinea Bissau in March 2016 and had then called for the situation to be resolved through dialogue and in accordance with national laws and the constitution. We have taken note of the upcoming visit of the Security Council members to Guinea Bissau, which will be followed by a briefing session. We hope the visit will provide an opportunity to members to assess the situation on ground ahead of the decisions they may take.

We are hopeful that Guinea Bissau will be able to hold inclusive, free and credible elections, now proposed to be held on 10th March, in accordance with its Constitution, with the support of the international community and with the assistance from the Peacebuilding Fund.

We appreciate efforts made by all member countries and organizations to provide technical and financial support for the conduct of the forthcoming elections.

The continuing political crisis and instability that is affecting the overall socio-economic situation in the country needs to be addressed. UN Office on Drugs and Crime has been doing commendable work in Guinea Bissau in the areas of transnational organized crime, trafficking in persons, border control and countering illicit trafficking and counter terrorism.

While recognizing the contributions of all stakeholders to the Guinea Bissau political processes, it is important to note that national ownership and leadership of Guinea Bissau is necessary for the success of any political process. It is also important that we lend support to both the internal and regional political dialogue processes to have a strong ownership of the outcome.

We also welcome the step taken by the Government of Guinea Bissau towards gender inclusion by the promulgation of the Gender Parity Law in December last year by the President, which establishes a 36% quota for women candidates for parliament and in public sector institutions.

India continues to partner Guinea Bissau in its development and capacity building initiatives, including development assistance worth US\$ 25 million for rural electrification projects, food processing and agriculture.

We commend the efforts of the PBC Guinea Bissau Configuration as a platform for discussions amongst various stakeholders along with the Government of Guinea Bissau and would support your efforts in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.