



**STATEMENT OF
H.E Mr. DOMINGOS SIMÕES PEREIRA
PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA BISSAU**

**DURING
THE GENERAL DEBATE OF 69th SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 29, 2014

Mr. President

Mr. Secretary-General

Honorable Heads of State and Government

Ladies and gentlemen

On my own behalf and on behalf of the President of the Republic José Mário Vaz and the State and People of Guinea-Bissau, I congratulate Your Excellency Sam Kutessa for your election to the honorable and distinguished office of President of this 69th Session of the General Assembly.

Your election in this most representative institution of the International System pays tribute not only to Uganda, your country, but also to the entire African continent. I therefore welcome you and wish you success in guiding the work of this great and august assembly.

We are grateful to the United Nations, particularly to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, for the attention given to Guinea-Bissau and for the important contribution of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau toward the process of political normalization. We would also like to say a special word of appreciation to the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, President José Ramos Horta, for his friendship toward Guinea-Bissau and for his dedication to the mission.

We appreciate and thank the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, their government and their people. When they saw the need of their sister nation, they extended a hand of friendship and provided valuable and extraordinary support for our country to overcome our crisis. Please accept the gratitude of the people of Guinea-Bissau.

The sub-region provided financial support for our government to function, which was key for us to arrive at this juncture today.

We wish to say a word of appreciation and profound recognition to the ECOMIB forces, which carried out their mission with professionalism and ensured a peaceful and orderly transition. We likewise applaud the efforts made by all political actors in Guinea-Bissau and our international partners toward reaching the consensus required to maintain an international stabilization force after the period of this current term.

We wish to recognize and thank all the member countries of ECOWAS for their support, particularly my friend and brother, President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria, who chaired the Contact Group on Guinea-Bissau and provided additional and valuable support to our country. I pray to God almighty for peace and

tranquility for his country and well-being for his people. And we are deeply grateful to President Alpha Condé, who mediated the crisis in Guinea-Bissau.

Finally, we express our profound recognition and gratitude to all our international partners, namely the United Nations, the African Union, ECOWAS, CPLP, the European Union, UEMOA, and OIF, whose support was important in monitoring and managing the political transition process, as well as in holding free, transparent, and fair general elections in our country.

Mr. President,

I would further like to share with you that the Bissau-Guinean society has renewed its hope for a new political cycle and to assure you of our political will and deep commitment to consolidating political stability, revitalizing and strengthening the State's capacity, and creating the basic conditions for the dreams of our people to come true.

Guinea-Bissau is a post-conflict State with fragile institutions and scarce financial resources, suffering the severe political, economic, environmental, and social consequences of our crisis. Therefore, our country faces a complex and difficult situation and calls on the International Community for assistance, which will be essential in stabilizing our country in this post-election period. Guinea-Bissau must strengthen the State's institutional capacity, reduce poverty and the vulnerabilities of our people, ensure social stability, legitimize our government, and relaunch our economy.

This approach to international assistance, which is at the center of our dialogue with our international partners, is based on the government agenda, which has three key components: Urgent Program, Contingent Program, and Medium-Term Development Program.

Under the Urgent Program, we must ensure food safety and social stability through support for agricultural production and distribution, improve access to food and income for part of the population, provide basic health, education, and water and power supply services to the population, as well as pay civil servants' overdue salaries. This program also includes a health emergency plan of action to prevent and respond to the threat of an Ebola epidemic.

The objective of the Contingent Program is essentially to ensure transparency and accountability in all natural-resource concession and exploitation agreements, and to put an end to the nefarious procedures that resulted in the plundering of our country's forestry and fishery resources during the last two years.

The Medium-Term Development Program will be submitted to our international partners in a Donor Conference to be held late this year or early next year, for which we request the essential support of the United Nations and all multilateral and bilateral partners.

We now begin to face the challenge of rebuilding a new Guinea-Bissau, fully aware of all the problems, but filled with a patriotic spirit of collective drive and unity among all Bissau-Guineans and, in particular, among all political actors and sovereign institutions, and with full confidence in an inclusive government that includes all political parties that are represented in our Parliament, as well as Civil Society and the Diaspora. This confidence was significantly enhanced by our National Parliament's recent unanimous approval of the Government's program, which is unprecedented in the history of our democracy.

While it is true that the ongoing process of political stabilization and normalization of the democratic institutions in Guinea-Bissau depends on a major national effort, it will also require unequivocal and urgent support from our regional and international partners. We must structure and coordinate our actions based on the goals established under the Government's program in order to lay the foundations for our country to change course and become viable.

In this context, three situations demonstrate how imperative it is for us to combine our efforts: 1 – The ongoing process of Defense and Security Sector, including extensive steps taken in recent days toward its reorganization; we need international support in order to make them sustainable and irreversible; 2 – Extending the State's presence in the national territory in an effective and organized manner through decentralization and local elections; the Government will lay the foundations for the municipal administrations to become operational and adopt the National Territory Organization Policy; 3 – The extremely complex task of combating drug trafficking and organized crime; our country's efforts will be successful only through a collective and objective approach.

Mr. President,

Guinea-Bissau needs a robust and impactful intervention from our development partners in order to consolidate the success of our political transition but also to lay the foundations for a transition toward development. We request the reactivation of the International Contact Group on Guinea-Bissau under the auspices of the United Nations, for the purposes of monitoring the domestic situation in our country and supporting the mobilization of international aid, which is key for our country to face the challenges in our future.

Excellencies,

The new authorities in Guinea-Bissau, our Parliament, the President of the Republic, and our Government chose an inclusive dialogue and political coordination as the preferred tools in our efforts to consolidate political stability and create a wide consensus around the main thrusts of governance.

Therefore, in addition to strengthening the democratic legitimacy of our political institutions, we wish to take clear, unequivocal, and decisive steps to build large consensus on the main issues facing our society, anchored in a Political Protocol that established the main areas of legislative and executive action, including issues related to reforming the State, revising the Constitution, and rebuilding the economy. A sign of this power-sharing vision for the resolution of our main problems is the inclusion of the opposition leader as part of this delegation, to show the world, together, that Guinea-Bissau can embark on a path of harmony and stability.

Excellencies,

Our sub-region, West Africa, is confronted by an Ebola epidemic, which places several countries of ECOWAS, our Community, under direct threat. Allow me to offer Guinea-Bissau's solidarity toward our sister nations where cases of contamination have been identified.

I would also like to note our appreciation for the international efforts in providing urgent medical assistance and call on the International Community to enhance their commitment and support in combating and preventing this epidemic. We also appeal for the establishment of an effective international coalition to confront this grave threat to international security, as recently recognized by the Security Council.

In this regard, we would like to reaffirm our country's position on reforming the Security Council. The enlargement of this important body of the United Nations is required in order to enhance the legitimacy of its representation and for the new international order under discussion.

From this perspective and in accordance with the African Union's position, Guinea-Bissau calls for the designation of two permanent seats with the right of veto and five non-permanent seats in the Security Council for the African continent. We also voice our support for the designation of permanent seats in the Security Council for Brazil, Japan, Germany, and India.

I would like to offer our solidarity toward the peoples and countries that have fallen victim to international terrorism and to renew our Government's commitment to contributing to the fight against this scourge under a framework of coordinated actions undertaken jointly with our regional and international partners, according to the specific nature of the actions.

We note with concern that the economic and financial embargo imposed against Cuba more than 50 years ago constitutes a serious obstacle to that country's economic and social development, and reiterate our call for its lifting.

Mr. President,

We would like to applaud and encourage United Nations, particularly the Secretary-General, for their renewed efforts, vision and wisdom with regard to facing the issue of climate change and its effects on life on our planet. The Climate Summit, held here on the 23rd of this month, bears eloquent witness to this fact.

The basic thrusts that may allow for viable and sustainable development emerged and seem able to gather the required consensus for the establishment of a global Post-Kyoto climate regime for the welfare of all.

Sustainable Development Goals, the new global development paradigm to be established post-2015, must be rooted in the cultures and objective realities of the peoples and draw their inspiration, without a doubt, from the lessons of the Millennium Development Goals.

It should be noted that climate change is no longer a threat to the future; it has now become an unequivocal threat to the present. The incidence of climate changes that expose our vulnerabilities is now felt with increasingly unpredictable consequences.

Human, economic, and environmental losses in a vulnerable country such as Guinea-Bissau are expanding and threaten our survival and chances for development.

The rise of sea levels may irreversibly affect our seaside areas, entire islands, villages, and cities, as well as other coastal settlements. This situation is particularly worrisome for our country, which combines coasts and archipelagos, suffers the impacts of climate events, and may see our efforts toward combating poverty and achieving development goals compromised.

Despite all the difficulties that have challenged Guinea-Bissau's efforts to fulfill our international commitments holistically, we are pleased to note that 12% of our national territory consists of protected areas, to be doubled by 2020.

Unfortunately, most of the population in developing countries with forests, such as Guinea-Bissau, continue to depend of these natural resources as their only means of survival. Therefore, in order to offset these initiatives, technological and financial alternatives must be made available to this population.

Mr. President,

I conclude my statement by thanking the United Nations and expressing our deep appreciation for the significant role that the Peacebuilding Commission has played in supporting the consolidation of political and governance stability in Guinea-Bissau.

I also recognize the institutions in the United Nations System, including UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, UNFPA, and WHO, as well as grassroots groups and nongovernmental organizations that work on a day-to-day basis with our Government in combating poverty and the vulnerabilities of our population, and advocate respect for human dignity.

The people of Guinea-Bissau expects strong involvement from your institutions in this new phase, in order for us to accelerate our efforts and come closer to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Guinea-Bissau is poised to transform our territory into a space of peace, human security, and openness for all who, together with our people, wish to build a more brotherly, secure, welcoming, and progress-oriented society with all peoples and cultures.

Thank you very much!