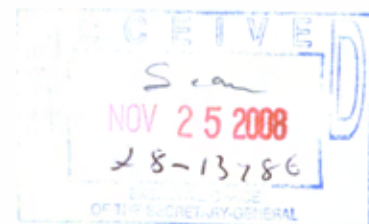


ACTION
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Note to the Secretary-General

GUINEA-BISSAU: ARMED ATTACK ON PRESIDENT VIEIRA'S RESIDENCE✓

1. The international community largely followed your strong condemnation of the armed attack on President João Bernardo Vieira's residence in the early morning of 23 November 2008, in a development widely seen as an attempted assassination. This was the second such attempt in less than four months.

25/11/08

2. Preliminary reports have confirmed that one of President Vieira's guards was killed and several other people injured. Five members of the armed forces of Guinea-Bissau, who reportedly took part in the attack, are said to have been arrested. The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces informed your Representative, Mr. Shola Omoregie, that a thorough investigation had been initiated, and intimated that supporters of the former head of the Guinea-Bissau Navy, Rear Admiral Bubo Na Tchuto, who fled to Gambia after being accused of leading the failed attack on President Vieira in August, were responsible for the 23 November incident.

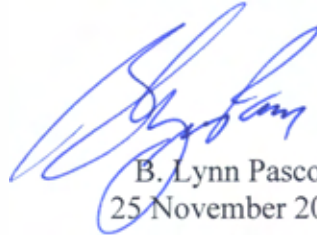
3. Although the motive(s) for the attack remain unclear, a **link** continues to be made with the publication on 21 November of the results of the 16 November legislative elections, which gave a large majority of 67 seats out of 100 in Parliament to the PAIGC party. The PRS, which came in second with 28 seats, had rejected the results as fraudulent and its leader, former President Kumba Yalá, was prevented by the State Prosecutor from leaving the country on 21 November. Since his party draws its support mainly from the same Balanta ethnic group that dominates the armed forces, many analysts suggest that the Balanta elements of the military, displeased with the marginalization of the PRS party following the elections, may have sought to seize power directly through a coup.

4. Your statement condemning the attack was also accompanied by similar positions expressed by many bilateral and international partners of Guinea-Bissau, including, among others, the African Union, ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP). On the ground in Guinea-Bissau, your Representative initiated consultations with the UN system, national authorities and international partners to try to find a solution to the current crisis. Following these consultations, the diplomatic community issued a joint statement condemning the attack, and recalled the international community's growing rejection of the culture of impunity. Your Representative also led a delegation of Ambassadors and representatives of international organizations accredited to Guinea-Bissau to meetings with national authorities, including the President and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. Neighboring Senegal is reported to have sent troops to the border with Guinea-Bissau, and President Wade is said to have proposed the convening in Dakar of an international conference in Guinea-Bissau.

5. The people of Guinea-Bissau themselves appear shocked and disappointed by the negative turn of events following the peaceful elections of 16 November. More than 1,000 civilians marched in the capital on 23 November, calling for peace and expressing solidarity with President Vieira after the attack. They also called for the perpetrators of the attack to be brought to justice. The main political actors have also been meeting with your Representative to discuss

the way forward, with the PAIGC pressing on President Veira to proceed with the establishment of a new government to be led by their leader.

6. Your Representative is continuing to monitor the situation and is providing relevant support to national authorities. We will keep you informed of further developments. SRSG Said Djinnit of UNOWA will also visit Guinea Bissau along with the President of ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and the Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso, Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, to assess regional implications of the situation and initiate the necessary regional efforts to contain it.



B. Lynn Pascoe
25 November 2008

cc: Mr. Omoregie