



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL
on the opening of consultations with Guinea-Bissau pursuant to Article 366a of
the Lomé Convention

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Following the events which occurred in Guinea-Bissau on 6 and 7 May 1999, the European Union published a declaration condemning the outbreak of violence, the deposition of President Vieira in violation of the Abuja agreement and the attacks on diplomatic missions.

Article 5 of the Lomé Convention stipulates that respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law underpins relations between the ACP States and the Community.

The Union therefore appealed to the various authorities in Guinea-Bissau:

- to work for national reconciliation, reconstruction and development;
- to return to the process of democratisation based on the country's Constitution, and;
- to take the necessary measures leading to the holding of free and fair presidential and legislative elections in November.

In accordance with Article 366 a of the fourth ACP-EC Convention implemented by the Council decision of 11 March 1999, the Commission proposes that the Council invite the ACP party (Guinea-Bissau) to consultations with a view to assessing the situation in detail.

These consultations should enable the Guinea-Bissau party to specify the measures that it intends to take to meet the expectations expressed by the European Union in its declaration of 18 May 1999, in particular with regard to the separation of civilian and military powers, as well as the deadlines that it intends to set and respect.

DRAFT

Sir,

In its declaration of 18 May 1999, the European Union condemned the recourse to violence for the resolution of the conflict in Guinea-Bissau, which led to the deposition of the democratically elected President as well as to attacks on diplomatic missions. The European Union also deplored the violation, by both parties, of the Abuja agreement and of constitutional arrangements.

In this declaration, the European Union appealed to the various authorities in Guinea-Bissau:

- to work for national reconciliation, reconstruction and development;
- to return to the process of democratisation based on the country's Constitution, and;
- to take the necessary measures leading to the holding of free and fair presidential and legislative elections in November.

Following this declaration, an interim president was nominated in accordance with Guinea-Bissau's constitutional procedures and the government of national unity has remained in office. Since the Guinea-Bissau authorities have declared that they wish to see relations with the European Union normalised as quickly as possible, the EU must now verify that the conditions set out in its declaration of 18 May 1999 are being respected.

Pursuant to Article 366a of the Lomé Convention, I should like to invite the ACP party to consultations with a view to assessing the situation in detail.

These consultations should enable Guinea-Bissau to specify the measures that it intends to take to meet the expectations expressed by the European Union in its declaration of 18 May 1999, in particular with regard to the separation of civilian and military powers, as well as the deadlines that it intends to set and respect.

I suggest that these consultations take place on at..... in the premises of the Council of the Union.

Yours faithfully

For the Council

For the Commission

H.E. the Ambassador of
Chairman of the Committee of ACP Ambassadors
Brussels

Copy : Guinea-Bissau Embassy