



**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION OF ECOSOC ON THE AD HOC ADVISORY GROUP ON AFRICAN COUNTRIES EMERGING FROM CONFLICT: GUINEA-BISSAU (New York, 30 January 2003)**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to underline the following observations:

We would like at the outset to congratulate the Consultative Group on Guinea-Bissau for having accomplished its mandate and submitted its conclusions and recommendations within the fixed deadline.

The report under consideration draws a clear picture of the situation in Guinea-Bissau, the brother country emerging from a conflict which plunged the whole population into a disaster and hindered its efforts to achieve a social and economic development.

Today, Guinea-Bissau is healing its injuries and relies therefore on the international support in order to meet the urgent needs of its population, ensure a normal functioning of its institutional apparatus and launch its social and economic development.

Hence, ECOSOC is seized with an urgent case of a country which is in real need of a financial and economic assistance indispensable to avoid the return of this country to a situation of war. For this reason, consolidation of peace in this country calls for an urgent action on the part of donors and the rest of the international community.

The importance of the report under consideration resides in the fact that it is the first report of the first ad-hoc Group established in accordance with the resolution adopted in July 2002 by the Social and Economic Council.

Consequently, we should ensure that this first experience is a beneficial and successful one for the population and the Government of Guinea-Bissau and also for the United Nations which is called to act not only in the field of conflict prevention and resolution but also in the domain of peace consolidation and national reconstruction.

The success of this experience will undoubtedly encourage other African countries emerging from conflicts to ask for the establishment of a working Consultative Group to study their post-conflict situations in order to provide the necessary solutions to the difficulties encountered in the domain of economic reconstruction. The Council should therefore send a strong and clear political message to the international community to provide its assistance to this country and contribute consequently to a wide stability in the region.

The Group of 77 and China welcome the recommendations contained in the report and believe that their effective implementation is the only way to contribute to improve the social and economic situation in this country.

We subscribe to the concept of “partnership” underlined by the Consultative Group in its report. This partnership implies that all concerned parties, i.e. the national authorities of Guinea-Bissau on

one hand, and donors on the other hand, have obligations to fulfill in order to ensure the consolidation of peace and the promotion of the social and economic development of this country.

However, the creation by the authorities of Guinea-Bissau of an appropriate internal environment propitious to development depends on the assistance to be provided to this country by the international community.

We believe that this country, which has its own social and economic development plans and programs, needs financial resources and expertise, necessary for the implementation and achievement of the economic and political objectives.

To this end and in order to ensure the implementation of the long-term recommendations contained in its report, the Consultative Group is called to explore, in collaboration with the United Nations, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the donor countries, the ways and means to mobilize the necessary financial resources and expertise in favor of the specific social and economic sectors, starting first by encouraging the flow of foreign investments in the country.

In relation to the recommendations calling for an action on the part of the United Nations system, we support the idea of the establishment by the UNDP of a new assistance program in favor of Guinea-Bissau, in consultation with the donors and the international financial institutions.

We believe that this program should be multi-sector related and oriented towards basic infrastructures, such as education, health, water, roads, telecommunications, agriculture, fisheries, industrial activities as well as the reinforcement of institutional capacities.

The social dimension of the program should mainly focus on employment, reinsertion of the soldiers in normal life and poverty reduction with the aim to regain confidence among the population and encourage all social strata to participate in the reconstruction of the country.

Besides, we would like to call for an immediate implementation of the short-term recommendations contained in the report of the Consultative Group in order to help the national authorities prepare the appropriate environment leading to the organization of the legislative elections to be held in April 2003.

These elections are of crucial importance and we hope that they will contribute to national reconciliation and confidence-building between the Government and its partners. Also, the international community and the donors, in particular, are called to provide the necessary financial assistance in order to allow the government apparatus to function normally and to prepare for the upcoming elections.

In this context, we support the establishment of a special allocation fund in order to respond to the immediate and short-term needs of Guinea-Bissau. In this respect, the Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate their position of principal concerning the rejection of any conditional assistance. The humanitarian and economic assistance should be provided in accordance with the principals of neutrality and impartiality and respond to the specific needs and priorities of this country. This assistance should not call the economic and political choices of the country into question.

The Group of 77 and China believe that it is urgent to establish, as soon as possible, the aforementioned special fund in order to meet the financial needs of the country.

Also, the Group of 77 and China hold the view that the report and the recommendations therein relate to the circumstances and situation in Guinea-Bissau and should have no implications of any systemic nature.

We continue to believe that each African country emerging from a conflict has its own specificities and its particular needs as regards economic and humanitarian assistance and, therefore, ECOSOC should proceed by examining case by case, keeping in mind that the main objective is always to ensure the reestablishment of peace and the achievement of national reconciliation and regional stability.

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China hope that at the end of this debate, we will be able to adopt the recommendations presented to us and by doing so, we will address a message of solidarity to a whole population which suffered from the conflict and aspires for peace and stability.

The Group of 77 and China would like to assure the brother country of Guinea-Bissau, member of our Group, of our full solidarity and our commitment to work together for the consolidation of peace and stability in this country in order to enable it to devote all its energy to the reconstruction and social economic development of its population.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.