

Brussels, 28 July 2009

Commissioners Ferrero-Waldner and De Gucht on the second round of Presidential elections in Guinea Bissau 26 July 2009

Benita **Ferrero-Waldner**, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy said:

"I am pleased to congratulate the people of Guinea Bissau for reconfirming their strong commitment to the democratic process in their country. I would like to pay tribute to the orderly way in which these elections were conducted, in this very sensitive context. As the final stages of the presidential elections are now being undertaken, I call upon all parties who may have complaints to submit these through the relevant legal channels. Furthermore, I also would like to express my gratitude to Johan van Hecke, Chief Observer of the EU Election Observation Mission and his entire team for their hard work and commitment."

Karel **De Gucht**, Commissioner for Development, added:

"The peaceful and orderly conduct of this second round of the presidential elections in Guinea Bissau confirms the strength of the commitment of the people of Guinea Bissau to a full restoration of the normal functioning of the country's institutions, to democracy and to the rule of law. The European Commission remains engaged with Guinea Bissau and will continue to support the country's democratic and economic development as well the essential reform of the security sector."

Background

The European Commission deployed an EU Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) for the Presidential elections in Guinea Bissau on the 28 June 2009 and the run-off election on 26 July 2009. This EU EOM was led by Mr. Johan van Hecke and represents a further contribution by the European Union to support democracy in Guinea Bissau.

The EU EOM deployed 16 observers throughout Guinea Bissau to observe and assess the electoral process in accordance with international standards for election observation and the laws of Guinea Bissau. The EU EOM will remain in country to observe post-election developments and the tabulation of results for the second round. A final report covering the entire electoral process including recommendations for future elections will be published by the EU EOM in the coming months.

The European Commission mobilised 2,4 M€ through the 10th EDF to support the 2009 anticipated presidential elections in Guinea Bissau, thereby covering for more than half of the budget calculated by the National Electoral Commission (4 M€). The EU contribution was administered by UNDP, in the framework of a convention signed between the EC and the UNDP.

For additional information, see also:

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_obs/index.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/country-cooperation/guinea-bissau/guinea-bissau_en.htm