

*DECLARATION BY THE SENEGAL-GAMBIA-GUINEA BISSAU FORUM FOR PEACE AND SECURITY ON THE POST-ELECTION CRISIS IN THE GAMBIA*

The Senegal-Gambia-Guinea Bissau Women's Forum for Peace and Security, which brings together organisations from the three countries, including African Center for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS), Women's Political Platform of Guinea Bissau (PPM-GB) and Women's Platform for Peace in Casamance (WPPC) met this day, 27 December 2016, in Ziguinchor, to discuss the political and security situation in The Gambia which the members of the Forum find 'very disturbing'. Following the decision by President Yahya Jammeh to challenge the official results of the December 1<sup>st</sup> election after formally declaring that he accepted the verdict of the ballot box, the sister republic of The Gambia is now experiencing a serious post-election crisis.

The purpose of Senegal-Gambia-Guinea Bissau Women's Forum is to help promote and strengthen peace and stability in our sub regional area. Therefore, it cannot remain silent in a situation that may lead to military intervention or a civil unrest in a sister country. The Forum is firmly convinced that all these scenarios can only create greater tension and seriously endanger the peace and security of The Gambia as well as in Senegal and our entire sub region which is already exposed to terrorism, overflow of mercenaries and proliferation of arms.

Thus, in line with the principle of peace it is dedicated to promote with all its energy, the Senegal-Gambia-Guinea Bissau Women's Forum is urging all the parties to exercise full restraint and give priority to dialogue and non-violence to resolve this crisis.

Recalling its apolitical nature and its unfailing commitment to work for peace and security in the sub region,

Recalling our legitimate role as mothers, women, citizens and mediators in playing our part to defuse any and all tensions within our communities,

The Senegal-Gambia-Guinea Bissau Women's Forum reassert its commitment to bring its contribution towards the resolution of the current crisis by non-violent means,

Mindful of the observance of the law, the Constitution of The Gambia and all Treaties, Protocols and Conventions signed by The Gambia,

Respectful of the sacred nature of the power and will of the people and, therefore, of the principle of democracy that *de facto* confers on the elected President the legitimacy to govern and lead a free and united people,

- φ The Forum urges President Yahya Jammeh to respect the choice of the sovereign people of The Gambia as he was guided to do by his intuition on the evening of 2 December when he conceded defeat, earning him the admiration and respect of his people and the international community as a whole.

φ The Forum strongly urges The Gambia Armed Forces not to stand up against their people who have so far demonstrated a high level of maturity and to support the desire for change, progress and peace.

We, the Senegal-Gambia-Guinea Bissau Women’s Forum reassert our full and undivided support to The Gambian people whenever and wherever needed, regardless of the outcome of the present situation.

We welcome all the initiatives and efforts by ECOWAS, the African Union and United Nations toward a peaceful resolution.

We solemnly call on outgoing President Yahya Jammeh, as Panafricanists, to listen to his people, give priority to discussion, dialogue and consultation as genuine African values constantly observed by our forefathers when faced with similar choices.

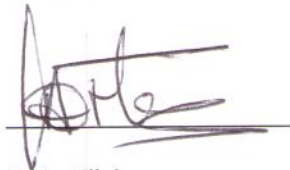
Finally, we reiterate our proposal and availability to contribute facilitate direct discussions with the two parties so that Peace and democracy can prevail.

*Senegal-Gambia-Guinea Bissau Women’s Forum*

*Ziguinchor, 27 December 2016*

For ACDHRS

Hannah Forster



Amie Sillah

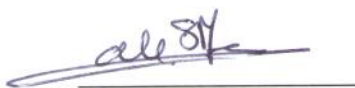


For WPPC

Ndeye Marie Thiam

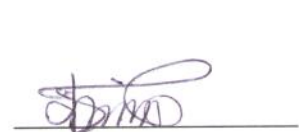


Seynabou Male



For PPM-GB

Silvina Tavares



Aissatou Camara Injai

