



## COMMUNIQUE

1. The commitment and support of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to work alongside Guinea Bissau to resolve the political and institutional crisis facing the country for several years has led to the establishment of the electoral cycle, which culminated in the conduct of presidential elections on 29 December 2019.
2. The Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) welcomed the implementation of the various stages of the electoral cycle, particularly the first and second rounds of the presidential elections, which various observer missions, including that of ECOWAS, unanimously commended for its smooth conduct, inclusiveness and transparency.
3. The protest against the provisional results announced by the National Electoral Commission on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 triggered an electoral dispute which, to date, has remained a major concern for ECOWAS.
4. The Commission also notes that the National Electoral Commission announced the final results of the presidential elections on three occasions within the specified timeframe. One of the announcements was made under the aegis of ECOWAS after the verification of the result sheets from each region, as requested by the Ministerial Follow-up Committee on Guinea Bissau and all of them yielded the same result.
5. The Commission further notes that the misunderstandings between the National Electoral Commission and the Supreme Court on the one hand, and within the Supreme Court itself on the other hand, did not give allow for the settlement of the electoral dispute, which has been going on for nearly four months now.

6. In light of the continued impasse and after a thorough review of the political situation in the country, the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government decided to recognise the victory of Mr Umaro Sissoco Embalo in the run-off presidential elections of 29 December 2019 in Guinea Bissau.
7. They also called on President-elect Umaro Sissoco Embalo to appoint a Prime Minister and form a new Government no later than **22 May 2020**, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, particularly as regards the results of the parliamentary elections.
8. The Heads of State and Government also stressed the need to immediately start the reform process for a new Constitution, which will be submitted to a referendum in six months' time, with a view to ensuring stability in the country.
9. Lastly, the Commission reiterates ECOWAS' willingness to continue to support Guinea Bissau to enable the country, on the one hand, consolidate democracy and promote peace, and on the other hand, to implement the priorities for the country's socio-economic development.

Abuja, 22 April 2020

ECOWAS Commission