PRESS RELEASE

JOINT PRESS STATEMENT OF AU, ECOWAS, EU AND UN ASSESSMENT MISSION TO THE GAMBIA

Addis Ababa, 17 May 2017: H.E. Pierre Buyoya, former President of the Republic of Burundi and AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, led a delegation composed of UN/ECOWAS and EU to Banjul, where H.E. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of The Gambia, received them on 16 May 2017. Ms. Ade Mamonyane Lekoetje, UNDP Resident Representative/UN Resident Coordinator for The Gambia, H.E Attila Lajos, EU Ambassador to The Gambia and Dr. Cyriaque P. Agnekethom, Director for Peacekeeping and Regional Security of the ECOWAS Commission were part of this mission.

The delegation congratulated the President and the people of The Gambia for the peaceful election and resolution of the political impasse. H.E. Buyoya assured the President and people of The Gambia of the commitment and unflinching support of the African Union and ECOWAS to the priority actions identified by the Government, including the security sector reform, the reconciliation process and the economic recovery of the country. He commended the collaborative efforts of the international community in solidarity to the Government and people of The Gambia.

The EU Ambassador and the UN Resident Coordinator reiterated the commitment of the UN and the EU to sustain their support to the Government and people of The Gambia towards the realization of their reforms and development agenda.

In his remarks, H.E. President Barrow expressed appreciation to the international community for the unrelenting support to the country, which he alluded, reassures the Government and people of The Gambia in their journey on democracy, governance, economic recovery and pursuit for truth, justice and reconciliation. In this regard, The President appealed for financial and technical support in the areas of training and professionalizing of the justice, defense and security sectors. He emphasized the significant role of the ECOMIG troops in securing and stabilizing the country and the imperatives of adequate support to enable them to execute their mandate.

Building on ongoing initiatives by respective organizations in The Gambia, the main purpose of the Joint ECOWAS, EU and UN mission is to join efforts for a coherent approach in supporting the security sector reform process in The Gambia.

In parallel, the AU delegation launched a needs assessment mission in The Gambia from 13 to 19 May 2017, with focus on the security sector, economic reforms and national reconciliation. This mission was necessitated by a request from The Gambian Government to the African Union’s Peace and Security Council on 29th of March 2017. In pursuit of coordinated and sustained international efforts, the AU delegation collaborated with the joint ECOWAS, EU and UN fact-finding mission on security sector reform to explore measures to effectively support the Government. The findings of the assessment and fact-finding missions will contribute to the enhanced coordination of international partners’ efforts to support the Government and people of The Gambia.