

## STATEMENT TO THE MEDIA

### **Mohamed Ibn Chambas calls for credible, inclusive and peaceful elections in Ghana**

**Accra, 17 June 2016-** Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for being here,

Earlier this year, in February, I came on mission to Accra, and met with various stakeholders as part of United Nations engagement and support in the preparations towards elections 2016. During that mission, I reiterated the UN's commitment to be present and to accompany the process leading up to, during and after the general elections later this year. I also encouraged the political parties and all stakeholders in Ghana's elections to work together through inclusive consultations to address all disagreements and build consensus with a view of ensuring the conduct of credible and peaceful elections.

I have just concluded a second fact-finding mission, as follow-up to my earlier working visit. I was able to meet with the Electoral Commission, Political Party representatives, her Ladyship Chief Justice, the National Peace Council, the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers, Ghana's international partners, as well as your colleagues representing the media. I am very pleased with the outcomes of my various interactions, which have served to address specific concerns of the elections stakeholders as well as to discuss the steps which need to be taken in order to create the conditions for the successful conduct of credible, inclusive and peaceful elections.

I am optimistic that some misunderstandings and diverging interpretations about legal decisions will be fully clarified and resolved.

While I renew the commitment of the United Nations to support Ghana through strengthened and effective partnership for the elections of 2016, I also call on all Ghanaians to commit individually and collectively, to working towards credible and peaceful elections. During my meetings, I noted the concerns expressed about statements that are prone to heat up the political discourse. Also, the overall security of the elections remains an area to

be followed up closely, to ensure that unregulated security bodies will not play any role in the electoral process.

I wish to seize this opportunity to appeal to the political parties to show leadership and expunge from their structures as well as disassociate completely from such groups in support of their formations. We acknowledge that these groups are likely to stir a political climate of intolerance and violence that cannot be conducive and helpful in the preparations towards the impending elections.

Political parties have a responsibility to safeguard the stability and unity of the country and therefore should campaign in a peaceful manner. I urge all national stakeholders, and especially the political parties and their supporters, to make use of the valuable existing mechanisms for dialogue and dispute resolution to bridge differences and minimize the potential for violence.

The ability of the Electoral Commission, the judicial system, the Election Security Taskforce, and all the other electoral stakeholders, to address any emerging situations in a prompt, professional, and restrained manner, will be a crucial component of the process.

The signing of the Kumasi Declaration by Presidential Candidates in 2012 has contributed to the holding of peaceful elections. I encourage the National Peace Council to continue its consultations towards the signing of the similar peace accord for peaceful elections in 2016.

As you all know, Ghana has over the years demonstrated exemplary conduct of elections with a proven track record of national ownership and managing peaceful transitions. Once again, the international community has high expectations that the upcoming presidential and legislative elections will be conducted in a peaceful and credible manner, in line with this so well deserved reputation as a model for the region and beyond.


The eyes of the world are fixed on Ghana.

Thank you.

Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas,  
*Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for West Africa and the Sahel*  
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**Bureau de la Communication et de l'Information Publique**

Kouider Zerrouk, Chef de bureau – (+221) 33-869-8560 / 77- 3324928 – zerrouk@un.org  
Vicky Delore Ndjeuga, Chargé de communication – (+221) 33-869-8544 / 77- 3339414 – ndjeuga@un.org  
Angelita Mendy Diop, Chargée de communication – (+221) 33-869-8547 / 77-450-6181 – mendya@un.org  
Cheikh A. Bamba Seye, Webmaster – (+221) 33-869-8560 / 77-185-9954 – seyec@un.org

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 Ngor, route de la plage- PO Box 23 851, Dakar Ponty (Sénégal)