



Bureau des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest et le Sahel

UNOWAS

United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel

Ensemble pour la paix

Together for peace

PRESS RELEASE

THE UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND PEACEBUILDING AFFAIRS CONCLUDES VISIT TO FIVE WEST AFRICAN STATES

Dakar, 18 January 2020- Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) Rosemary A. DiCarlo today concluded her first official visit to West Africa with a stop in Burkina Faso. The five-day visit also took the Under-Secretary-General to Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Niger and Nigeria.

The Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, accompanied by Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) Mohamed Ibn Chambas, discussed with national and regional leaders pressing issues of peace, security and development. She also held consultations with the United Nations Country teams (UNCTs) on the humanitarian situation and ways to further strengthen United Nations support through an enhanced strategic partnership with regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the G5 Sahel. The Under-Secretary-General also met with civil society organizations, political parties and diplomatic corps accredited in the five countries.

In Senegal, the Under-Secretary-General met President Macky Sall and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad Amadou Ba. She lauded efforts aimed at promoting political dialogue in the country and congratulated the President on the adoption by the National Assembly of a bill criminalizing acts of rape and pedophilia, a major step in addressing violence against women. She also commended the authorities of Senegal for their commitment to democratic consolidation and their continued contribution to regional peace and security.

In Guinea Bissau, the Under-Secretary-General met President Jose Mario Vaz and other senior officials, as well as President-elect Umaro Sissoco Embalo and presidential candidate Domingos Simoes Pereira. She also met with the five international organizations that support the peacebuilding process in Guinea-Bissau, namely the African Union, ECOWAS, the Community of Portuguese Language Countries, the African Union and the European Union, commonly known as the P5. Ms. DiCarlo commended the people of Guinea Bissau for the successful conduct of the polls and the peaceful atmosphere that prevailed throughout the electoral process. She also called for sustained efforts to promote national reconciliation, inclusive democratic governance and development.

In Niger and Burkina Faso, Ms. Di Carlo met respectively with Presidents Mahamadou Issoufou, and Roch Marc Christian Kaboré. She conveyed the condolences of the United Nations to the governments and people of both countries following the recent terrorist attacks. During meetings with the Country Teams (UNCT), she recalled the support UN entities to the governments of Niger and Burkina Faso in countering and preventing violent extremism and promoting democratic governance. She also stressed the importance of acting as *One UN* in the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), while renewing the commitment of the United Nations to continue supporting regional efforts towards sustaining peace and development.

In Nigeria, Ms. Di Carlo had meetings with the Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UNCT and the diplomatic corps, focusing on Nigeria's response to security, humanitarian and development challenges within the country and in the Lake Chad Basin and the support the UN provides.

Ms DiCarlo also met with Jean Claude Kassi Brou, President of the ECOWAS Commission, and Mr. Maman Sambo Sidikou, Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel Secretariat, respectively in Niamey and Abuja. They exchanged views on enhancing partnerships and the need to reinforce coordination. Discussions also touched on the situation in the Sahel in view of the recent meeting in Pau, France, and international efforts to address the situation in Libya. The exchanges also focused on upcoming elections in the region and efforts to promote peace, democracy, good governance and the rule of law.

Noting that several countries in the region will undertake election processes, the Under-Secretary-General stressed the need for all stakeholders to engage in peaceful, credible and transparent electoral processes and to refrain from any acts of violence. She emphasized that successful electoral processes are an integral part of democratic consolidation and the rule of law, which are in turn critical to sustaining peace and development in the region.

###