



March 22, 2012

### **U.S. Statement on Guinea-Bissau Presidential Elections (first round)**

We congratulate the people of Guinea-Bissau for their role in creating a peaceful atmosphere for the March 18 presidential elections. Observers, including our own, noted that the process was generally open, free, and fair.

Provisional results announced yesterday indicate Prime Minister Carlos Gomes, Jr. won 49% of the vote, with the runner-up, former president Kumba Yala, having received 23%. If these results are finalized, confirming that no candidate garnered the necessary 50% to win in the first round, a second round of voting will occur.

We do note with concern the reported allegations of fraud, and urge the National Elections Commission (CNE) and judicial authorities to thoroughly examine and address any complaints in a fair, transparent, and expeditious manner.

While waiting for the final determination of the first round vote to be issued by Guinea-Bissau's Electoral Tribunal, we call on all Bissau-Guineans to exercise patience and restraint, and to refrain from any violence. We urge all parties to refrain from inflammatory rhetoric or violence and show respect to the established electoral and judicial systems.