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PRESS RELEASE

JOINT CANADA, JAPAN, U.K., AND U.S. PRESS STATEMENT

“THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND IMPUNITY MUST END”

The Chiefs of Mission of the Embassies of Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States accredited to Guinea-Bissau congratulate Guinea-Bissau on a successful first-round presidential election on June 28, 2009. The diplomats from the aforementioned embassies who served as international election observers believe the election to have been well-organized, well-executed and free of significant irregularities. We commend the government and people of Guinea-Bissau for showing their continued commitment to democracy. We also call on all parties to fully respect the election results and ensure that the second round of voting on July 26 will be conducted in as peaceful and transparent a manner as the first round.

Sadly yet clearly, the assassinations and beatings of June 5, coupled with the assassinations in March of this year are wholly incompatible with the principles of democracy. We urge the government of Guinea-Bissau to fully investigate the violence and to hold the guilty accountable. In order for Guinea-Bissau to become a truly representative democracy, the cycle of violence and impunity must end. We therefore encourage the government of Guinea-Bissau to continue working with the UN Peacebuilding Commission and other international partners to overcome obstacles to further progress.

The governments of Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States call on all the parties to renounce violence, to lay aside personal agendas, and to work together to transform Guinea-Bissau into a proud example of stability and security in the region.

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