

Statement on Transition in Madagascar, 22 May 2009

The multilateral negotiations seeking to establish a neutral, peaceful and consensual transition in Madagascar resumed on Wednesday 20 May 2009 under the auspices of international mediators from the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and the United Nations (UN).

All political forces of Madagascar are represented at the negotiating table. They are gathered around four enlarged political groups: the Rajoelina group, the Ratsiraka group, the Ravalomanana group and the Zafy group.

Negotiations are ongoing in view of securing the endorsement of all groups for a Charter of the Transition, which will provide a framework for the consensual management of the transition leading to free, fair and transparent elections as soon as possible.

To date, the negotiations have succeeded in reaching agreement on a number of points.

First, all parties have agreed on the following principles:

- The need for a neutral, peaceful and consensual transition.
- The participation of former Heads of State and the Head of State of the Transition in the next presidential election. After a long debate, the Malagasy parties decided to respect the right of former Heads of State and the Head of State of the Transition to run in the election.
- The elections will take place at the earliest possible date within a period of 14 months based on an assessment by international and national experts of Madagascar's capacity to organize credible elections.
- A special statute ensuring the dignity and guaranteeing the security of former Heads of State will be drafted. A Council of Wise Men regrouping all former Heads of State will also be established.

Second, parties reached agreement on the establishment of all transitional institutions.

These are:

- The High Transitional Authority
- The Transitional Government of National Unity
- The Transitional Congress
- The National Reconciliation Council and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, mandated to review recent Malagasy history, promote national reconciliation and assess issues of reparations and compensations.
- The Economic and Social Council of the Transition
- The High Court of the Transition
- The Reflection Committee on National Defense and Security
- The Independent Electoral Commission

The ongoing discussions are focused on the composition and formula for the proportional distribution of seats among executive and legislative institutions.

A general amnesty, excluding gross violations of human rights, war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes of genocide, is also under discussion for infractions linked to the events of a period yet to be specified.

The international mediators call on all parties to make the concessions necessary to reach agreement on all remaining questions and conclude the negotiations in order to establish a concerted transition.

Antananarivo, 22 May 2009.