

Brussels, 30 April 2009

Louis Michel welcomes the outcome of initial consultations with the Republic of Guinea under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement

On 29 April 2009, the European Union opened negotiations with the Republic of Guinea under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement. In this framework, Guinea adopted a consensual roadmap leading to general elections on 11 October and presidential elections on 13 December 2009. The President and members of the ruling military junta and the Prime Minister of the transitional government have undertaken not to stand for these elections.

Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, commented: "I am pleased with the results of the opening round of these negotiations. With the commitments Guinea has made, we can envisage in the short term a consensual transition towards restoration of constitutional order and establishment of a democratic regime on the basis of free and transparent elections. Guinea is a country of key strategic significance for the stability of the sub-region of West Africa. The ongoing process of crisis resolution is therefore vitally important. In this context, I must congratulate the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on the work they have done within the International Contact Group on Guinea in which the European Commission also plays an active role. I would like to offer them every encouragement to continue along these lines".

The European Commission will continue to monitor the crisis resolution process in Guinea closely, in particular through measures for following up commitments made in the Cotonou Agreement Article 96 consultations, and through its participation in the International Contact Group for Guinea, which is to hold its next meeting on 4 May in Conakry.

The Republic of Guinea has been under military rule since 23 December 2008. The military junta is led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara, self-declared President of the Republic.