



Message from Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for West Africa

Commission on the Impact of Drug Trafficking on Governance, Security and Development in West Africa

Inaugural Session

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Dear Members of the Commission,

The situations in Guinea-Bissau and in Mali continue to illustrate the extent to which organised crime has developed its activities and extended its reach, thus threatening to seriously undermine governance and security in the sub-region. At the same time, some positive steps to counter their impact have been taken during the last six months. On the institutional side, the ECOWAS Commission, with the support of the United Nations and that of other partners, has initiated encouraging steps towards the implementation of its Regional Plan of Action to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crimes and Drug Abuse in West Africa. I am furthermore encouraged by the launch of your Commission on the Impact of Drug Trafficking on Governance, Security and Development in West Africa, that will allow the population of the region to engage in the debates over these issues, and which is a strong illustration of the increasing involvement of the West African civil society in confronting the related threats. The UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and the UN system as a whole will continue engaging different partners in the subregion to further raise awareness, including the Kofi Annan Foundation which I want to congratulate for taking initiatives in this respect. UNOWA will be entirely available to closely work and cooperate with the Commission.