

Gabon: The United Nations encourages politicians to dialogue to preserve social peace



Libreville (Gabon), 18 November 2014 - The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily (photo), encourages Gabonese political actors to engage in dialogue to preserve social peace. During an audience with Prime Minister Daniel Ona Ondo on Monday 17 November, he emphasized this important factor, drawing the attention of the Government to some situations that may compromise the stability of the country. He expressed hope that all stakeholders will discuss the issue in order to consolidate the

achievements of the 1990 National Conference and to find coordinated solutions to the challenges facing by the country and the subregion.

A few weeks in advance of Senatorial elections, scheduled for 13 December, and approximately 20 months before the Presidential election (2016), Mr. Bathily is calling for more openness to promote the practical expression of pluralism and debate. "It is important to go to elections in a climate of peace and brotherhood," said the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Central Africa. "Exclusion is a source of conflict and tension," he added, calling also for equitable access of different socio-political actors to public media and to the development of an independent press that can help in promoting peace and good governance.

"Gabon should remain an example of stability in Africa. I rely on the wisdom of opinion leaders, opposition leaders and of members of civil society so that the country keeps this good reputation," underlined the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Central Africa, saluting the historic role of Gabon in the field of mediation in Africa and in the Central Africa subregion in particular.

During a meeting on 17 November at UNOCA headquarters, he emphasized this important issue to representatives of the former *Union nationale* party (opposition). Messrs. Zacharie Myboto and Jean Eyeghe Ndong as well as four of their comrades took the opportunity to present their vision of the Gabon of today and the one of tomorrow. On Friday 14 November, Mr. Bathily also held discussions with Jean Ping, former Chairperson of the African Union Commission. In the same spirit, he recently had a meeting with Mr. Faustin Boukoubi, Secretary General of the *Parti démocratique gabonais* (PDG, the ruling party).

Mr. Bathily will continue consultations with other key actors in accordance with his mandate for the promotion of preventive diplomacy in the countries covered by UNOCA, including Gabon, where he is following with concern the unease expressed by certain stakeholders. Through the good offices of the UN Secretary-General, he will spare no effort to continue to work for peace and security in Central Africa, the *sine qua non condition* of sustainable development and regional integration.