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AFRICA/GUINEA BISSAU - Presidential and parliamentary elections will be held on Sunday

Bissau (Agenzia Fides) - As many as 775,500 voters out of a population of 1.6 million will cast ballots in an election that was delayed twice, according to the United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea Bissau. There are 13 presidential candidates, while 15 parties are vying for 102 seats in parliament.
The two candidates are former Finance Minister Jose Mario Vaz, considered the frontrunner in the presidential vote. Vaz is the candidate for Partido Africano da Independencia da Guine e Cabo Verde, or PAIGC, which fought a guerrilla war against the Portuguese and took power at independence in 1974 and Abel Incada of the PRS (Social Renewal Party) of former President Kumba Yala, who died of a heart attack last week. The latter had been elected Head of State in 2000, but was overthrown by a military coup in September 2003 (see Fides 15/09/2003).
Guinea Bissau lives in a situation of chronic instability, with countless military coups (the last one was in 2012), which is compounded by the fact that in recent years it has become a transit point for cocaine from Latin America with target markets in Europe and north American (see Fides 04/02/2014).
To ensure the security of the elections, 4,200 local military and West African countries have been deployed, while the fairness of the vote will be certified by 550 international observers. A run-off is scheduled on May 18. (L.M.)
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