



**FIFTH MEETING OF THE SUPPORT
AND FOLLOW-UP GROUP ON THE
SITUATION IN MALI**

**BAMA KO (*International Conference Centre*)
1 JULY 2013**

CONCLUSIONS

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1. The Support and Follow-up Group (SFG) on the situation in Mali held its 5th meeting in Bamako on 1 July 2013, under the co-chairmanship of the African Union (AU) Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ramtane Lamamra, the United Nations (UN) Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, and the President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo.
2. The meeting, which was opened by H.E. Diounounda Traoré, Interim President of the Republic of Mali, was attended by: (i) Mali, whose delegation was led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Tiéman Hubert Coulibaly, and included the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, Moussa Sinko Coulibaly, the Minister of Economy and Humanitarian Action, Mamadou Namory Traoré, and the Minister of Internal Security and Civilian Protection, Tiefing Konaté; (ii) the representatives of the countries of the region and other AU Member States, some of which attended at ministerial level (Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria); and (iii) the representatives of the bilateral and multilateral partners. The AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, Pierre Buyoya, the Special Representative of the President of the ECOWAS Commission in Mali, Cheaka Touré, the European Union (EU) Special Representative for the Sahel, Michel Reveyrand, and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Mali, Albert Gerard Koenders, attended the meeting.
3. The meeting afforded the participants the opportunity to review the developments in Mali since the previous meeting of the SFG on 19 April 2013, including the steps taken as part of the implementation of the Transitional Roadmap, and to interact with the Malian authorities on the way forward.
4. The participants noted the symbolism attached to the holding of the meeting on the same day of the transfer of authority from the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) to the UN Integrated Multidimensional Mission for Stabilization in Mali (MINUSMA), in accordance with relevant ECOWAS, AU and UN decisions and resolutions. In this respect, they welcomed the assumption of responsibility by MINUSMA and pledged their full support to the Mission, looking forward to the proactive implementation of its mandate. They commended the AFISMA leadership and personnel for a job well done, in spite of the tremendous financial and logistical challenges that the Mission faced. They paid tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of peace, security and stability in Mali. They expressed deep appreciation to the troop and police contributing countries, from ECOWAS Member States and Chad, for their commitment, as demonstrated by the swift deployment of AFISMA in January 2013. They also expressed their deep gratitude to France for its timely intervention and support through the 'Serval' operation.
5. The participants noted with satisfaction the continuation of the restoration of state authority in the northern regions and the gradual return to normalcy, both of which will create conditions conducive to the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). They reiterated their appreciation to all the forces involved in the efforts to secure and stabilize the northern part of the country. In this respect, the participants encouraged the Malian authorities to expedite the redeployment of State administration and intensify

their efforts to rehabilitate and re-establish basic public services. They, once again, called for enhanced humanitarian support to all affected populations and greater coordination among all concerned actors. They requested the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to provide an update on the efforts being made to this effect and to make recommendations on how best to increase effectiveness in this area.

6. The participants welcomed the signing, in Ouagadougou, on 18 June 2013, of the Agreement Towards the Presidential Election and Inclusive Peace Talks in Mali between the Transitional Government of National Unity of the Republic of Mali, the “Coordination of the National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (MNLA)” and the “High Council for the Unity of the Azawad (HCUA)”. They took note of the subsequent adhesion to the Agreement of the “Arab Movement for the Azawad (MAA)” and the “Coordination of Patriotic Movements and Forces for Resistance (CMFPR)”. They urged all Parties to respect the letter and spirit of the Agreement and to ensure its urgent and full implementation. They urged the Parties unreservedly to cooperate with the Joint Technical Committee on Security and the Follow-up and Evaluation Committee, and to resolve any differences that may arise in the course of the implementation process through the agreed mechanisms. The participants paid a well-deserved tribute to Presidents Blaise Compaoré and Goodluck Jonathan, ECOWAS Mediator and Associate-Mediator in the Malian crisis, respectively, as well as to President Alassane Ouattara, current Chairman of ECOWAS, for their tireless efforts. They also recognized the contribution of the AU, the UN, the EU and the bilateral partners.

7. The participants expressed their appreciation to the UN, the AU and ECOWAS for the deployment in northern Mali of human rights observers, and encouraged them to closely work together, with particular emphasis on the protection of women and children, as part of the MINUSMA mandate. They emphasized the obligation for all concerned to scrupulously respect human rights and their determination to ensure that perpetrators of abuses are held accountable for their acts.

8. The participants reiterated the need for continued dialogue among and between Malian communities in order to achieve sustainable peace. They encouraged the Malian authorities and the Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission to expedite action in this respect, including early finalization of the programme of work of the Commission. They urged international partners to intensify their support for the process.

9. Regarding the electoral process, the participants commended the relevant Malian structures for the efforts undertaken so far to ensure the smooth preparation of the presidential election, which the Malian Government has undertaken to organize on 28 July 2013. They welcomed the support extended by international partners to the Malian-led efforts.

10. The participants encouraged the Malian authorities, in close consultation with the electoral management bodies, the political parties and other stakeholders, to continue to assess the state of preparation of the elections, with the view to facilitating effective action to resolve the outstanding issues and create the best possible conditions, under the current circumstances, for the holding of free, fair, transparent, peaceful and credible elections, within the stated timetable, in order to successfully conclude the Transition and lay the foundation for durable peace, security and development in Mali. They urged all political

parties to adhere to the electoral code of conduct, including ensuring responsible behavior of their followers, acceptance of the outcome of the polls and resorting exclusively to peaceful and legal means to seek redress to any concern, in the higher interest of Mali and its people. The participants requested the Joint Coordination Mechanism (JCM), comprising the AU, ECOWAS, the UN and the EU, to work closely with the Malian authorities to help create conditions conducive to the smooth conduct of the electoral process. They appealed to the international partners to increase their financial assistance, notably by bridging the gap for the conduct of the elections, estimated at about USD 25 million, the provision of critical logistical support, in particular air assets, the deployment of as many international observers as possible, whose work on the ground should be closely coordinated, as well as support to national observers.

11. The participants recognized the efforts underway to train and restructure the Malian Defense and Security Forces (MDSF), with the support of the EU Training Mission (EUTM). They appealed to all those who made pledges in support of the MDSF at the Addis Ababa pledging conference of 29 January 2013 speedily to honour their commitments. They called on the UN Secretariat to take all necessary steps for the rapid and effective utilization of available resources in the Trust Fund for Peace and Security in Mali, in close consultation with the Malian authorities. They stressed the need for the international community to assist Mali towards the rehabilitation and rebuilding of its security services and judicial institutions, as part of the efforts to promote the rule of law.

12. The participants emphasized that economic recovery and development are an important component of the stabilization efforts in Mali. They underlined the urgency of meeting the basic needs of millions of Malians and paving the way, in a coordinated fashion for early recovery, which will be critical to gain and retain the support of the Malian people. In this regard, they congratulated the EU and the Malian authorities for the successful holding in Brussels, on 15 May 2013, of the International Donors Conference “Together for a New Mali”. They look forward to an update by the EU and Mali on the follow up to the Conference at their next meeting.

13. The participants stressed once more the need for enhanced security cooperation among the countries of the region, as well as coordination among the concerned regional organizations. They commended the AU for the progress made in this regard, in particular with the holding in Abidjan, on 20 and 21 June 2013, of the 2nd meeting of the Heads of Intelligence and Security Services of the countries of the Sahelo-Saharan region, as a follow-up to the conclusions of the ministerial meeting held in Nouakchott on 17 March 2013, and welcomed the steps envisaged to ensure close cooperation with MINUSMA. They look forward to the 3rd meeting of the Heads of Intelligence and Security Services, scheduled to take place in N’Djamena, Chad, in mid-September 2013, to be followed by the 2nd ministerial meeting of the countries of the region, based on the Nouakchott format. The participants stressed the importance of continued cooperation among the core countries (Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger) in combating terrorism and transnational criminal networks, noting in this respect the ministerial meeting that took place in Algiers, on 28 June 2013, with the participation of Chad, Libya and Nigeria.

14. The participants welcomed the report of the UN Secretary-General on a United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel region, and encouraged his Special Envoy for the Sahel, Romano Prodi, to pursue his efforts. They look forward to close consultation between the Special Envoy, the AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel and relevant African institutions, such as the NEPAD Implementation Agency, ECOWAS and the African Development Bank, as well as other stakeholders, including the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the EU, on the implementation of the Strategy, especially the convening of an international conference on security and development in the Sahel.

15. The participants agreed to convene the next meeting of the SFG within three months. The venue and exact date of the meeting shall be determined through consultations among the co-Chairs and with the Malian Government.

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