



Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

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Wednesday, 16 October 2013, 10 a.m.

New York

President: Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan)

Members:

Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
Australia	Mr. Quinlan
China	Mr. Zhao Yong
France	Mr. Araud
Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
Morocco	Mr. Laassel
Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
Rwanda	Mr. Gasana
Togo	Mr. Menan
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2013/582)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2013/582)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Mali to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Cheick Oumar Diarra, Minister for Reconciliation and Development of the North of the Republic of Mali.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Albert Koenders, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/582, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.

I now give the floor to Mr. Koenders.

Mr. Koenders (*spoke in French*): It is a great pleasure and an honour for me to address the Security Council today. The second report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali, which is before the Council (S/2013/582), follows up on resolution 2100 (2013). I wish to offer an overview of the political and security situation in Mali, the progress made since my briefing at the end of June (see S/PV.6985) and the challenges that lie ahead.

At the outset, it is important to underscore two important achievements. In July and August, the Malian people massively and calmly participated in the presidential elections. The transitional authorities, political actors and all the national stakeholders rallied to ensure the success of the elections throughout the national territory. Through that exemplary event, Malian men and women demonstrated their desire to turn the page after the disturbing events of the recent past — the occupation of the north by extremist groups,

the coup d'état and the collapse of national institutions. A decisive step was taken to restore constitutional order and the country's stability.

The second major achievement concerns the successful, although incomplete, establishment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). On 1 July, we welcomed the troops of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali. Although MINUSMA had just been established, it still actively contributed to ensuring the safety of the presidential elections and creating favourable political conditions for holding the elections.

The elections were held across the national territory thanks to the preliminary agreement, adopted on 18 June in Ouagadougou by the Government and the armed groups in the northern regions of Mali. The agreement paved the way for elections in the north, and will be followed by inclusive talks on a comprehensive peace settlement, which will start 60 days after the establishment of a new Government. The United Nations has played an important role in the negotiations, in close collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union. I welcome the critical contributions of those organizations in those endeavours.

The implementation of the agreement has moved forward, in particular with regard to beginning of the process of the cantonment and the adoption of confidence-building measures, particularly in terms of measures to facilitate the start of a gradual return of the State administration and the army in the north. MINUSMA accompanied those processes by strengthening its presence on the ground. We opened offices in Kidal, Timbuktu, Gao and Mopti. That is where we want to fully play our role with the communities and the people of Mali.

Those developments are positive signs for the restoration of peace and security in Mali. The inauguration ceremony of the new President in the presence of several Heads of State demonstrates that Mali is back in the concert of nations. President Keita, by forming his Cabinet, has already sent a strong signal by creating a ministry in charge of reconciliation and the development of the northern regions, and we have the honour to have the Minister in the Council today. He also said that reconciliation and security would be the immediate priorities of the Government.

Despite those advances, it is clear that the real work is just beginning. National reconciliation, the implementation of the preliminary agreement, the holding of legislative elections, the launching of inclusive peace talks to address the root causes of the Malian crisis, the restoration of the authority of the State, the consolidation of security throughout the territory, progress in the fight against corruption and bad governance are priorities .

The authorities announced the holding of the first round of legislative elections on 24 November, with a second round scheduled for 15 December. That would allow the establishment of a new Parliament and, ultimately, the conclusion of the electoral cycle. However, it is important that all political parties and stakeholders be involved in discussions on the holding of those elections in order to achieve an inclusive national consensus.

In addition, in order to maintain a peaceful and secure environment, the full implementation and adherence of the signatories to the preliminary agreement is crucial. On the ground, the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad (MNLA) and the Haut Conseil de l'Azawad continue to occupy the governorship and the public radio station, the Office of Radio and Television of Mali, in Kidal, despite the calls by authorities for their return. The return of basic services in Kidal is becoming urgent. The issue of cantonment sites and the coordinated deployment of Malian forces also remain on the agenda.

I organized two meetings of the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee since the adoption of the agreement. However, during the second meeting, held on 18 September, representatives of the MNLA and the Haut Conseil de l'Azawad announced the suspension of their participation, citing the non-implementation of confidence-building measures, in particular the release of prisoners. The Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad also endorsed that decision.

Since then, we have increased our contact and the number of meetings, making use of my good offices with the representatives of the armed movements in Kidal and Ouagadougou. All those efforts have helped to ease the situation and led to the return of the signatory movements within the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee. For its part, the Government called for the efforts under way in order to reach a lasting settlement to the crisis in the north, including

the upcoming organization of the States-General of the decentralization and the establishment of the north. It is important to note that the Government has implemented confidence-building measures. It released 23 prisoners and announced the lifting of several arrest warrants. That clears the way for coordinated dialogue so that the parties to the conflict and the Malian nation may overcome the causes that led their country to division, so that the past will not happen again.

(spoke in English)

The recent and worrying security incidents in Mali are, in my view, also an important wake up call. After a period of calm, which facilitated the holding of the presidential elections and the cantonment of armed groups in Kidal, increasing tensions and acts of provocation resulted in clashes throughout the month of September in various localities in the north. There is a need for a wake-up call.

The pursuit of tactical operations by the parallel French forces, along with the gradual increase of the Malian forces and the strategic deployment of MINUSMA in some localities, positively impacted the overall security situation in northern Mali. However, the effective stabilization of the northern regions remains challenging partly due to the complex nature of the conflict, including the threat of asymmetric attacks by extremist elements, which should not be underestimated.

On 28 September, a vehicle laden with explosives attempted to enter a Malian Defence and Security Forces camp in Timbuktu. The attackers detonated the vehicle at the entrance of the camp, killing four individuals, including the driver and passenger, and injuring many more. On 30 September, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility for the attack. On 7 October, shells were fired at the city of Gao. The Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa claimed responsibility.

In addition to the security threat from armed groups and terrorists, which mainly affected the northern regions, the authorities had to contend with tensions within the armed forces. On 1 October, sustained gunfire was heard in the garrison town of Kati, the stronghold of General Sanogo, approximately 30 kilometres from Bamako. The mutineers were peacefully neutralized following a strong stance by the Minister of Defence and an address to the nation by President Keita. Yet that incident is a sobering reminder of the urgent need to

quickly and effectively re-establish discipline and the chain of command in the armed forces and to undertake security sector reform in earnest.

The human rights situation, including violations of sexual rights, remain of concern in spite of a decrease in violations particularly in the north. Our human-rights teams continue to register cases of abuses and violations committed by all parties. They include illegal arrests and detentions by the Malian defence and security forces, extrajudicial executions and pervasive impunity for various actors. On 24 September, the MNLA released 30 individuals it had illegally detained in Kidal. I will ensure that our work in the human rights area receives all necessary attention, and we will continue to underline the need for an end to impunity so that justice may prevail.

Despite such security challenges, which are an important wake-up call for the Security Council, I can assure the Council that the overall improvement of the situation in Mali has also opened up new prospects for the country's recovery and longer-term perspectives. But Mali's development and humanitarian needs remain daunting. I am shocked by the country's malnutrition levels. Scores of displaced people and refugees are returning home, and an action plan for the northern regions for the next few months has been developed by the United Nations development and humanitarian country teams to guide the international response to the most urgent humanitarian and early recovery needs. However, international support for the humanitarian emergency in Mali has been timid, with the humanitarian appeal funded at 37 per cent, or \$177 million out of \$477 million required, leaving a gap of \$300 million. With this month marking the start of a new school year, needs in the education sector are particularly pressing.

The near-collapse of the Malian State last year was not a mere coincidence. The country has been facing recurrent crises for the past few decades. Nor should we lose sight of the regional dimension of the Malian crisis; we must make progress in implementing an integrated Sahel strategy. As we move forward, it is important to avoid repeating the errors of the past and to address the root causes of the challenges facing Mali, which also include the manner in which international partners have traditionally provided political and financial support. The time may be right for a critical reassessment of our engagement. We may consider forging a new compact or new deal between the Government and the

donor community, on the basis of an agreed set of key priorities and a clear accountability framework, that will lead the country and international actors towards a more transparent and focused partnership, combating bad governance and corruption and with Mali in the driver's seat.

While the United Nations is striving to support the Malian Government and people, we are faced with a number of severe challenges. I have mentioned the wake-up call of the security risks. The Mission lacks critical enablers, such as helicopters, for facilitating rapid deployment and access to remote areas to ensure the protection of civilians. Troop generation must accelerate. I call on Council members and troop — and police-contributing countries to do their utmost to promote the rapid deployment of additional enablers and battalions to Mali in order for MINUSMA to discharge its mandate speedily and effectively. Enablers are also particularly important within the context of our security and logistical support for the forthcoming legislative elections, and in the light of the risks of asymmetric threats.

The new authorities are dealing with numerous challenges that must be addressed urgently in order to enable Malian men, women and children to live in security and to benefit from peace dividends. I remain concerned about the fragile security situation, notably in the North. Progress on the political front is key in that respect, and I urge all actors and parties to refrain from acts of provocation and violence that could easily jeopardize the gains achieved so far. I encourage them to formulate a transparent and agreed-on road map for inclusive talks without hesitation and as a matter of priority.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the people of Mali on the journey they have begun so splendidly. They can count on the support of the international community in their search for sustainable solutions to the challenges facing their country. Those solutions can come only from them. I also thank the African Union, ECOWAS and other international partners for their commitment to addressing the Malian situation and for their respect and support for MINUSMA.

The President: I thank Mr. Koenders for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Reconciliation and Development of the North of the Republic of Mali.

Mr. Diarra (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on Azerbaijan's presidency of the Security Council for the month of October, and to welcome your initiative in holding this important meeting on the situation in Mali. My Government is also very grateful for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the commendable efforts he has continued to make to resolve the Malian crisis.

Since the Council's 25 June briefing on the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/338), much has happened in my country. On 18 June in Ouagadougou, the transitional authorities and armed groups signed a preliminary agreement on the presidential election and inclusive peace talks in Mali. On 1 July, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) became operational, absorbing the African-led International Support Mission in Mali. On 29 July and 12 August, with the support of its outside partners, Mali held the most transparent presidential election since its democratic process began in 1992. The election reflected an exceptionally high participation rate that testified to our people's willingness to take charge of their own destiny and to emerge from the swamp of the multidimensional crisis that the country has been wallowing in since January 2012. By an uncontested landslide vote of 77.6 per cent, the Malian people entrusted Ibrahim Boubacar Keita with the task of guiding our country's future.

Since beginning work on 8 September, the Government, led by Prime Minister Oumar Tatam Ly under the authority of President Keita, has thrown itself into solving the problems of the North. While pursuing an intensive dialogue with all the parties involved in the crisis, it has implemented a series of efforts aimed at preparing for the negotiations stipulated in the preliminary agreement of 18 June within a 60-day time frame.

Without going into detail, I will mention the following actions: the meeting of armed groups held in Bamako from 15 to 17 September; the audience granted by the President to the armed groups in Koulouba on 17 September, during which the Head of State established the framework for future discussions, specifying that apart from the issues of autonomy and independence, everything was negotiable within the framework of a united and pluralist Mali; and the implementation of confidence-building measures, beginning with the freeing of several detainees on 18 September and 3 October. I should also emphasize

that we have ordered that the political mandate of various persons who were members of the National Assembly be lifted as soon as possible. On 15 and 16 September in Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal and throughout the national territory, we also held sensitization forums, as provided in the preliminary agreement signed in Ouagadougou. Various intra-community forums are currently being held in several regions of the country.

The new National Commission for Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation will shortly be organizing inter-community forums while conducting thorough investigations into violations of human rights and the consequences of the occupation of three regions in the North. The Commission will visit refugee camps and displaced populations in order to be informed of all issues concerning their reintegration into their places of origin, and will make recommendations to the Government on how to ensure that from now on justice will prevail and an end be made to the culture of impunity in our country.

From 21 to 23 October, in the framework of preparations for the national conference on the North, which will be held by the end of this month, the Government will conduct a forum on decentralization, aimed at creating institutional mechanisms enabling the strengthening of the powers of the decentralized collectives so that they can better respond to the basic aspirations of the people.

At the same time, the Government is preparing a plan for the accelerated development of the northern regions, the first version of which was approved on Monday, 14 October, during a ratification workshop held with the Government and our technical and financial partners. The recommendations of the decentralization forum and the content of plan for accelerated development of the northern regions appear on the agenda of the national conference on the north, which will bring together all the social components of our nation so that together we can forge a definitive and lasting solution to the crisis that has shaken the country.

The aim of our Government is to reconcile Malians among themselves and with themselves, because a nation cannot move forward if it is not united and in agreement about a common vision for its future. With determination and wisdom, we will rebuild a new social contract in order to recreate the conditions of living together as Malians among all Malians.

In his speech on 27 September 2013, at the general debate of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly (see A/68/PV.15), President Boubacar Keita showed his unshakeable determination to complete the electoral process by organizing the first round of legislative elections on 24 November and the second round on 15 December. Mali has embarked on the path of building the rule of law, while resolutely fighting against corruption and impunity. The nation is primarily a space of solidarity founded upon justice and equity.

Although the deployment of Malian Defence and Security Forces and of MINUSMA and Operation Serval helped to significantly improve the security situation in the major cities of northern Mali, at some point we must recognize that the situation on the ground today is characterized by the return of armed groups, terrorists and jihadists who continue to pose a serious threat to the stability, the peace and security in the northern regions of the country and across the Sahel. As an illustration, the increasing number of terrorist attacks in northern Mali was the subject of a letter addressed to the members of the Security Council dated 2 October 2013 (S/2013/586), with which the Government of Mali sought to draw the Council's attention to the threat. Those terrorist attacks clearly demonstrate that the fight against terrorism and organized crime in Mali is not over and that the security situation remains fragile throughout the Sahel region.

Let me say a few words about the humanitarian situation in Mali, where much remains to be done to bring about the safe and sustainable return of internally displaced persons and refugees to their homes. In addition to the difficulties arising from the security crisis in the north, there has been a considerable deterioration in the food situation in the south of the country, where more than 800,000 people are facing untold difficulties.

The renewed terrorist activities in recent weeks requires the deployment of the Malian army throughout the territory, with the support of the MINUSMA, which also needs to receive adequate resources to fulfil the mandate assigned to it under the relevant provisions of paragraphs 16 and 17 of resolution 2100 (2013), of 25 April.

Before concluding, I wish to reiterate here the sincere thanks and deep gratitude of the people and the Government of Mali to our bilateral and multilateral partners for their continued engagement with our country, but also to remind them of the need to never let down our guard vis-à-vis terrorist and jihadist groups on the grounds that the Malian crisis is resolved and that we should turn the page and move to other areas of tension.

I wish to state emphatically that the security situation remains very volatile. It requires sustained attention from all the friends of Mali and involves a renewed commitment from the international community to combat terrorism and transborder crime.

Finally, I would make an urgent appeal to the international community, especially the friends of Mali, which met in Brussels in May, for an urgent mobilization of pledges to boost economic development in Mali.

My delegation welcomes the report under consideration today (S/2013/582).

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.