



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8636th meeting

Tuesday, 8 October 2019, 10.15 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Matjila	(South Africa)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
	Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Germany	Mr. Heusgen
	Indonesia	Mr. Syihab
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Peru	Mr. Duclos
	Poland	Mr. Lewicki
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Mrs. Craft

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2019/782)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 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/2019/782)

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

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

Mr. Annadif is joining today's meeting via video-conference from Bamako.

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/2019/782, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.

At this meeting, we will hear briefings by Mr. Annadif and Ambassador José Singer Weisinger, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali.

I now give the floor to Mr. Annadif.

Mr. Annadif: Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the role of President of the Security Council for the month of October. I would also like to take this opportunity to greet and congratulate the Ambassador of Russia for his presidency of the Council during the month of September.

(spoke in French)

It is an honour and a renewed pleasure for me to present to the Council today, from Bamako, the report of the Secretary-General on Mali (S/2019/782), covering the past three months, in accordance with paragraph 64 of resolution 2480 (2019).

I also take this opportunity to welcome Ambassador Issa Konfourou, Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations.

This report comes at a time when news from Bamako is, unfortunately, not encouraging, particularly last week's gruesome attacks on Boulékéssi and Mondoro, as well as the death 48 hours ago of a peacekeeper in Aguelhok and the injury of another in the vicinity of Bandiagara.

Despite these ongoing tragedies committed by the enemies of peace, significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation on Mali, particularly with regard to political and institutional reforms, defence and security issues and socioeconomic development issues, as mentioned in the report under consideration. That progress includes the promulgation last July of the Loi d'entente nationale and legislation establishing the fundamental principles for the creation, organization and control of the northern economic development zone, which lays the foundations for relaunching development at the local level.

In the same vein, it is worth noting and welcoming the workshop held from 14 to 16 September in Bamako, which endorsed the terms of reference of the inclusive national dialogue and the official launch of the dialogue by Prime Minister Boubou Cissé, on 16 September. In that regard, we note that the main political and institutional reforms provided for in the Agreement are well reflected in the terms of reference. The consultations at the local level began yesterday and will through today. They will continue at the cercle level on 14 and 15 October, then at the regional level on 21 and 22 October, before moving to the capital, Bamako, for the national dialogue to be held towards the end of October, or early November at the latest. The Malian political class and civil society should be commended for taking this important step, and an appeal should be made to the various stakeholders to take part in the debate in order to ensure massive and truly inclusive participation.

The failure to hold the thirty-eighth session of the Agreement Monitoring Committee, scheduled to take place in Kidal on 17 September, caused some unease among the signatories. That unease was amplified by the Government's announcement of its wish to review certain provisions of the Agreement during the inclusive national dialogue. In the light of these

developments, which could hinder the smooth progress of the peace process, it is extremely important to call on all stakeholders to continue the dialogue in the spirit of the Agreement, which remains the only basis for a return to peace and stability in Mali. Building trust among the signatories is essential in order for the next session of the Committee to take place. I would like to take this opportunity to commend Ambassador Ahmed Boutache, who, after leading the work of the Committee in an outstanding way for almost five years, is about to take on other responsibilities in the service of his country, Algeria.

Concerning the defence and security pillar of the Agreement, the planning of the redeployment of 1,006 combatants from the Operational Coordination Mechanism, who are now an integral part of the Malian security forces, is on track. That number will be supplemented by 328 other combatants who are still in training; a further 506 will be added, bringing the number of troops to nearly 1,840. The troops, who are all from the Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad, will be mixed with others in already constituted units and redeployed to the northern regions to form the core of the reconstituted and reformed Malian defence and security forces.

The establishment of a national security council and the appointment of its permanent secretary are significant steps forward, which were welcomed by all the partners at the fifth session of the strategic committee on security sector reform, held on 4 October. The council's establishment will likely facilitate the adoption of the national defence and security policy, which is essential to the coherent implementation of security sector reform in Mali.

By initiating its efforts under the policy framework on crisis management in Centre, the Government of Mali is demonstrating its determination to remedy the situation, including through the implementation of its Centre stabilization strategy. Thanks to the efforts of the Malian Government, combined with those of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), statistics show a significant decrease in the number of attacks against civilians and the number of civilians killed or injured in recent months. This is a good opportunity to call for an increased presence of defence and security forces in Centre, in coordination with MINUSMA efforts to protect civilians and combat impunity.

In that context, on 27 September, MINUSMA held a coordination meeting with the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission to discuss the implementation of the community rehabilitation programme designed to handle the disarmament and dismantling of self-defence groups and at-risk youth, particularly in Centre. The Government plans to launch the programme very soon. The provisional date is set for 11 October, in the presence of the Prime Minister. MINUSMA will support the operation, particularly in the areas of disarmament, biometric registration, human rights awareness, child protection and HIV/AIDS testing, as well as through the community violence reduction project.

In addition, the humanitarian situation in Centre continues to deteriorate. The cycle of violence has led to waves of internal displacement, currently numbering around 171,000 people. That is the highest number of displaced persons since 2015. Some of them live in displaced persons' camps, while others live with host families, in often very difficult conditions, which is putting humanitarian assistance under strain owing to the lack of regular funding and, above all, to difficult humanitarian access despite MINUSMA's support. The restoration of public services, whether security, judicial or social, is essential if the level of violence is to be reduced. Humanitarian workers are not immune from the violence. At the end of September, two vehicles of a United Nations agency were stolen by armed men.

On cross-cutting issues such as child protection, the Plateforme, one of the signatories to the Agreement, submitted its action plan against the recruitment and use of children on 18 September.

In the area of combating sexual violence, MINUSMA held a workshop from 24 to 27 September to prepare an action plan following the signing, on 1 March, of the joint communiqué on conflict-related sexual violence by the Government and the United Nations. The draft action plan is currently being reviewed and will have to be signed at the end of this year in order to be rolled out in 2020.

Lastly, in accordance with resolution 2480 (2019), a workshop on the inclusion of women in the peace process is planned for 25 November. It will focus on determining and validating the modalities for their inclusion, including the establishment of a women's observatory. MINUSMA, UN-Women and donors stand

ready to support the Government's efforts to organize and run the workshop.

As members can see from the Secretary-General's report, while there are many challenges, MINUSMA is determined to fulfil its obligations, in full coordination not only with the Government of Mali but also with international partners, including the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, Operation Barkhane and the European Union (EU) missions, such as the EU Training Mission in Mali and the EU capacity-building mission Sahel Mali.

I thank you, Mr President, for your kind attention and continued support to Mali and MINUSMA.

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

I now give the floor to Ambassador Singer Weisinger.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to brief the members of the Security Council in my capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017), concerning Mali. In my statement, I intend to provide information on my role as Chair since the start of my mandate on 1 January and to highlight the work conducted by the Committee and the Panel of Experts since the beginning of the year.

The Committee has met five times since the beginning of the year. The Committee held informal consultations on 7 February to consider the midterm report of the Panel of Experts on Mali (see S/2019/137), submitted to the Security Council in accordance with paragraph 4 of resolution 2432 (2018). Committee members heard a briefing on 12 April by Ms. Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, on the scourge of sexual violence in Mali. Since the Committee was established to date, there have been eight people on the 2374 (2017) sanctions list. The Committee signed an agreement with INTERPOL in March to publish and circulate INTERPOL-Security Council Special Notices. The Panel of Experts submitted its final report to the Security Council on 9 August (see S/2019/636), as mandated by the Security Council.

Lastly, I would like to report that I will be visiting Bamako from 16 October to 18 October. The visit is a timely one, as it is a good opportunity to engage with national authorities and receive updates on the political and security situation in Mali and the Sahel, including on the implementation of the Agreement on Peace

and Reconciliation in Mali. It also provides a good opportunity to explore prospects for future engagement with countries in the Sahel in order to promote peace and reconciliation in Mali and stability in the wider region.

The President: I thank Ambassador Singer Weisinger for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes today's briefing on developments in Mali in the light of the strategic priorities defined by resolution 2480 (2019). We commend Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), on his briefing and express our full support for his tireless efforts in implementing the MINUSMA mandate. My delegation also thanks Ambassador Singer Weisinger, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017), concerning Mali, for his detailed briefing. We welcome the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations to today's meeting and will pay close attention to his statement.

In the light of the findings and recommendations of the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Mali and the work of MINUSMA (S/2019/782), my delegation would like to make a few observations on the political, security and humanitarian issues.

At the political level, my country welcomes the actions of the Malian authorities, in particular the launching, on 16 September, of the political dialogue, which should enable all the country's leading forces to make their voices heard on constitutional issues and political and institutional reforms. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire calls on all stakeholders to prioritize the best interests of the nation in the political dialogue.

National consultations must also give a prominent place to women, the primary victims of the unspeakable violence perpetrated by terrorist groups, so that their aspirations can be taken into account in the quest for lasting solutions to Mali's many challenges. Furthermore, my country believes that the success of the dialogue depends, above all, upon the willingness of Malian political actors to take ownership of the recovery process following the crisis. We also welcome the support of MINUSMA, which is an added value

in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, borne out of the Algiers process. Côte d'Ivoire therefore hopes that the new momentum created by the political dialogue will enable a continuation of the slow but encouraging progress in the areas of defence and security and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and in establishing the northern economic development zone.

The security situation in northern and central Mali remains a source of serious concern, as illustrated by the recurrent attacks by terrorist groups against civilians and the use of community violence. Côte d'Ivoire reiterates its firm condemnation of the heinous and indiscriminate attacks on the Malian defence and security forces, MINUSMA, the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel) and international forces. They include attacks on the Boulkessy and Mandoro military camps, on 1 and 2 October, which killed 25 Malian soldiers, as well as those carried out four days later in Aguelhok and Bandiagara, which left one dead and injured five among MINUSMA forces. Such attacks, similar to violence against civilians, compel the Security Council to continue strengthening the logistical and operational capacities of the Malian armed forces, in particular when collecting and analysing information. In that regard, my delegation welcomes MINUSMA's support in building the capacity of the Malian armed forces, in line with the Government's integrated security plan for the central regions and the restoration of State authority and basic social services in the centre of the country, which should help reduce violence and intercommunity tensions.

The continuing deterioration of the humanitarian situation, due mainly to attacks by extremist armed groups and terrorists, as well as community violence, is also worrisome. The number of internally displaced persons continues to increase and, regrettably, reflects the urgency of the humanitarian situation in affected areas. According to the most recent report of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, dated 12 September, the number increased from 84,300 to 168,500 between January and July. Approximately 3.9 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance today, as compared to 3.2 million in January, thereby increasing the budget for the intervention plan to \$324 million. Côte d'Ivoire therefore calls for strong support from the international community commensurate with the immense humanitarian challenges in order to fund the intervention plan.

Today's meeting takes place in a worrisome regional security context, marked not only by the exacerbation of intercommunity conflicts but also the growing terrorist threat and an increase in the number of attacks throughout the West African subregion. There is an increasing number of worrisome signs that require the Council to go further and be pragmatic in its support for the fight against terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel. That calls for a paradigm shift in the fight against terrorism, which must be considered at the subregional level, while building on the achievements of the G-5 Sahel. That is the essence of the commitment made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at its Extraordinary Summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government on Terrorism in the ECOWAS Region, held on 14 September in Ouagadougou, where they pledged to pool their resources in the fight against terrorism through a priority action plan with a fund of \$1 billion.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire reiterates its ongoing support for the Malian authorities during this difficult phase of their country's history and encourages the international community, first and foremost the Security Council, to strengthen its support in order to help restore peace and stability in Mali.

Mrs. Craft (United States of America): I thank Special Representative Annadif for his briefing.

Today I want to emphasize the continued importance of follow-through. We have seen that essential quality in the sustained commitment of those serving in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the most dangerous mission of the United Nations. Both MINUSMA and the Malian Defence and Security Forces have suffered heinous attacks in recent days, with a Chadian peacekeeper killed in one attack and at least 38 Malian troops killed in two others. The United States owes a debt of gratitude to the families whose loved ones' lives were taken, and we wish a speedy recovery to all the injured.

On a personal note, we must not become numb to this kind of violence. The deaths of those Malian soldiers are wrong. The death of one soldier is wrong. They come far too soon, and that should motivate the Council to redouble its efforts. Such horrific acts reinforce the reality that MINUSMA is no ordinary peacekeeping mission and that Mali's security and

humanitarian crisis is continuing its dangerous spiral. Terrorist organizations operate with impunity, and civilians are being killed, injured or displaced in unacceptable numbers. Affirming such a status quo is unacceptable.

The Council unanimously adopted resolution 2480 (2019) on 28 June. Notably, the mandate created a second strategy priority for MINUSMA, supporting the Government of Mali in its efforts to protect civilians in the centre of the country. We commend MINUSMA for its efforts to address instability in that region, particularly through the launch of Operation Oryx II, as well as its work to re-establish State authority and its assistance with local reconciliation efforts. We also welcome the Mission's strategy of increasing its mobility and concentrating on major population centres. Like my colleague from Côte d'Ivoire, we encourage the greater and continued participation of women in inclusive national dialogue and in the monitoring mechanisms of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. The United States also recognizes the efforts made by Mali's Government to stabilize the centre of the country. The handing over of a MINUSMA camp to Malian security forces is an example of a small but concrete step in the right direction, and we want to see more transitions like it in the future.

However, despite MINUSMA's commendable efforts, the overall trend in this reporting period is deeply worrying, as it speaks to a notable lack of follow-through. The Government of Mali and the signatory armed groups have made little progress in implementing the Algiers peace agreement, despite the clear message in resolution 2480 (2019) that the signatory parties are expected to accelerate that implementation. In the three months since the resolution was adopted, we have yet to see any consensus reached on how the inclusive national dialogue should proceed. A number of critical parties have pulled out of the process, and implementation has been hampered by administrative shortages and a failure to fund local authorities at the level the agreement requires. That is not acceptable. We cannot continue to support a peacekeeping mission where the signatory parties enjoy security provided by international forces while refusing to fully implement their own agreement. We have also heard calls for giving MINUSMA a more robust counter-terrorism mandate. In our view, however, MINUSMA, as a peacekeeping mission, should not be viewed as a solution to a regional counter-terrorism problem. The States of the Group of

Five for the Sahel have already developed a Joint Force to address those specific challenges, and the United States supports that effort.

In conclusion, I want to return to the theme of follow-through. The late theologian Eugene Peterson once wrote that beginnings are important, but that a beginning without a continuation is a lie. We cannot allow another promising beginning to evade continuation. We cannot allow another year to pass in which we are no closer to the implementation of the Algiers accord or the achievement of the agreement's key political goals. If all stakeholders remain unwilling to break the status quo, we must be willing to begin developing a different approach to peace, security and renewed hope for the people of Mali.

Mr. Syihab (Indonesia): I would first like to thank Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and Ambassador José Singer Weisinger, Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali, for their comprehensive briefings.

I would also like to express my deep condolences for the death of one peacekeeper and the injuring of five others during attacks in northern and central Mali. We appreciate the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and all MINUSMA personnel in ensuring peace and stability in Mali. I would now like to share three points.

First, we welcome the political developments in Mali, including the launch of an inclusive national dialogue on 16 September. We hope that the dialogue will enable an important consensus to be reached on constitutional reform, the election of a new Parliament and the redeployment of the Malian Defence and Security Forces. We also welcome the progress made in the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, including the continuing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and the promulgation of laws on the establishment of a northern economic development zone. We call on all Malian stakeholders to continue to work together in accelerating the implementation of the peace agreement and the priority measures set out in resolution 2480 (2019).

Secondly, the security situation continues to be a cause of concern, particularly in northern and central Mali. With this situation in mind, we believe it is necessary to step up efforts to redeploy the Malian Defence and Security Forces. That will be crucial to restoring a State presence and addressing the security situation, particularly in northern Mali. In central Mali, we commend the reconciliation efforts being led by the Government and supported by international partners, including MINUSMA. We believe that reconciliation, the re-establishment of a State presence and the provision of basic needs for the population should continue to be prioritized, along with security responses. With regard to MINUSMA, we commend the efforts made to adjust its footprint and increase its proactive posture. We call on the Government to support the implementation of that adaptation plan.

Thirdly, we would like to reiterate the importance of a holistic approach to addressing the situation in Mali that encompasses security, humanitarian and development efforts. We therefore call on regional and international partners to advance the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel and its support plan. Only such a concerted effort can enable us to achieve durable peace, stability and sustainable development in Mali.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank Special Representative Annadif and Ambassador Singer Weisinger for their briefings.

China strongly condemns the attack on 6 October targeting peacekeepers from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). We would like to express our condolences to the family of the peacekeeper killed in the attack and wish the injured a speedy recovery.

At present, the peace and reconciliation process in Mali is slowly advancing, preparations for an inclusive national dialogue are under way and progress has been made in the intercommunal reconciliation process in central Mali. However, the security situation in the country and the surrounding Sahel region still poses a challenge to the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. The international community should continue to pay attention to the issue and to help Mali and the countries of the region on the political, security and development fronts.

First, we should support Mali in advancing peace and reconciliation. All the parties in Mali should take

the opportunity presented by the national dialogue to work together for peace and development and resolve their differences peacefully, through full consultations. The international community should provide Mali with constructive assistance and support it in strengthening its development and governance capabilities. The Council's Mali sanctions mechanism should abide strictly by the Council's mandate, and its work should help advance the political process.

Secondly, we should support Mali in enhancing its security capacity-building. The Government of Mali bears the primary responsibility for protecting its territory and people. The international community should continue to help it improve its security and counter-terrorism capabilities so that it can gradually assume its full responsibility for security. Since terrorism knows no national boundaries, we must strengthen regional cooperation and combat terrorism in and around Mali, with an integrated approach. The international community should continue to support the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel). Through the African Union, China has provided financial support amounting to ¥300 million to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force.

Thirdly, we should support Mali in achieving economic and social development. Development is the foundation for peace. The international community should continue to help Mali consolidate its economic foundation, strive for independent and sustainable development, and promote development through cooperation and peace through development. China calls on all the relevant parties to follow through on their aid commitment and help the Malian Government increase investment in development in the country's northern and central areas. We welcome the progress made in establishing a northern economic development zone and hope that all the parties concerned will continue to advance those efforts and help the local people share the peace dividends as soon as possible.

Fourthly, we should support the work of MINUSMA. In June the council adopted resolution 2480 (2019), extending the mandate of MINUSMA for one year, enhancing its mandated tasks in central Mali and expanding its support for the G-5 Sahel Joint Force. We hope that MINUSMA will plan sensibly, use its existing resources effectively and fully cooperate with all parties in performing all of its functions. Given the complex environment in which MINUSMA is deployed, we hope that the Mission will continue to

take measures to strengthen the safety and security of its peacekeepers and ensure their effective performance of their duties. China supports the important role played by the Mission and Special Representative Annadif in assisting the peace process in Mali and strengthening the country's security capacity-building.

China is a major troop-contributing country to MINUSMA. More than 420 of our peacekeepers are currently carrying out their duties in the Mission. China will continue to work with the rest of the international community to contribute to achieving peace, stability and development in Mali.

Mr. Esono Mbengono (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We are also grateful to Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and Ambassador José Singer Weisinger, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali, for their informative briefings regarding the increasing tensions at the political level and the deterioration of the security situation in our brother country of Mali and in the Sahel region.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, I want to express our firm condemnation of the terrorist attacks of 30 September and 1 October on the Malian armed forces and on one of the battalions of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel) in the areas of Boulikessi and Mondoro. We offer our sincere condolences to the families of the fallen soldiers and wish the wounded a speedy recovery.

The Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, under the leadership of President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, reiterates its full solidarity with the Government of Mali and the countries contributing troops to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force. We want to emphasize that such attacks should not in any way hinder the valiant efforts of national and international parties to achieve peace and security. On the contrary, they should serve as a reminder of the urgent need for strong and effective support on the part of the international community for the efforts of the countries of the region to combat terrorism.

Mali has been dealing with a multidimensional crisis since 2012. Neither the signing of the 2015 Algiers Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and the mobilization of enormous financial resources, nor the deployment of Operation Barkhane, MINUSMA and even the G-5 Sahel Joint Force has succeeded in curbing the jihadist threat. In the face of these gloomy prospects, international public opinion is clear and unanimous that the humanitarian and security situation is deteriorating to a worrying degree, while the civilian population is the most affected by the conflict and marginalized young people are badly exploited by terrorist groups preying on their vulnerability.

In the light of the situation, we should combine synergies and prioritize mechanisms and initiatives that can potentially weaken the terrorists and create new hope for restoring peace. In that regard, the implementation of the inclusive national dialogue launched in September constitutes an ideal framework for addressing the most pressing matters, as the Secretary-General underscores in paragraph 99 of his report (S/2019/782) — that is, fostering consensus among national actors with regard to the essential reforms that will lay the groundwork for a more peaceful and stable Mali.

My Government takes note of the postponement of the thirty-eighth session of the Agreement Monitoring Committee, which was supposed to take place on 17 September in Kidal. We urge the Malian parties not to withdraw from the dialogue. In the current environment, it is crucial to ensure that the negotiations continue in order to create the necessary conditions for the rapid implementation of the peace agreement, particularly in view of the upcoming internationally established deadlines. Those joint efforts should result in the speedy provision of basic social services and State services, including those related to the return of the Malian Defence and Security Forces to the northern area of the country.

Equatorial Guinea reiterates its unwavering support for the Malian Government on its path to stability and lasting peace and greatly appreciates the leadership and work of MINUSMA in often very difficult conditions. We welcome the 25 July communiqué of the African Union Peace and Security Council highlighting the urgent need for the Malian parties to redouble their efforts to further accelerate the implementation of the Algiers agreement, which is the most viable framework for resolving the crisis in northern and central Mali, as well as for ramping up the continuing support for

G5-Sahel operations and strengthening its presence in the centre of the country, in accordance with resolution 2480 (2019).

In line with the declaration issued at the extraordinary session of the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on 14 September in Ouagadougou, we reaffirm the principle of respect for the inviolability and territorial integrity of States in accordance with the founding principles of the African Union, and commend the adoption by the leaders of ECOWAS of a \$1 billion plan of action over the next five years aimed at stepping up the fight against terrorism and cross-border organized crime, including trafficking in arms, tobacco and drugs.

In conclusion, I want to point out that the implementation of everything that we just mentioned will not bring back the thousands of people who lost their lives. However, it is likely to create conditions conducive to optimism and a new hope for realizing peaceful co-existence, accepting intercommunal co-existence, and fully restoring the authority of the States' concerned so that they can exercise their constitutional prerogative and legitimacy by protecting their people and property, as united and indivisible States.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my national capacity as the representative of South Africa.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Annadif for his insightful briefing on the developments in Mali pertaining to the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). I also thank Ambassador José Singer Weisinger for his update on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali. We pay tribute to our peacekeepers and the members of the Malian armed forces who have sacrificed their lives so that Malians can enjoy peace in their homeland.

My statement this morning will focus on the political process and the security and humanitarian situation in Mali. It will also reflect on the support provided by MINUSMA to the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel) and on the sanctions imposed on Mali.

With regard to the political process, South Africa welcomes the launch, in September, of the inclusive national dialogue. We urge stakeholders to participate in the national dialogue, which is aimed at contributing to the creation of political and institutional reforms that will characterize the future State of Mali and address the situation in the north and centre of Mali with a view to maintaining the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the country.

In that regard, we emphasize that the full implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali is vital for the establishment of peace, security and stability in northern Mali. It is also important that all Malians, including women, actively participate in the political processes in their country. In that regard, we are encouraged by the efforts being made to establish an independent women's observatory to enable women to participate in the monitoring of the implementation of the Agreement, which is an important step towards improving the participation of women in the political process in Mali.

With regard to the security situation, South Africa remains concerned about the continued instability in the north and centre of Mali, as evidenced by the sustained attacks against MINUSMA peacekeepers and national and international forces. We condemn the recent attacks in September and early October that resulted in the loss of many lives, including 38 Malian soldiers and a peacekeeper from Chad. It is important that the perpetrators of those attacks be held accountable and brought to justice.

The cessation of hostilities between the Fulani and Dogon communities in central Mali with a view to reducing intercommunal violence is a positive development that must be commended. Despite that overture, however, the persistent intercommunal attacks that result in casualties among civilians, including women and children, have the potential to undermine the positive gains that have been made to date. The protection of civilians, particularly the vulnerable groups in the conflict, must be a priority for all those concerned. The Security Council should encourage, support and provide the capacity for community-based conflict resolution and mediation and sustained intercommunal, inter-ethnic and interreligious dialogue throughout Mali. Such grass-roots efforts should include women, young people and religious and tribal leaders.

We note the progress that has been made to date on the accelerated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes, which could contribute to the redeployment of the reformed and reconstituted Malian defence and security forces throughout the country, especially in northern and central Mali. All possible measures must be taken by Malian authorities to address concerns regarding the DDR processes.

As we heard in the briefing by Special Representative Annadif, MINUSMA continues to help the authorities in Mali to restore State presence and State authority in northern and central Mali, primarily by ensuring the provision of basic services to its people, which is particularly important to ensure the normalization of the living conditions and the improvement of the lives of the ordinary citizens of Mali.

However, such an undertaking requires sufficient resources. The international community should therefore redouble its efforts to mobilize the requisite funds for the 2019 humanitarian response plan for Mali. South Africa would like to also reiterate the importance of a comprehensive and holistic approach to the multiple challenges facing Mali, particularly with regard to improving economic growth and socioeconomic development. In that regard, we are encouraged by the reports of the adoption of legislation to support the establishment of the northern development zone.

We reiterate the importance of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force in Mali and the Sahel region. Every possible effort should thus be made by the United Nations and its States Members to ensure that the continued challenges facing the G-5 Sahel Joint Force are addressed and that it has its full capacity and is able to efficiently implement its mandate. That is in addition to the life-support consumables that the G-5 Sahel Joint Force is already receiving from MINUSMA. There is an urgent need to resolve the root causes of instability, intercommunal clashes, terrorism and violent extremism.

In that regard, the decision taken by the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States at its recently concluded Extraordinary Summit, which pledged resources for fighting terrorism in the region, is an indication of the willingness of African countries to resolve their own problems and should be commended.

Regarding the sanctions imposed on Mali, allow me to reiterate my country's position that any sanctions regime should aim to support political processes and peace efforts, and not undermine them. The work of

the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017), concerning Mali, should therefore ensure that the Mali sanctions regime is effective in supporting the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and does not hinder it in any way.

In conclusion, South Africa is encouraged by the continued commitment of the international community, through the United Nations, to supporting efforts towards the establishment of peace, security and stability in Mali, all of which are precursors to the achievement of sustainable peace. As we have seen time and again, Mali is like a wall that acts as a dam blocking water from the north. If that wall breaks — and we can see the cracks — the countries downstream will suffer the most. Mali is a friend in the fight against terrorism. If those terrorists find their way out of Mali, the rest of Africa will suffer.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Mali

Mr. Konfourou (Mali) (*spoke in French*): It is always an honour for me to brief the Security Council on developments in Mali, in this case in the light of the latest quarterly report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2019/782).

First of all, I would like to warmly congratulate His Excellency Mr. Jerry Mathews Matjila, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa, both on his country's assumption of the presidency of the Council and on the outstanding way in which he conducts the work of the Council.

I would also like to express our deep appreciation to the delegation of Russian Federation for its excellent leadership of the Council in the month of September. I would be remiss if I did not reiterate here the deep gratitude of His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali, as well as the deep gratitude of the Government and the people of Mali, to Secretary-General António Guterres for his strong commitment to the stabilization and development of both Mali and the Sahel region,

I would like to add my thanks to all the members of the Council, the countries that have contributed troops and personnel to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the African Union, the European Union and the Economic

Community of West African States for their decisive and valued support to Mali during this particularly difficult time.

I would also be remiss if I did not commend the tireless work carried out by Ambassador Ahmed Boutache of Algeria in his role as Chair of the Monitoring Committee for the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. I also thank Ambassador José Singer Weisinger, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017), concerning Mali, both for his briefing and the plans he has made to visit Mali next week.

The Government of Mali takes note of the report of the Secretary-General under consideration. I thank my brother Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali, for his briefing and update on the latest developments in Mali since the finalization of the report. I have also taken note of the comments and high expectations that the members of the Council just expressed. I will be conveying them to the Government of Mali and to all Malian stakeholders. For my part, I would like to make several remarks on behalf of my Government.

Exactly 12 days ago, on 25 September, the President of the Republic of Mali, his Burkinabé counterpart, in his capacity as the current President of the Group of Five for the Sahel, and the Secretary-General of our Organization co-chaired a high-level meeting on Mali and the Sahel. It was an opportunity to take stock of the progress made and assess the challenges and consider perspectives in Mali and the region.

The Government, led by the President of the Republic, remains today more than ever firmly committed to implementing the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the outcome of the Algiers process. That political will is reflected in the substantial progress we have made in implementing the Agreement. I am delighted that the Secretary-General has noted that progress, as did many members of the Council in their statements this morning.

Therefore, with regard to political and institutional reform and after two unsuccessful attempts, the Government is now focusing on the timely organization of an inclusive national dialogue whose overall objective is to formulate a rigorous diagnosis of the problems that have plagued our country for more than three decades and to analyse, in a participatory and inclusive manner, the causes and consequences of those

problems with a view to proposing solutions to end the crisis through a concrete plan of action and timelines for its implementation.

I am pleased to inform the Council that the dialogue has already begun in Mali. Talks between 611 communes were launched yesterday and are ongoing at this very moment. Consultations at the level of the cercles and communes of the district of Bamako are scheduled for 14 and 15 October — in one week's time. Dialogue at the regional level, in the district of Bamako and among Malian Embassies and consulates abroad, will be held on 21 and 22 October. Those steps demonstrate that we are fulfilling that commitment, which is particularly dear to our hearts, so that Malians have the opportunity to talk to one other and take ownership of the peace process.

The overarching inclusive national dialogue will be held soon — according to the Secretary-General, it will be held towards the end of October or, at the latest, at the beginning of November. Again, that shows that we are taking steps in the right direction and that we remain firmly committed to creating a framework for Malians to converse and take ownership of the peace process. I must state here that one of the specific objectives of the inclusive national dialogue is to discuss institutional and political reform, including the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the outcome of the Algiers process. I also wish to stress that the inclusive national dialogue is intended to foster greater ownership of the peace process by the Malian people.

I am pleased to inform the Council that tangible progress has also been made in the area of defence and security issues. In the context of the establishment of the reconstituted national army, nearly 2,000 ex-combatant members of the Operational Coordination Mechanism have been registered in the accelerated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. Half of those fighters have just completed an updated predeployment training cycle and those new members of the reconstituted national army are waiting to be deployed on the basis of a consensual deployment plan that is currently being finalized.

In addition, the signatory parties agreed on the modalities for the distribution of ranks and responsibilities among ex-combatant commanding officers who will join the reconstituted national army. Meanwhile, the process of security sector reform is ongoing and gaining momentum with the adoption of

a plan of action by the National Council for Security Sector Reform.

With regard to the development issues in the northern regions of Mali, the President of the Republic has promulgated all the texts constituting the legal and institutional framework of the northern development zone. We have also created the Sustainable Development Fund, which is the financial instrument responsible for implementing the development strategy for the northern regions of Mali, to which the Government has already allocated \$72 million.

As of 28 June, as recognized by the Secretary-General, the Government had earmarked 21 per cent of its national budget — out of the 30 per cent planned — for implementing the Agreement. In that regard, too, we have made tangible progress. The State's financial efforts serve yet again to demonstrate of will of the Malian Government to honour its commitments under the Agreement.

In terms of national reconciliation, I can assure Council members that an important step has also been taken in that area. The Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission has to date registered 14,191 depositions from victims, while public hearings are scheduled to begin in December. Moreover, the mandate of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission has been extended until 31 December 2021 and now covers all incidents that occurred in Mali from our independence to the present day.

In the same vein, the President of the Republic promulgated the law of national understanding in July. Admittedly, the law exonerates persons who committed or were accomplices to crimes in the context of the painful events that occurred in Mali from January 2012, in accordance with the recommendations of the Conference of National Understanding. However, the law does not constitute a guarantee of impunity. On the contrary — the law of national understanding specifically excludes war crimes, crimes against humanity, rape and crimes not subject to the statute of limitations. It also provides for recognition and reparation measures for the victims of those events, as well as a reintegration programme for the collateral victims of that painful experience endured by our people.

It is clear that genuine progress is being made in the implementation of the Agreement, although I am aware that Malian stakeholders must live up to their

commitments and redouble their efforts to honour the relevant provisions of the Agreement so that our entire people can fully enjoy the dividends of peace.

I understand the impatience of our partners regarding the delays in the Agreement's implementation. However, it must be kept in mind that the implementation of the Agreement continues to be impeded by a number of significant challenges, such as the deterioration of the security environment and the lack of financial resources, particularly in terms of funding pledged by our partners.

I therefore take this opportunity to appeal to our partners to honour their commitments so that we can expedite the implementation of the Agreement. The Government remains firmly committed to advancing its implementation in a timely manner, as evidenced by the adoption of a new road map for the Agreement's implementation in July by both the Government and the signatory parties.

The situation in the regions of central Mali remains a source of major concern for the Government. The tragic events of the night of 30 September to 1 October in Mondoro and Boulékéssi are a bitter reminder that our adversaries — terrorist groups, drug traffickers, human traffickers and others — are determined to further destabilize Mali, its neighbouring countries and the region as a whole. Worse still, in addition to sowing terror in our common space on a daily basis, those forces of evil are exploiting our populations and turning them against each other. The factions created and manipulated by those criminal groups are fuelling the intercommunal violence that is inflicting deep suffering upon our nation.

The Government is fully aware of the complexity of the situation that is developing in central Mali. That is why it has opted for a comprehensive approach by adopting an integrated security plan for the regions of central Mali. The plan provides for political measures, including dialogue among communities, strengthening the security apparatus to protect people and their property, and providing peace dividends to our people, in particular basic social services.

I wish to emphasize that the Government remains very committed to accountability and the fight against impunity. Thus, following the violence that the centre experienced during the first half of the current year, several alleged perpetrators were arrested and are now in the hands of the courts to answer for their actions.

In addition, I also wish to reiterate the Government's resolve to respect and uphold human rights. Indeed, justice is systematically activated whenever cases of human rights violations are reported. It is true, however, that security conditions, the absence of competent public services in certain localities and the lack of expertise in some cases do not favour the rapid conclusion of some open procedures.

The regional dimension of the Malian crisis is another major challenge to the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. It is the very foundation of the commitment of the G-5 Sahel member States to stabilizing our region. As I said earlier, the proliferation of terrorist attacks in recent weeks in the Sahel region underscores the urgent need for the international community to work more closely with us. In that regard, I welcome the heartfelt message sent by the President of the Security Council. Mali and the Sahel are a bulwark against the common threat we face from terrorism. If it were to collapse, the rest of the world would suffer. I therefore ask the Council to stand with us and support us in addressing our common challenges. That is my appeal.

That having been said, our region is ready to play its part. We have invested our own material, human and financial resources in implementing the G-5 Sahel mandate, and we are determined to assume our share of the responsibility. However, we are aware that no amount of security alone can overcome those challenges. That is why, alongside the security component, we are working together to implement the Priority Investment Programme to create economic, social and development opportunities for our populations, particularly our

youth. In that regard, I welcome the ECOWAS decision to strengthen its support for our common efforts.

In closing, I wish to commend the outstanding work of the women and men of MINUSMA on the ground, under the able leadership of Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif. I know they work in extremely difficult conditions — and I know what I am talking about, for it is my country. They are far from their homes and their families. I pay tribute to the sacrifices they make every day to help us. The recent attacks on MINUSMA, on 6 October in Aguelhok and Bandiagara, which claimed the life of a Chadian Blue Helmet and wounded five others, remind us of those sacrifices. I address the heartfelt condolences of the Malian people to the family of the late hero and to the brotherly Chadian people. I wish a speedy recovery to the wounded, including the Togolese Blue Helmets hurt at Bandiagara.

Similarly, I pay homage to all the victims of the Malian crisis — civil and military, foreign and Malian — who have fallen on the field of honour in our country. I reiterate the gratitude of the Government and the people of Mali to the French Force Barkhane, to the troop-contributing countries of MINUSMA and to all partners, multilateral and bilateral, for their tireless support for Mali and a lasting and final settlement of the crisis.

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 11.25 a.m.