



**MISSION PERMANENTE
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MALI

**STATEMENT IN NATIONAL CAPACITY
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AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL**

*== Translation from French ==
== Check against delivery ==*

New York, 11 June 2020

Mr. Secretary-General,
Mr. High Representative,
Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to preside over this Security Council meeting on Mali on the occasion of the French presidency.

Mr. Secretary-General, France thanks you for making us the honour to participate in this session. I also welcome the presence of the High Representative of the African Union for the Sahel and Mali and of many Ministers. It is a sign of our collective interest in the situation in Mali and, beyond that, in the Sahel.

I would like first of all to discuss with you the progress made over the past eight years. For we must remember where we are coming from. In 2012, the North of Mali was occupied by terrorists and a political vacuum had set in. In 2013, France, at the request of the Malian authorities, intervened to stop the jihadists' advance towards Bamako. The African force MISMA, and then MINUSMA were deployed to secure the

territory and elections were held. A peace agreement was reached, under the aegis of Algeria. Since then, significant progress has been made in the implementation of that agreement. This year, for the first time in five years, one thousand soldiers of the reconstituted Malian army, which includes former rebels, returned to the Northern cities, including the symbolic city of Kidal. And progress on other aspects of the peace agreement is continuing, whether on decentralisation, development of the North or the participation of women in the peace process.

However, mirroring these sometimes hard-won gains, the situation in Mali and the Sahel remains extremely fragile. Terrorist groups are continuing their actions of harassment. The civilian populations and armies of the Sahel, whose courage and commitment I salute, are paying a heavy price. The humanitarian situation, aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, continues to deteriorate, leading to an increase in the number of internally displaced persons and refugees. Reconciliation between different communities remains a challenge. Finally, climate change makes Mali and the whole region particularly vulnerable.

But France is confident. In the Sahel, we are working with States, some of which are weakened but committed. And the international community has increased its support with the launch this year of the Coalition for the Sahel. We will hold its first ministerial meeting tomorrow. On the ground, this dynamic has resulted in the establishment of a joint command mechanism between the 5,100-strong French force Barkhane and the G5 Sahel Joint Force. The results are here, with victories in the fight against terrorism, including the neutralization last week of Abdelmalek Droukdal, leader of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. The Takuba Task Force, which brings together European special forces, has also been launched. Finally, we have continued our efforts on governance and the return of the State, with the Partnership for Stability and Security in the Sahel, launched with Germany, and development actions, within the framework of the Sahel Alliance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The month of June is of major importance for Mali, as it is the month of the MINUSMA's mandate renewal. In the face of the persistent challenges facing the country, MINUSMA remains the best tool available to the international community to support the Malians on the path to peace and security. MINUSMA's adaptation plan, which I invite all Member States to support, should further improve the mission's capabilities.

In the negotiation of this mandate, which will begin in the coming days, our priorities will be to confirm MINUSMA in its priority tasks: implementation of the peace agreement and support to the redeployment of the State and the protection of civilians in the Centre of the country.

But we will also seek to indicate, in this mandate, our expectations towards the Malian parties, both the Government and the armed groups. Five years after the signing of the peace agreement, the international community is still expecting significant progress from them. The actions of certain actors in blatant substitution of State authority in the North are not acceptable. Their disarmament must continue, under conditions agreed by the parties. On the other hand, the political and institutional reforms from the Agreement are still awaited. Let me repeat here: the peace agreement resulting from the Algiers process must remain our compass, and it is for its full and complete implementation that we must strive. Those who oppose it, on whatever side, will face sanctions.

The renewal of this mandate must also be an opportunity to recall our demands regarding the protection of civilians, respect for International Humanitarian Law, humanitarian access, respect for Human Rights and the fight against impunity. The Malian government has announced investigations into several allegations of

serious Human Rights violations, some of which are allegedly attributable to elements of the defence and security forces. It is essential that those responsible for these unacceptable acts be brought to justice, as the Malian government has pledged to do.

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda this year, I also recall the importance of the full, effective and meaningful participation of women, without whom there can be no lasting peace.

Because MINUSMA acts in conjunction with other security presences, it is finally important that adequate synergies be established. For the sake of the unity of this Council, we will advocate the continuation of MINUSMA's support to the G5 Sahel joint force, as well as a clarification of how that support is provided beyond the Malian territory.

Ladies and gentlemen,

MINUSMA is doing an excellent job in one of the most challenging environments. I commend your commitment, Mr. Secretary-General, that of your Special Representative, Mr. Annadif, and that of the peacekeepers.

France, aware of its responsibility in this matter, will be keen to work closely with each of the members of the Security Council in order to reach a consensus on the renewal of the mandate.

I thank you./.