

Mali: Any dispute over key Sunday vote must be resolved peacefully, says UN envoy

With key presidential elections in Mali just two days away, the top United Nations official there on Friday stressed that candidates must accept the results and ensure that the democratic process in Mali is “irreversible”.

“It is necessary that everybody goes to vote in a peaceful way and that the actors competing in this election accept the ballot box results”, said Mahamat Saleh Annadif, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative for the African country, in an interview with the UN Mission’s radio network, *Mikado FM*.

He said that security conditions, although fragile, were adequate for a successful round of voting on Sunday. Any dispute must be resolved through arbitration by the Malian institutions in charge, he stressed.

As the 2013 elections restored constitutional order, the 2018 elections must reassure that the democratic process in Mali is “irreversible”, he said.

The UN mission, known by its French acronym [MINUSMA](#), headed by Mr. Annadif, is providing technical assistance to the Malian authorities, and helping to create conditions conducive for the holding of credible and peaceful elections.

This includes the preparation and distribution of electoral materials; back-up security support; as well as helping to transport and train electoral officials. The mission has also made transportation available for all candidates to reach remote northern and central parts of the country, for campaigning purposes.

MINUSMA said it had transported 200 tons of electoral material and distributed it in all the northern regions; and flown 300 different people related to the whole electoral process – including the Independent National Electoral Commission delegates, Constitutional Court delegates, as well as international and national observers. including those from the African Union, the European Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Speaking to journalists at UN Headquarters on Friday, Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General, said that the security situation remains volatile, with local intercommunal tensions still high, heightening the risk of criminal and terrorist actions in the north and the centre.

“So far, however, there have been no major incidents related to the electoral process,” he said.

The Spokesman said that Mr. Annadif is proactively seeking to ensure that any electoral-related dispute is resolved peacefully and in accordance with the law.