

[Mali: In Mopti, UN chief urges support for 'G5' countries fighting terrorism in Sahel region](#)

On the second day of his visit to Mali, United Nations [Secretary-General António Guterres](#) travelled some 460 kilometers outside the capital, Bamako, to Mopti, where he made a strong appeal for more predictable financial support to the regional force tackling terrorist threats in the region.

Shortly after arriving in Mopti, on Wednesday, Mr. Guterres went to nearby Sévaré, where he visited the G5 Sahel Force Base.

Set up by Burkina-Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, neighbouring countries in the vast Sahel region – an area lying south of the Sahara Desert and stretching east to west across the breadth of the African continent – the Force aims strengthen the fight against threats to peace and security and bolster development.

“I would like to congratulate all the women and men who make up the G-5 Sahel Force for the way they are determined to build this project and to protect the civilian populations of the region, and at the same time they ensure the security of the entire international community in the face of the threat of terrorism and organized crime that is proliferating in this part of the world,” the Secretary-General told the press on the scene.

Adding that the UN has proposed secure funding options that would allow the Force to better plan its operations, he said: “We have not achieved all the goals we have set ourselves to better support the G5 Sahel Force. But we will do our best.”

“We will make a very strong plea to the international community so that the G5 Sahel can have the financial and material resources necessary for its effectiveness,” Mr. Guterres said.

“We are asking the international community for a big investment for the development of the region, for the development of the Sahel, because there is no peace without security and there is no development without peace.”

UN chief visits Grand Mosque



UN Photo/Marco Dormino

UN Secretary-General António Guterres visits the Grand Mosque in Mopti, Mali.

After visiting Sévaré, Mr. Guterres returned to Mopti where he met the Imam at the city's Grand Mosque. With his delegation, which included Jean-Pierre Lacroix, the head of UN peacekeeping operations, the Secretary-General talked with the Imam and the local civil society, focused mainly on the humanitarian and security situation in the region.

During his trip to Mali during the Ramadan period, the Secretary-General fasted in solidarity with Muslims around the world.

UN News has a multimedia team travelling with Mr. Guterres and we will be bringing you a full report from them, later in the day.