

Recent initiatives important milestones towards greater peace in Mali, say UN, regional partners

8 March 2017 – Commending recent progress, including the launch of interim authorities in Kidal, northern Mali, the United Nations together with regional blocs urged the parties to the peace agreement in the African nation to overcome the difficulties which are impeding the establishment of such authorities in the Taoudéni and Timbuktu regions.

The UN, the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the European Union (EU) – in their capacity as members of the Mediation Team supporting the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali resulting from the Algiers Process – also welcomed the successful conduct by the parties of the first mixed patrol in Gao on 23 February, within the framework of the Operational Coordination Mechanism, and called on them to extend the patrols in Kidal and Timbuktu without delay.

“[These] initiatives represent important milestones towards the successful implementation of the Agreement and towards greater peace and stability and the return of state services,” read a joint declaration issued by the four organizations.

Noting the important steps still to be taken, the organizations further invited parties to the Agreement to continue to honour the commitments made, in particular at the high-level meeting of the Agreement Monitoring Committee held in the capital, Bamako, last month, as well as to implement all the provisions of the Agreement for the interim period so as to support in a consensual manner the ongoing State reform and the new political and security architecture.

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“In that regard, [we] call on the parties to establish without delay the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion, the Integration Commission, and the National Council for Security Sector Reform which are key to advancing the peace process,” added the joint declaration.



Rwandan Peacekeepers from the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) patrol the streets of Gao, in northern Mali. UN Photo/Marco Dormino

Also in the declaration, the organizations also welcomed the establishment of a consultative framework involving all parties as well as the international Mediation Team, as well as commended progress towards preparing for a national conference, the *Conférence d'entente nationale* and called for broad

and inclusive participation for its preparation and organization.

The organizations, however, noted concern at the recent increase in attacks and clashes, particularly in north and central regions of Mali, such as those in Boulkessi, in Timbuktu as well as terrorist attacks in border areas in Burkina Faso and Niger, and underlined the need to bring the perpetrators to justice.

They also called on the parties to the Agreement to work closely together to improve intercommunal relations, share information about security threats, and take concrete steps to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism and spill-over into the region.

“In this regard, [we] welcome the initiative of the G5 Sahel Member States to more effectively fight violent extremism in support of the Malian parties,” said the parties.

They also reiterated their commitment to support, in coordination with the lead and the other members of the Mediation Team, the implementation of the Agreement as well as their determination “to counter those who take actions to obstruct or threaten the implementation of the Agreement.”