

Speech: “We will continue to support MINUSMA and its mandate to support implementation of the Peace Agreement.”

Thank you Mr President,

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for this comprehensive report on the situation in Mali and Jean-Pierre for so clearly setting out the report’s findings during your briefing. And I’d also like to welcome Minister Koulibaly here to the Council today.

Mr President, let me start by echoing the words of my Ethiopian colleague and welcoming the absence of violence between the signatory parties in Mali during this reporting period.

These conditions provide the best chance for the successful implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. We commend all parties for their continued commitment to the definitive cessation of hostilities and urge them to remain committed.

The United Kingdom strongly supports the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement and the ongoing dialogue between the parties. We welcome the adoption of a revised timetable at the meeting of the Comité de Suivi de l’Accord last week.

We strongly encourage all parties to reaffirm their commitment to the Agreement and to work together to implement the outstanding actions, as outlined by them, in the latest timetable, as soon as possible.

It’s now been over two and a half years since the Agreement was signed. We, like many other Council members, are frustrated by the lack of meaningful substantive progress made in implementing the Agreement.

We urge all parties to speed up the implementation of the Agreement. The Malian people’s patience is not infinite and it is incumbent on all parties to deliver in good faith on the commitments they made in the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement.

We welcome the appointment and participation of the independent observer, the Carter Centre, in the Agreement Monitoring Committee. We hope that this will lead to greater accountability for the delays in implementation.

We will work with the international community to identify those who seek to block or prevent the full implementation of the Peace Agreement which now constitutes a basis for sanctions designations.

Elections are crucial to delivering on the promise of decentralisation in

Mali, and are central to the Peace Agreement. It is disappointing that local elections have been delayed. It is crucial that credible and fair local, presidential and parliamentary elections are delivered in 2018.

Mr President, while we recognise that the best route to long-term stability in Mali is through the implementation of the Peace Agreement, the security situation today remains poor and stabilisation of this region is urgent. The UK is taking action in three ways to provide stability.

First, as the Prime Minister announced last week, we will be deploying three British Chinook helicopters to the Sahel, and we will continue the support we offer through our heavy lift transport aircraft, increasing the ability of French troops to manoeuvre efficiently in their battle against extremists.

Second, the UK will provide an additional \$70 million in aid to the region, including lifesaving humanitarian support for hundreds of thousands of people affected by epidemics, natural disasters and conflict.

And third, we will continue to support MINUSMA and its mandate to support implementation of the Peace Agreement, including the redeployment of reformed and reconstituted Malian defence and security forces and the protection of civilians. We look forward to the upcoming strategic review of MINUSMA which will be crucial to set the future direction of peacekeeping support to Mali.

We also reiterate our support for the G5 Sahel Joint Force and its objectives of tackling terrorism, organised crime, people smuggling and human trafficking in the region. We welcome the support of the international community in pledging funding to this initiative.

We recognise the importance of MINUSMA's technical and logistical support to the G5 Joint Force in assisting it to get up to full capacity, and we encourage the swift implementation of a technical agreement to enable this. We also reiterate the calls of the Security Council for implementation of a robust human rights compliance framework by the G5 Sahel Joint Force.

We recall, however, that the G5 Sahel was not created solely as a military force and that there is no exclusive military solution to insecurity in the cross-border regions. G5 cooperation with MINUSMA on development and humanitarian efforts will be crucial.

Mr President, in conclusion, we welcome the positive steps made since the last Council session, including the reduction in violence. But now is the time to see meaningful progress, and actions, to implement the Peace Agreement. This is the only way to achieve lasting peace and security Mali and the region.

Thank you.