

# The need for Mali's transitional authorities to deliver a timely return to constitutional rule

Thank you Mr President. First let me thank you and the Permanent Representatives of France and Niger for leading our visit last weekend. I would also like to thank SRSW Wane, the two country teams and the Secretariat for their support. We are grateful to the government of Mali and Niger for their welcome.

Last weekend we saw first hand the scale of the challenges facing Mali and the region. We met heroic UN staff in both countries. We heard the commitment of civil society leaders – men and women – to national dialogue and peacebuilding, and the commitment of Mali's neighbours to working together for the stability of the Sahel. But we received some worrying messages from Mali's transitional authorities about their commitment to the transition, and on regional cooperation.

The UK shares concerns at the lack of progress made by the transitional authorities in preparing for elections. The UK supports the mediation efforts of ECOWAS and endorses their call for the transitional authorities to publish an election timetable without delay.

We all recognise the need for reforms aimed at governance, security, and justice concerns. But the authorities should focus on those required for timely political transition. Broader reforms are the job of a democratically elected government. The UK is deeply concerned about increasing violence against civilians, restrictions on humanitarian access and continued allegations of human rights violations and abuses, including against children. There must be an end to impunity for such acts.

The UK remains committed to doing what we can to help address these challenges. As part of MINUSMA, UK troops are demonstrating how strengthened civilian-military coordination and more proactive peacekeeping can provide better protection for communities in hard to reach areas. The UK's Long Range Reconnaissance Group has supported UN human rights teams to investigate abuses, enabled UN and Malian civilian officials to visit local communities, and piloted models for better intelligence gathering ahead of operations.

MINUSMA alone cannot fix Mali's problems, however, absent the right political environment. In the coming weeks, we should keep developments in Mali under close review, in the hope that the transitional authorities deliver a timely return to constitutional rule promised to ECOWAS and this Council. Should the authorities fail to do so there must be consequences. As many said in the Council event yesterday, we should follow the relevant regional bodies – in this case ECOWAS.

Mr President, in closing I would like to raise our concerns regarding

the holds placed on the Mali Panel of Experts and a number of other panels. In the current context it is vital that the Mali sanctions committee and the Panel of Experts are able to operate without hindrance, to report on developments on the ground and inform Council decision making.

Thank you.