



Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7528th meeting

Tuesday, 6 October 2015, 10 a.m.

New York

President: Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi. (Spain)

Members:

Angola	Mr. Lucas
Chad	Mr. Cherif
Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
China	Mr. Zhao Yong
France	Mr. Delattre
Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Wilson
United States of America	Ms. Power
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Méndez Graterol

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2015/732)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): As this is the first formal meeting of the Security Council for the month of October, I should like to take this opportunity to express my personal thanks and those of the members of the Council to the outgoing President and the Russian delegation for the excellent work performed not only by the Head of the Russian Mission, Ambassador Vitaly Churkin, but by his entire team, because, in the final analysis, the Security Council's work is about the teamwork of the 15 members of this important principal organ of the United Nations. Furthermore, they did a very good job in a special month, in which the presidency of the Council coincided with the opening of the General Assembly at its seventieth session and the major task of establishing the development agenda for the next 15 years.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2015/732)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Mali to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Mongi Hamdi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/732, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.

I now give the floor to Mr. Hamdi.

Mr. Hamdi (*spoke in French*): I am honoured to brief the Security Council on the latest report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2015/732). Today I would like to give the Council an overview on

developments in the political, security and humanitarian situation and summarize the actions being taken and efforts made to implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

The signing of the Agreement by the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA), which I noted in my most recent briefing (see S/PV.7468), marked the beginning of its implementation phase. Immediately after 20 June, Algeria, as leader of the international mediation efforts, officially launched the Comité de suivi de l'accord. Since then, the Comité de suivi de l'accord has held five meetings and established its rules of procedure. At its third meeting, it set up four subcommittees, and at the fourth, the Government of Mali presented an action plan for implementation of the Agreement, including a contingency plan for the interim period.

In that regard, in line with its mandate from the Council, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) is currently developing a reconfiguration plan for supporting implementation of the Agreement. In addition, it is creating a structure, based on existing resources, that will provide technical, administrative and logistical support to the Comité de suivi de l'accord and its subcommittees. Those efforts will be closely coordinated and synergized with every component of the Mission and the United Nations system.

At my last briefing, I said that the path to peace and implementation of the Agreement would be strewn with obstacles, and that is indeed the case. The difficulties we have encountered have been more significant and have appeared sooner than we foresaw. In the three months since the final signing of the Agreement on 20 June, there have been serious setbacks to the implementation schedule. These were caused mainly by frequent violations of the ceasefire, in a context characterized by the actions of terrorist groups and activities related to the illicit transnational trafficking. Violations of the ceasefire have limited progress in the implementation of the Agreement. Valuable time was lost, as discussed at the ministerial meeting on 1 October on the Malian peace process, held in the margins of the General Assembly.

The takeover of Anéfis by the Platform on 17 August was a clear violation of the peace Agreement and led the CMA to suspend its participation in the Comité de suivi de l'accord. Any progress on crucial issues, especially related to the cantonment, was halted. While

the Platform was present in Anéfis, CMA has expanded its presence in areas of the Timbuktu region, also in violation of the Agreement. After the withdrawal of the Platform from Anéfis in mid-September, its forces took positions further to the north. These movements have exacerbated tensions with CMA and led to clashes in the area of In-Khalil, near the Algerian border.

(spoke in English)

Throughout this period, MINUSMA directed political and military efforts to overcome these challenges. First, military resources were directed to the protection of civilians in Kidal and Anéfis. Secondly, an enhanced effort was undertaken to survey the movement of armed groups. Thirdly and most importantly, in order to address violations of the ceasefire, which often lead to serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, I used my good offices to persuade the parties to abide by their commitments and avoid an escalation of tensions.

It bears particular mention that, on 28 August, President Keïta called for the Platform's unconditional withdrawal from Anéfis. His determined efforts, added to those of MINUSMA and the rest of the international community, succeeded in persuading the Platform to eventually withdraw. The return of CMA to Anéfis on 18 September was not coordinated in the context of the Commission technique mixte de sécurité, as sought by the international mediation. CMA's return to Anéfis, although justified according to the provisions of the disengagement plan, raised tensions unnecessarily at a time during which the paramount goal was to ensure that the parties returned to "the logic of the peace Agreement".

When confrontation broke out near In-Khalil at the beginning of September, MINUSMA was deeply concerned that it could lead to the end of the peace process. In response, I called on the leadership of CMA and the Platform and met with them separately to address the situation. On 23 September, I facilitated a joint meeting in Bamako of the Platform and CMA leadership to break the political stalemate. This involved MINUSMA bringing together for the first time the top military leadership of both movements. At that meeting, the parties agreed on the following.

First, that they would cease hostilities, including provocative troop deployments. Secondly, they would return in principle to their initial positions prior to the 20 June signature of the peace Agreement. Thirdly,

they would return to the peace process, including participation in the Comité de suivi de l'accord and its subsidiary bodies. Fourthly, they would agree on the circulation of people without arms. Lastly, there was a general agreement to continue dialogue among the communities and to resolve problems peacefully.

I am pleased to report that the ceasefire and the terms of these agreements are now holding. CMA and Platform have continued discussions and participated in a joint visit, together with Government ministers, to Anéfis on 27 and 28 September.

The difficulties of these past two months show the importance of determined international engagement to prevent escalation and bring the peace process back on track. They also show the urgent need to make decided progress in the work of the institutions established by the peace Agreement. The international community, with MINUSMA playing a key role, must remain engaged in political efforts to defuse tensions. There is a particularly urgent need to advance in the cantonment process, and that is in fact happening now. Reconnaissance missions of cantonment sites proposed by the Platform are ongoing. As soon as CMA turns in its proposed sites, similar reconnaissance missions will take place.

Over the past few months, criminals, along with opportunistic elements, have been resorting to looting and banditry. This fosters insecurity and fear among the population, while reducing faith in the peace process. In some cases, there have been calls for the formation of self-defence groups — a move that could create added security challenges further down the line. The priority at present is to rebuild trust among the Malian parties and to promote national reconciliation and fight against impunity. To this end, MINUSMA is supporting a conference of national understanding, to be organized by the Government of Mali.

Redress for victims of human rights and humanitarian law violations is key to the consolidation of peace and national reconciliation. Those responsible for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law must be held accountable. I welcome the commitment of the Malian authorities to establishing transitional justice mechanisms, and call for a more transparent and inclusive process that places victims at the centre of discussions.

To contribute to a more secure environment, MINUSMA is seeking to deploy longer-range unmanned

aerial vehicles. It also hopes to free up troops previously dedicated to the protection of supply lines through the deployment of a combat convoy battalion. These moves would help the Mission to expand its presence in key areas of the north and to take timely, dissuasive action within the framework of its mandate.

I also appeal to troop- and police-contributing countries to provide elements with appropriate equipment to allow MINUSMA to reach its mandated force and police levels. In order to ensure gender mainstreaming within the Mission, troop- and police-contributing countries are encouraged to include women in the contingents. The deployment of military observers, most of whom are expected to be operational by the middle of this month, will help in the task of observing and reporting on ceasefire violations. In light of recent experience, such reports could form the basis for discussions on implementing sanctions against spoilers of the peace Agreement.

I would like to stress the importance of statements coming from the Council on its support for MINUSMA and its role in the implementation of the peace process. I welcome the conclusions of the aforementioned ministerial consultative meeting on the Malian peace process, which took note of the Security Council's readiness to consider targeted sanctions against those obstructing or threatening the implementation of the Agreement.

There is a strong need to ensure the delivery of peace dividends, especially to the population of conflict-affected areas. MINUSMA has been seeking to provide improved water access, supporting expanded electricity supply, ensuring the return to school of children whose education has been thwarted by the conflict, and encouraging the voluntary return of internally displaced persons or refugees to their communities of origin. In that regard, I am pleased to note the efforts of the Government, in cooperation with MINUSMA, to help children from Timbuktu and Gao to return to school, while kids from Kidal are expected to go back to school by the middle of this month.

In addition, it is imperative to involve civil society closely in this phase of implementation, including women, youth, and traditional leaders, ensuring broad ownership of the peace Agreement. MINUSMA is strongly committed to raising awareness and disseminating the peace Agreement, in partnership with civil society.

While we regret the delays in the implementation of some provisions of the Agreement, it is important to stress that the concerted action of MINUSMA, the Government of Mali and the international mediation was successful in bringing the parties back to the logic of the peace Agreement. I also take note of the recent decision of the Malian authorities to postpone local elections. The postponement offers an opportunity to bring the electoral calendar in line with the terms outlined in the peace Agreement.

In closing, the peace process is back on track. Nonetheless, vigilance will be required, since the peace process remains fragile. It is my strong conviction that promoting the implementation agreement through close support to the Government provides the best opportunity for Mali to address its multiple challenges.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mali.

Mr. Kassé (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to convey the warm congratulations of the delegation of Mali on the Kingdom of Spain's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. At the same time, I commend the delegation of the Russian Federation for its outstanding leadership of the Council's work last month.

On behalf of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, and the people and Government of Mali, I wish to pay a ringing tribute to the men and women of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), under the leadership of Mr. Mongi Hamdi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSMA.

In the framework of the search for a solution to the crisis in Mali, we are always extremely pleased to recognize the efforts of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, as well as those of Algeria, leader of the international mediation process and Chair of the Comité de suivi de l'accord, the African Union, the Economic Community of Western African States, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, France, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Nigeria, the Niger, Chad and the United States of America.

Before proceeding any further, I wish to pay my deepest respects to the memory of all victims — civilian and military, national and foreign — of the Malian crisis.

The delegation of Mali takes note of the report of the Secretary-General before us (S/2015/7321), which is devoted to the situation in our country, and commends the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for introducing it.

Since the signing in May and June of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the Government of Mali, with the support of its partners, has set about its implementation. Among the accomplishments to date, I would like to mention the following actions.

First, the adoption in June by the Council of Ministers of documents establishing regional development agencies, in application of article 40 of the Agreement; secondly, the establishment of a national coordination mechanism for implementation of the Agreement under the auspices of the Prime Minister, our Head of Government, in order to better coordinate the action of the various State authorities involved in implementing the Agreement; the provision of a headquarters for the Comité de suivi de l'Accord, with renovation work to begin shortly and the Government contributing to the relevant costs; the Government's decision to postpone local and regional elections with a view to promoting calm and to allowing for an inclusive preparatory process with the participation of all concerned stakeholders, in response to a strong request from our political parties and civil society; and the appointment in August of the Chair of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, in accordance with article 46 of the Agreement, with the remaining members of the Commission to be named shortly.

Also in the context of the initiatives and action undertaken by the Government, I would like to stress the pursuit and strengthening of dialogue within and outside the Comité de suivi de l'Accord. In that regard, the Government has held numerous meetings with all stakeholders in the process in order to anticipate the difficulties ahead and to assist in resolving those that arise. To give just one example, with the agreement of all concerned parties, three members of the Government traveled to Anéfis, in the region of Kidal, between 25 and 29 September with the aim of putting an end to clashes on the ground and to establish outreach commissions for the population and armed groups aimed at re-establishing peace and advancing the reconciliation process among the three regions. A meeting for the signing of a peace agreement between and within communities is expected to be held in the coming weeks and to be countersigned by the

Government. Moreover, in September, the Government held a meeting in Bamako with representatives of the Mbéra refugee camp in Mauritania to discuss possible mechanisms for their return to Mali.

Alongside the actions I have just mentioned, the Malian Government has worked to share the dividends of peace with the populations that were hardest hit. Schools in Gao and Timbuktu reopened on 1 October. I am especially pleased to announce the reopening of schools in Kidal, scheduled for mid-October, just a few days from now, after three long years during which classes in that region were suspended. In addition, the anti-malaria campaign resumed on 1 October in the region of Kidal.

Moreover, again with a view to advancing progress and promoting peace, the Government has taken a number of confidence-building measures, including an exchange of prisoners with armed movements, in partnership with MINUSMA and with its support, along with that of France's Opération Barkhane and human rights organizations. That exchange involved 16 soldiers from the Malian armed forces and 32 from armed groups. Another wave of releases is expected in the next few days.

In addition, in application of article 38 of the Agreement, the Government has moved ahead with the development and presentation to the Comité de suivi de l'accord of a global action plan for the implementation of the Agreement and an emergency plan for the interim period, both of which detail the entirety of the activities provided for by the Agreement as well as the coordination and implementation mechanisms for those action plans. The implementation of the emergency plans, which have already been finalized with the armed movements and Mali's technical and financial partners, begins this month.

Finally, with a view to making better use of the peace process for the people of Mali as a whole, the Government has embarked on a communications campaign targeting institutional and non-institutional actors through a number of campaigns aimed at disseminating information and raising awareness.

The optimism created by the signing and the first phase of implementation of the Agreement has unfortunately been dampened for several months by the persistence of a number of threats and challenges that remain to be addressed. The challenges include terrorism, drug trafficking and all other forms of

organized crime in the region of the Sahel-Sahara. The criminal activities of terrorist groups and drug traffickers indiscriminately target peaceful civilians, the Malian armed forces and the international forces of MINUSMA and France, with a toll of fatalities, casualties and material damage. Such threats, which are frequently cross-border, concern all the countries of the Sahel and beyond. It is therefore time to urge the Security Council once again to support the decision of the Heads of States member of the Nouakchott Process to create a rapid response intervention force.

The delays observed in the implementation of the Agreement derive essentially from ongoing incidents on the ground and from multiple violations of the ceasefire by certain actors who are nonetheless signatories of the Agreement. The Government has consistently condemned all violations of the Agreement and has called for independent investigations in order to identify those responsible and punish the perpetrators. However, I would like to stress emphatically that such incidents should not serve as a pretext for armed movements that have signed the Agreement to hold the peace process hostage.

On the contrary, such incidents underscore the need and the urgency to move forward with the activation of the security mechanisms provided for by the Agreement with regard to overseeing and monitoring violations of the ceasefire. This concerns in particular the activation and launch of the Operational Coordination Mechanism and the Commission technique mixte de sécurité.

These incidents are a clear reminder of the pressing need for the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement on cantonment, security-sector reform, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, whose subcommittee is co-chaired by the United Nations.

Another major challenge lies in mobilizing the resources necessary for the effective and comprehensive implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. To that end, the Government has planned, as part of its 2015 budget, to allocate the sum of 11.4 billion CFA francs, that is, more than \$19 million, including for emergency action during the interim period such as humanitarian work, the return of refugees and displaced persons, and so on.

Similarly, the Government, in order to meet its commitments stemming from the Agreement, has planned over the next five years a budgetary allocation that would be considerably more significant; the exact figure will be announced during the conference that is to take place at the headquarters of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris on 22 October.

I would like to take this opportunity to call on all partners, bilateral, multilateral and private, to participate in large numbers in the mobilization conference for financing-for-development partners in Mali and to make pledges that are commensurate with the pressing needs in the area of peace and security in Mali, in the Sahel and the rest of the world.

By way of conclusion, I would like to reiterate the need to accelerate the implementation of the measures provided for by the Agreement in the area of security and to invite the international community to strengthen the leadership of the Government of Mali in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.