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Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Alotaibi	(Kuwait)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
	China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Adom
	Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Elé Ela
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Germany	Mr. Schulz
	Indonesia	Mr. Djani
	Peru	Mr. Ugarelli
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	South Africa	Mr. Matjila
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mr. Hunter

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2019/454)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2019/454)

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

On behalf of the Council, I warmly welcome His Excellency Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, 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/2019/454, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.

I now give the floor to Mr. Annadif.

Mr. Annadif (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on presiding over this meeting. We assure you of our full support.

(spoke in English)

I would also like to take this opportunity to greet and commend the Ambassador of Indonesia on his country's presidency of the Council during the month of May.

(spoke in French)

If I may, I would further like to take this opportunity to greet and welcome Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali.

It is an honour and pleasure for me to be before the Security Council to introduce the Secretary-General's report (S/2019/454) on the situation in Mali, at a time when that country is entering a critical time in its peace process. The Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in June last year by adopting resolution 2423 (2018), in which the

Council expressed its impatience and frustration with the delay in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

The Council will also recall that, in its presidential statement S/PRST/2019/2 of 3 April, the Security Council stressed the urgent need for significant progress to be made, including with respect to institutional reforms, the redeployment of the Malian defence and security forces in the north and the establishment of the northern economic development zone. The continued willingness of the signatory parties to proceed with the implementation of the agreement still offers real opportunities to advance the cause of peace in Mali in the coming months, despite the accumulated and ongoing delays.

The significant good offices efforts to promote Malian ownership of the agreement and build trust between the parties should be continued and encouraged. Those good offices laid the foundation of the signature of the peace agreement, one of the achievements of which was to extend the implementation of the agreement to movements that now uphold it even though they may have split from their original groups.

The same efforts have led to the establishment of a group within Parliament to specifically monitor the implementation of the agreement. One cause for regret is the lack of results regarding the inclusion of women in the implementation structures of the agreement, while the greater involvement of civil society organizations in the public sphere is to be welcomed. The latter, under MINUSMA's impetus, have agreed to establish observatories to monitor the actions of the institutions set up under the agreement, in particular the regional assemblies.

The peace process in Mali entered a new phase with the appointment of a new Prime Minister, Mr. Boubou Cisse, on 22 April and the signature of the political agreement on governance between the presidential majority and the main democratic opposition party on 2 May. That was followed by the formation on 5 May of an open Government, of which the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, who is present here today, is a perfect representative. That development, which prioritizes the implementation of the agreement, also paves the way for the creation of a broader political consensus around political and institutional reforms. The consensus reached on the extension of the National

Assembly's mandate is an indication of that willingness to move forward.

In the same vein, we note with satisfaction that the bill to establish the northern economic development zone has already been passed by the Council of Ministers and sent to the National Assembly. The political agreement on governance of May 2 also tasks the Government with arranging an inclusive political dialogue, the goal of which will be to enable discussion among Malians with a view to forging a shared vision on the major challenges facing the country. I am sure that the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who is with us here today, will give a more precise account of the evolution of the process and its most noteworthy aspects.

In parallel with those important political developments, the redeployment of the reconstituted and reformed defence and security forces is making encouraging headway. To date, nearly 1,400 troops from the Platform coalition and Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad of the Operational Coordination Mechanism will begin training for their ultimate integration into the Malian defence and security forces. If we add their 600 Operational Coordination Mechanism colleagues from the Malian armed forces, we will have nearly 2,000 troops, which will represent the kernel of the reconstituted Malian defence and security forces and will gradually be redeployed to the north.

I note and commend the effective integration into their original units of nearly 600 former Malian armed forces combatants who had deserted following the events of 2012. The fraternal welcome extended to them by their brothers in arms upon their return proves that reconciliation among Malians is possible.

The effective return of the Administration to the north, a guarantee of the restoration of basic social services, will enable the population to benefit from the peace dividend, one of the key objectives of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

The glimmer of hope on the horizon cannot be transformed into a real opportunity without accelerated control of the security situation, particularly in the centre. What happened on Sunday night into Monday on 9 and 10 June, in the village of Sobamé-Da in the Mopti region, reminds us of the gravity of the situation, in particular following the massacres of Koulogon-Peul and Ogossagou, respectively, on 1 January and 23 March, in the same region of Mopti, unfortunately.

It was precisely after the Ogossagou tragedy that MINUSMA, as part of its mandate to protect civilians, mounted Operation Oryx, in coordination with Operation Kapigdou of the Malian defence and security forces, in the central part of the country.

That emergency operation is based on the protection of civilians and is structured around five pillars: first, increasing patrols to ensure people's physical protection through deterrence and threat anticipation; secondly, deploying investigation teams and supporting the judicial chain of the Malian authorities in order to combat impunity; thirdly, increasing awareness through ongoing communication with the institutions and local communities in the central Mali; fourthly, coordinating with humanitarian and development partners by expanding secure spaces; and fifthly, engaging in mediation activities to promote reconciliation and social cohesion among the people.

The ongoing vicious cycle of violence must stop lest everyone be tempted to take the law into their own hands. It is worth emphasizing the importance of the fight against impunity. In that connection, I congratulate and encourage MINUSMA's human rights division, which is carrying out considerable investigative work to establish the facts and make relevant recommendations to the Government, without forgetting its multifaceted support for Malian judicial institutions, particularly the specialized judicial police.

In the same spirit, we welcome the assignment of a public prosecutor to Mopti and the recent arrests made by the Malian State. We hope that the arrests will bring the perpetrators to justice soon. We also welcome the establishment by the Government of a coordination unit for all security initiatives in central Mali. The Minister here in the Council today is responsible for its establishment and will, I am sure, provide us with details. To consolidate those efforts, we have adopted an integrated United Nations strategy with the United Nations country teams and MINUSMA, in line with the integrated strategic framework. Since 28 May, there is a military sector specifically dedicated to central Mali. Those two new elements will have a multiplier effect on our action in the days to come.

In terms of uniformed components, we are more proactive than ever before. A few years ago, the majority of our personnel were assigned to the protection of our camps. Today, the situation has completely reversed in that at least 70 per cent of them are now on the

ground, mainly for protecting civilians or escorting supply convoys through coordinated initiatives with our partners, leaving only nearly 30 per cent to secure our facilities.

Parallel to these efforts in the centre, we are maintaining the presence of MINUSMA in the north, particularly to accelerate the implementation of the agreement. I take this opportunity to recognize the outstanding work of Operation Barkhane at our side.

It is also critical to take into account the resumption of the operations of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel earlier this year. We continue to develop our logistical support in accordance with resolution 2391 (2017). A specific unit is being set up to that end, but, as we have often pointed out, geographical limitations hinder the effectiveness of our support.

In addition, coordination between MINUSMA and representatives of the international community based in Bamako — including Algeria as head of mediation, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the European Union — remains our main priority. That close coordination has proved its worth at critical moments, as reflected in the results achieved in the 2018 presidential elections. That is also true of the Agreement Monitoring Committee, whose decisions are now binding, and in efforts to encourage full Malian ownership of the agreement.

In order to maintain this momentum, several of the options highlighted in the Secretary-General's report are aimed at adjusting the composition of MINUSMA's civilian and uniformed components so as to promote greater mobility. That is the reason behind the proposals for the reassignment of certain specialized units and the possibility of transferring certain camps, starting with Diabaly, to the Malian authorities, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report.

In adopting resolution 2423 (2018) in June of last year, the Council reinvigorated MINUSMA by setting clear objectives and calling for a series of adjustments to carry out its mandate. The results of that initiative are now a reality. As the Secretary-General notes in his report, the peace process in Mali is at a decisive turning point thanks to that initiative and the commitment of the signatory parties to the agreement, as well as that of the other partners I mentioned earlier. Only the support of the Council through the extension of MINUSMA's mandate will make it possible to consolidate those achievements at both the political and security levels.

I once again thank the Council for its renewed support.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Annadif for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Annadif, for his very enlightening presentation and for his exemplary work. I also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, to the Council. It is an honour to be here with him and we appreciate his presence as an important gesture.

I would like to begin my statement by expressing our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Mali in the aftermath of a despicable attack that once again struck the country's central region. France will stand resolutely by Mali's side throughout this new ordeal. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the memory of all the civilians, State officials and members of the national and international armed forces who lost their lives in the terrorist and intercommunal violence that, unfortunately, affects Mali on almost a daily basis.

The escalation of violence that central Mali is experiencing today requires us to bestir ourselves and take urgent action, especially to prevent new massacres from occurring. The Malian authorities on the front line in this regard and we encourage them to take all necessary measures to prosecute the perpetrators of these crimes, disarm the militia and engage in meaningful intercommunity dialogue without delay. In the longer term, only the re-establishment of the State's authority and presence, the restoration of basic social services and genuine efforts to combat impunity will be able to restore peace in the region. France will propose a draft press statement containing these various elements at the end of this meeting.

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has a significant role to play in accompanying and supporting the Malian authorities in the centre of the country. In this regard, I wish to commend the important steps undertaken by the Mission since the adoption of resolution 2423 (2018) in June last year. We hope that MINUSMA will continue to bolster its support in the

region, including in helping to redeploy the State and protect civilians. We must also bear in mind that the Mission's work is not intended to act as a substitute for the primary responsibility of the Malian authorities, and that it can be effective only if it is based on the redoubled commitment of the latter. We must also ensure that MINUSMA has the adequate means at its disposal to meet the needs that exist on the ground.

The implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali in the north remains a prerequisite for the stabilization of Mali and the region. Unprecedented progress has been made in recent months, including with regard to the latest demands made by the Council in its presidential statement S/PRST/2019/2 of April. The inclusive national dialogue to be held in the near future is also a good sign regarding consensual progress in the conduct of the Government's political and institutional reforms, some of which relate to the agreement.

The progress made to date, however, remains largely insufficient and needs to be rapidly consolidated. That is why we encourage the Malian parties to adopt an updated road map, articulated around a limited number of priorities accompanied by binding deadlines, as soon as possible. I refer in particular to continuing the constitutional review process, developing a plan for the redeployment of the reconstituted Malian armed forces in the north, making tangible progress in decentralization and effectively operationalizing the northern economic development zone. The Council must continue to define precise expectations on these key points for the implementation of the agreement through benchmarks. It must also be made clear that the non-implementation of these benchmarks comes at a cost, including possible sanctions.

MINUSMA continues and will continue to play a vital role in the stability of Mali, as recalled by the Secretary-General in his recent report (S/2019/454) and by the Special Representative in his briefing today. We welcome in particular the Mission's efforts in recent months to reinforce its robust posture and to improve coordination between its various pillars and interaction with the country team, as well as to cooperate with other security elements deployed on the ground. I believe that these efforts have been widely recognized.

In the difficult context we are witnessing, we believe that the renewal of the Mission's mandate for an additional 12 months, while maintaining unchanged

parameters, is absolutely essential. We wish to take advantage of this in order to maintain heightened pressure in favour of implementing the peace agreement, to strengthen the Mission's actions in the centre in support of the efforts of the Malian authorities and to continue developing partnerships with the other security elements cited in resolution 2423 (2018). We also fully support the implementation of the options for the Mission's adaptation, as proposed by the Secretary-General, which will continue to enhance the effectiveness of the Mission's work. We will, of course, continue to encourage efforts to reduce security threats to MINUSMA while preserving sufficient flexibility and agility in its posture. Finally, we will seek to promote the adoption of a clear, realistic and concise mandate, in line with the recommendations made within the framework of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative.

The Council's responsibility is to continue supporting Mali along the road to peace, in the understanding that the international community cannot serve as a replacement for the efforts of the Malian authorities, which are indispensable in driving Mali towards lasting peace and stability. That is the spirit of the draft resolution France will be working on until the end of this month, together with its partners in the Council, in order to renew the MINUSMA mandate. You may rest assured, Sir, of my country's full commitment to that end.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Before I give the floor to the next representative, I realize that this may be the final statement that Ambassador Delattre delivers to the Council before he leaves us in a couple of days. I speak on behalf of all Council members when I say that he should be proud of what he has achieved in an outstanding professional manner. We congratulate him on his new post and wish him every success in his future endeavours.

Mr. Hunter (United States of America): We thank Special Representative Annadif for his briefing today and we welcome Foreign Minister Dramé to the Council today. We very much look forward to working with him and with Mali's new Government.

Every quarter, we sit in this Chamber and listen to how the security situation in the centre of Mali continues to deteriorate. We hear how violence against civilians surpassed the previous quarter's reports. We hear how attacks against United Nations peacekeepers and international forces remain the norm and we hear

worries about how such volatility is spilling over and destabilizing other Sahel countries.

In this reporting period alone, 333 civilians were killed in intercommunal violence, with the latest massacre being the deadliest incident in Mali since 2012. That is a sharp increase from the 43 civilians killed in intercommunal violence during this reporting period last year. Additionally, 148 peacekeepers have been killed in hostile action since the establishment of the peacekeeping mission. The United States pays tribute to those who have paid the ultimate price and to all the soldiers, civilians and their families who make sacrifices daily in order to bring peace and stability to the people of Mali. We offer our condolences to the families of the most recent victims.

In addition to hearing how things continue to grow worse, we hear how there is little progress between the Government of Mali and the signatory armed groups in implementing the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. Four years after signing the agreement, it seems as though the parties and the Government are always on the verge of a new understanding or a road map that will lead to progress on the agreement's signature political and security tasks.

As we have said before, the status quo is not acceptable. At the Council's March meeting (see S/PV.8497) and in the presidential statement (S/PRST/2019/2) that followed, the Council made clear its dissatisfaction with the signatory parties' performance on the benchmarks in resolution 2423 (2018). The renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) is our opportunity to demonstrate that frustration and make changes based on evidence and analysis. It is also an opportunity to show the world that the people of Mali deserve better. Considering the stark realities of the political and security dynamics in Mali, the new mandate must achieve four key objectives: pressure, balance, transition and performance.

First, we must continue to apply pressure on the signatory armed groups and the Government to implement the peace agreement. One way to do that is by strengthening the Council's tools to respond when signatory parties fail to meet the key benchmarks in a mandate. Additional pressure can and should be applied to ensure that inaction and obstruction have specific and concrete consequences.

Secondly, the mandate must augment MINUSMA's single strategic priority to support implementation of the agreement with a second strategic priority that will adequately address the worsening security situation in the centre, focused on stabilization and the protection of civilians. Nevertheless, we expect the Government to do all it can, as soon as it can, in the centre to be the enduring security and governance solution there and for all of Mali.

Thirdly, it is essential to focus on the long-term transition, or else remain in a reactive posture. MINUSMA's collaboration with the country team on the integrated strategic framework was an important step in that regard, but this mandate should further empower the civilian and military leadership of MINUSMA to begin identifying a plan for the Mission's transition and departure and for other capable entities such as the United Nations country team, the Government of Mali, the Malian security forces and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel to assume a greater role in political, security and stability tasks.

Lastly, regarding performance, the political and security realities demand that MINUSMA focus its efforts on the peace agreement and on the centre. This mandate must streamline its tasks to enable MINUSMA to do that effectively. It must request that the Secretariat increase its effectiveness in repatriating and remediating poorly performing troops and work to provide MINUSMA with capable, flexible forces with minimal caveats. The mandate must set paradigms in that regard so as to ensure that MINUSMA receives adequately trained and equipped troops.

The Security Council must have the political will and vision to adjust mission mandates as a result of fact-based analysis. We cannot allow another year to pass and be no closer to seeing progress on the core political and security tasks of the agreement. The peace agreement addresses important drivers of conflict, and its implementation will have a positive impact on the lives of Malians. We must expect political courage from stakeholders on all sides to work together, break the status quo and achieve real and lasting positive changes.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mali, to today's meeting, and we thank Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing.

At the outset, we would like to express our condolences to the Government and the people of Mali regarding the terrible tragedy in the village of Sobamé-Da, where approximately 100 innocent civilians were killed as a result of an inter-ethnic clash on 10 June. We hope that those responsible for it will be found and duly punished. That tragic event, like the equally tragic attack on the village of Ogossagou in March, demonstrated once again the magnitude and gravity of the threats facing the country and the region, as well as their vulnerability to the destabilizing forces represented by terrorists, organized criminals and ideological extremists.

The developments in the situation in Mali in general are very worrying. We have seen that the number of terrorist attacks on both military personnel and civilians has increased in the past few months. Human rights violations are rampant. In central Mali, inter-ethnic and intercommunal conflicts continue to simmer and sometimes flare up. It appears that the issue here is not merely the centuries-old differences between the nomadic and settled populations. Militants are intentionally trying to gain the support of local residents by skilfully playing on existing disputes. It will be crucial to restore the Government presence there if those challenges are to be dealt with.

The worsening humanitarian situation is extremely worrying, and the number of people in need of assistance is increasing. We urge all external donors to fund the humanitarian appeal as quickly as possible. We should point out that when the situation seems hopeless, Mali's young people have no option but to join the ranks of terrorist, extremist or criminal groups. In that regard, it will be crucial to ensure that the efforts in the country's central and northern areas to stimulate economic and investment activity and restore social services do not let up.

We welcome the efforts of Bamako, Mali's political stakeholders and the Platform coalition and Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad signatory groups to implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. We hope they will strictly respect the timeline for implementing its key provisions with regard to the reconstitution of Mali's security forces, administrative and territorial reforms and the preparations for a constitutional referendum. Any delay in that regard will only exacerbate the existing threats and the country's vulnerability in the face of the destabilizing forces represented by terrorists,

organized criminals and ideological extremists. At the same time, we call on our colleagues not to impose additional restrictive measures. It is important to allow the existing sanctions regime to prove its effectiveness. We believe that Mali's law-enforcement agencies will be working more actively to suppress the illegal activities of sanctioned individuals, as well as others sabotaging the political process.

We support the activities of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, which is playing an important role in stabilizing the country. We believe that it is important not to undermine its effectiveness. We call on our colleagues to take a balanced approach to deciding on its future.

The situation in Mali is an important factor in African security as a whole. However, it is very unlikely that peace can be achieved there without normalizing the situation in the region. The issue of Libya continues to play a negative role in this. The links between the terrorists operating in Mali and in the region as a whole are becoming increasingly clear. In that regard, we support the concrete steps that the countries of the Group of Five for the Sahel have been taking to form a joint force to combat terrorism and organized crime, and we hope that their role in ensuring regional security will increase.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): Let me begin by thanking Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif for his very informative briefing on the recent developments in Mali. I would also like to warmly welcome His Excellency Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali.

At the outset, I want to express our condolences to the Government and the people of Mali for the tragedy in the Sobamé-Da village. That horrific event in the Mopti region is the most recent sign that the violence in Mali is spiralling out of control.

I would like to focus my statement on three issues — the political process, the security situation and the upcoming renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

First, with regard to the political process, while recognizing the progress made in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, including through the follow-up committee, Poland calls on the Malian Government to accelerate the full

implementation of its provisions, in particular on the effective reintegration of combatants, security-sector reform, decentralization and the establishment of a development zone in northern Mali. The constitutional review process should also be as consultative and inclusive as possible to ensure the participation of all key stakeholders representing Mali's diverse society. In that regard the full inclusion of women, youth and civil society is of the utmost importance.

Secondly, on the security situation, we remain grievously concerned about the critical security situation in the centre, where the levels of intercommunal violence and the number of civilian casualties are unacceptable. Therefore, we call on the Malian authorities to step up their efforts to protect the population from violence, to restore the State's authority and to ensure access to social services. The disarmament of ethnic-based militia and self-defence groups and the fight against impunity for the atrocities committed against the population in recent months have to be one of the top priorities for the Malian authorities.

Lastly, on the upcoming mandate renewal, Poland believes that support for the implementation of the agreement remains paramount and should remain the most important priority of MINUSMA. The good offices and presence of the Mission in northern Mali remain essential to preserving the gains made since the signing of the agreement.

In central Mali, MINUSMA should strengthen its efforts to facilitate the return of State administration, including by supporting the redeployment of the Malian defence and security forces and protecting civilians. That should be combined with proactive measures to prevent potential attacks and help to create a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian access.

MINUSMA's role in achieving stability and reconciliation in Mali remains essential despite the difficult and dangerous context. In the light of that, we are looking forward to the upcoming important discussion on the Mission's mandate renewal.

Finally, let me express my gratitude to Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif for his leadership and dedication, as well as to the personnel of MINUSMA, the United Nations country team and the troop- and police-contributing countries for their commitment in extreme and challenging conditions.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): We wish to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali to the Council today. We are pleased that he could join us in today's discussion and are looking forward to a briefing later on.

I wish to thank Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), for his comprehensive briefing and also to thank him and his team for the excellent work they are doing in Mali.

In the context of recent developments, I would like to take this moment to convey our sympathy to the Government and the people of Mali for the lives lost due to the prevailing security situation in the country, particularly the violence that broke out in the Mopti region on 9 June, in which people perished. We urge the Government of Mali to investigate those atrocious acts and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

My intervention today will focus on three issues: the security and humanitarian situation in Mali; the role of the United Nations in Mali through MINUSMA; and the very encouraging developments in the political process in Mali.

First, we remain seriously concerned that the security situation continues to deteriorate in both northern and central Mali, as demonstrated by increased terrorist attacks and intercommunal clashes and violence. It is disturbing that incidents of intercommunal violence are increasing. They have ravaged communities, displaced people and worsened the humanitarian situation in Mali. In that regard, we encourage the Malian authorities to bring those communities together in pursuit of peaceful intercommunal dialogue and reconciliation led by the people of Mali, with the support of the region and international community.

It is therefore important to address the root causes and conditions that have given rise to this situation in Mali including, inter alia, the absence of State authority in some parts of the country, porous borders, extreme poverty, exclusion, inequality and environmental impacts. It is equally important to acknowledge the impact of the situation in the Sahel, particularly in Libya, which is also contributing to the destabilization of Mali and the Sahel region as a whole. We wish to emphasize that enhanced efforts on cross-border

cooperation among the countries of the region should continue to be encouraged to address these challenges.

Complex conditions continue to pose challenges for humanitarian work to be performed effectively and deserve the serious attention of the international community. We therefore wish to urge the international community to provide the necessary support for the effective implementation of the 2019 humanitarian response plan for Mali.

Despite the fragility of the situation, we are encouraged by the progress made thus far on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes in Mali. We are pleased to learn from the briefing by the Special Representative that the training of the Malian forces will take place soon. Those positive developments will allow for the redeployment of the reconstituted Malian defence and security forces in northern and central Mali, improving security in those regions. We also welcome the operationalization of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission's national investigation team, which will expedite the realization of justice, healing and peace.

Secondly, with regard to the role of the United Nations in Mali, South Africa commends the continued efforts of MINUSMA to discharge its political and security mandate in Mali. We therefore support the recommendation of the Secretary-General on the renewal of the mandate of MINUSMA for another 12 months, until 30 June 2020.

We take note of the Secretary-General's options for the potential significant adaptation of MINUSMA and recommendations to enhance its support in the centre of Mali. However, it is our considered view that any recalibration of MINUSMA must be predicated by a review of the security situation in Mali as a whole, including in the centre. This is important so as to avoid a potential vacuum that will exacerbate instability and insecurity in Mali and the entire Sahel region. We are also of the view that should MINUSMA be expected to play a role in central Mali that exceeds the support recommended, it should be able to request additional capacities and resources based on a thorough assessment of conditions on the ground.

We appreciate the cooperation of MINUSMA with other security forces in the country, including the Malian Defence and Security forces, the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel), French forces and the European Union missions in Mali. The Council

previously discussed the challenges faced by the G-5 Sahel Joint Force regarding existing arrangements with MINUSMA to support its operationalization. South Africa reiterates its support for the recommendations of the Secretary-General regarding the support the United Nations should provide to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force.

Thirdly, on the political process, our delegation welcomes the signing of the political agreement between the Government of Mali and opposition parties, which has resulted in the appointment of a new, inclusive Government of national unity and of the Prime Minister. These political processes, anchored by the recently established Government of national unity and the emerging consensus among the Malian people, reassure all of us and indicate that the walk towards a new Mali has begun, and the Council should support it. It is therefore trusted that these changes will lead to stability, sustained peace and prosperity for all Malians, as envisioned in the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

South Africa wishes to encourage Malian stakeholders to continue to engage in dialogue to ensure the implementation of the peace agreement. We also encourage all Malian stakeholders to take up the opportunities to participate in an inclusive national conference to finalize the constitution, reflecting the institutional reforms envisioned in the peace agreement. We call in particular for the inclusion of women and ordinary people in that dialogue process.

We welcome the processes that have recently taken place to ensure the establishment of the northern economic development zone, including the submission of the related legislation to the National Assembly, as well as the associated funding mechanism for this undertaking. South Africa believes that a holistic development approach, including the upliftment of the living standards of the people of Mali and job creation, particularly youth employment, will contribute significantly to resolving the complex challenges in Mali. The soon-to-be-launched all-Malian national inclusive conference to dialogue and clarify and take Algerian agreement to all the peoples and corners of Mali is a sign of a new positive attitude among the Malian people — political parties, civil society, women, youth and communities. All Malians will win; no one will be a loser.

In conclusion, it is clear that the situation in Mali requires collective support to address the multiple and

complex challenges facing the country. The Council must continue to extend its support through MINUSMA and the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union. That support will assist the people of Mali to achieve peace and lead the developmental plans as envisioned by their Government.

Mr. Hickey (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Annadif for his very clear and objective briefing. I would also like to welcome Foreign Minister Dramé to the Council. I look forward to hearing from him in a few minutes' time.

Let me begin by joining others in offering my sincere condolences on behalf of the United Kingdom for the tragic deaths of those killed as a result of the massacre in the Mopti region just a few days ago. I very much agree with the Russian Ambassador when he said that the perpetrators must be brought to justice. That horrific attack highlights just how important it is for the international community and the Government of Mali to step up our collective efforts to help achieve long-term peace and stability in the country.

The mandate renewal of United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) offers an opportunity to make progress towards that goal. I would like to highlight three brief points in that regard.

First, this mandate renewal should be used to help drive forward the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. That was very much a focus of the Security Council's visit to Mali just a few months ago. While I very much welcome the fact that we have seen some progress since that visit — the Special Representative of the Secretary-General mentioned in particular the draft law establishing the northern economic development zone and he also talked about the progress on the training and reintegration of opposition fighters — we regret that overall the pace of implementation has slowed down in recent months, in part owing to political developments. We must not lose sight of the fact that there is still a lot of work to do. The United Kingdom supports the call made by the representative of France just now that those who impede the implementation of the peace agreement should be subject to sanctions by the Council.

This mandate renewal offers the chance to inject new momentum into the process through the use of ambitious benchmarks to be met by the Government

of Mali and signatory armed groups. From the United Kingdom's perspective, those benchmarks should include advancement on constitutional reform and decentralization, security sector reform, the economic development of northern Mali and, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Ambassador of South Africa mentioned, the meaningful participation of women in the peace process.

Secondly, I agree with all previous speakers that we have an opportunity now, with the mandate renewal, to tackle the instability in central Mali that has caused so many tragic deaths in recent months. Specifically, there is a need for both MINUSMA and the Malian Government to do more in the centre to restore State authority and protect civilians. MINUSMA has a unique role to play in the centre in using its good offices to reduce inter-community tensions — tensions that this most recent attack shows are currently all too high. On the part of the Government, there really is a need for a truly comprehensive political strategy to deal with the situation in the centre in order to ensure that its efforts are effective. From our perspective, a comprehensive solution should include the disarming of all armed actors, the restoration of peaceful relations between communities and the revision of the integrated security plan for the regions of the centre.

Thirdly, we recognize very much the challenging circumstances in which MINUSMA is operating, and the United Kingdom unequivocally condemns the recent attacks against MINUSMA personnel on the ground. To perform its mandate effectively in such circumstances, MINUSMA will need to further adapt to become a more flexible, agile and robust force, as recommended in the Secretary-General's most recent report (S/2019/454). The United Kingdom commends the actions taken by the Mission leadership, including the Force Commander, to do that already, and it welcomes the increase in the tempo of operations in recent months.

In conclusion, I think we should all recognize that MINUSMA is cannot be a permanent solution in Mali, but is rather a means to an end — a means to achieve sustainable peace in Mali. We welcome the steps that have been taken so far by the Government, other Malian parties and MINUSMA to foster stability in Mali, but we can see from the fact that large parts of the peace agreement remain unimplemented and that security in the centre is quickly deteriorating that more needs to

be done. This mandate renewal can catalyse progress towards a more sustainable peace across Mali.

Mr. Adom (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Kuwaiti presidency and the Security Council for organizing this briefing on the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). I would also like to welcome the presence among us of His Excellency Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali. I commend Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, for his very informative briefing and his personal, determined commitment to resolving the crisis in Mali.

My country joins other speakers in condemning unequivocally and in the strongest terms the cowardly massacre carried out by armed men in the village of Sobamé-Da, in the Mopti region. Côte d'Ivoire addresses its deepest condolences to the Government and brotherly people of Mali and reiterates its solidarity with them in their legitimate search for peace and stability. To that end, my country welcomes the decision of the Government of Mali to launch investigations to shed light on those heinous crimes and bring their perpetrators to trial before the competent national courts.

Côte d'Ivoire also welcomes the consensual formation of a new Malian Government and reaffirms its conviction that it will be able to meet the expectations of the Malian people.

The report of the Secretary-General on the activities of MINUSMA (S/2019/454) provides us with information about the progress made since the United Nations Mission was deployed in Mali. It sheds special light on the persistent challenges against the backdrop of which it is important to assess the needed adjustments and MINUSMA's support for peace efforts in Mali.

My delegation therefore welcomes MINUSMA's continued support for the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation and encourages the new Government team led by Prime Minister Boubou Cissé to contribute to it without fail. Indeed, Côte d'Ivoire reiterates its conviction that strong national ownership and inclusive implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation remains the only way forward for a rapid and sustainable return of peace, security and stability to Mali, particularly in the northern and central regions.

To this end, it wishes to express its full support for the Government of Mali in its stated desire to organize an inclusive national dialogue so that it can be used to explore the adoption of consensus solutions to the many challenges facing the country. Women and young people should find and have their rightful place in such a dialogue.

On the security front, my country shares the concerns related to the situation in the northern and central regions of Mali. Indeed, episodes of communitarian violence, as recurrent as they are bloody, undermine social balances and hamper efforts to restore calm and peaceful coexistence among communities. That is why the exacerbation and instrumentalization of this violence by armed groups should encourage the Council to support, through MINUSMA, the redeployment of police and judicial institutions, in order to enable the Malian State to fully perform its sovereign functions.

The need to continue the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and security sector reform is more important than ever today. The success of this process will undoubtedly contribute to a substantial reduction in the level of violence and the construction of an army of the Republic of Mali in the service of peace and stability.

With regard to the humanitarian situation — another cause for concern — my country would like to commend the multifaceted assistance provided by specialized agencies to meet the basic needs of the affected populations. Côte d'Ivoire strongly hopes that humanitarian responses will be strengthened by economic and social-development initiatives that focus, *inter alia*, on combating poverty and unemployment, which are the underlying causes of insecurity and instability in Africa in general.

MINUSMA remains an essential link in all the current forms of the security presence in Mali and the subregion. It should therefore benefit from the constant support of the Security Council. Its complementarity with the forces on the ground, namely, the Malian armed forces, the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel), Operation Barkhane and the European missions, constitutes a considerable asset in the fight against terrorism and organized crime throughout the subregion. It therefore seems imperative to ensure that its capacity is strengthened, in order to enable it to react and effectively anticipate attacks against its civilian

and military personnel and to continue to carry out all the missions assigned to it.

Admittedly, MINUSMA is not intended to replace the Malian armed forces, but its contribution and the strengthening of their capacity and support for their redeployment, particularly in the northern and central parts of the country, are crucial. The same applies to its support for the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, in accordance with resolution 2391 (2017). This support is of vital importance for effectively combating terrorism and restoring peace and stability in the Sahel region.

However, Côte d'Ivoire believes that, in the light of the constraints observed in the provision of support to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, a review of the technical agreement should be considered in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of MINUSMA's logistical support. My country also believes that any decision to reconsider the scope and means at the disposal of MINUSMA must necessarily take into account the potential consequences on an already fragile security situation. Côte d'Ivoire therefore urges the Security Council to maintain its level of engagement around MINUSMA and to continue its multifaceted support to the Government of Mali in its efforts to restore peace and stability and promote economic and social development.

I would like to conclude my statement by reaffirming my country's support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and by urging all bilateral and institutional partners to continue their support for MINUSMA.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): First, I would like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mali, His Excellency Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, to the Security Council Chamber. I would also like to convey my deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Mali on the attack on the village of Sobamé-Da that resulted in the loss of 95 civilian lives and injured many others.

Like other speakers before me, I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, for his comprehensive briefing.

Indonesia greatly appreciates the work of the Special Representative and of MINUSMA in ensuring peace and stability in Mali. We would also like to pay

tribute to the fallen personnel of MINUSMA and convey our sincere appreciation to all personnel who continue to risk their lives working in a difficult situation.

Indonesia welcomes and commends the recent report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the mandate of MINUSMA (S/2019/454). The comprehensive assessment of the situation on the ground and the recommendations contained in the report clearly serve as valuable input for our deliberations on the future of MINUSMA when its mandate expires at the end of this month. Our recent Security Council visit to Mali in March also provided us with a much clearer picture of what is happening on the ground, as we also had the opportunity to meet with many representatives of the United Nations system there.

Based on that and based on recent developments, we have several points we would like to share with the Council. First, we welcome the positive developments in Mali, including the establishment of a consensus Government and the signing of a political agreement between key political stakeholders in the country. We also welcome the limited but continued progress achieved in the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation. We hope that the recent political momentum will speed up progress in priority areas. We urge all Malian stakeholders to work together towards the completion of constitutional reform through an inclusive and consultative process.

In addition, we cannot overstate the importance of ownership and engagement of all parties in this process, including the Government, signatory armed groups, political opposition groups and civil society. We commend the continued efforts to support the redeployment of Malian defence and security forces through an accelerated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. We hope that any outstanding issues will be resolved in a timely manner. We also view that the establishment of a northern economic development zone needs to be pursued swiftly, so that the living conditions of the Malian populations in the north could be improved.

Secondly, we note with concern the security situation in Mali, particularly in the north and central regions. In this regard, we believe that the effective redeployment of the reconstituted and reformed Malian defence and security forces and the restoration of State authority are of paramount importance. It is high time for the Malians to take the reins of their destiny, so

that the State can deliver on its promises to the people who have entrusted it with their future, including by ensuring security and the provision of basic services.

With regard to MINUSMA, Indonesia believes that its presence in Mali remains crucial to enabling further progress and to preventing further deterioration of the situation. We support the mandate renewal so that the Mission can provide certainty in its support of peace efforts in Mali. We appreciate the increasingly agile posture adopted by the Mission. We concur that given the volatility of situation in Mali, a significant reduction or withdrawal of the Mission is not the wisest way forward. It should be the other way around, namely, providing MINUSMA with greater resources.

We take note also of the statement made earlier by the Special Representative, highlighting that 70 per cent of the uniformed personnel of MINUSMA, is currently in the field giving protection to civilians. That is an important aspect. We need to continue to support MINUSMA. We also feel that the Mission could benefit from a clearer mandate, division of labour with the United Nations country team, enhanced coordination with other security presences in Mali and, of course, closer collaboration with the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel). We took note of that during our visit to Mali and in our coordination and collaboration with the G-5 Sahel Joint Force. I think that that is an important aspect, which must be clearly stated.

We also remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Mali. We deplore the hindrance of humanitarian access and call on all parties to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches those who need it the most.

Thirdly and lastly, we would like to reiterate our belief that it is only by addressing the root causes of conflict that stability and progress in Mali can truly materialize. We therefore call on regional and international partners to support sustainable development in Mali, in line with the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel. Earlier today, we also discussed the issue of conflict. Conflict cannot be resolved without development assistance in addressing its root causes.

The country is now at a critical juncture. It is important for all of us to enhance cooperation to ensure lasting peace and development for the benefit of the entire Malian population. I believe that from the

statements we have heard thus far today, there is unity in the Council. I sincerely hope that this unity can be translated concretely into a robust draft resolution when we discuss the Mission's mandate renewal.

Mr. Yao Shaojun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I welcome Mr. Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, to the meeting and thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Annadif for his briefing.

As mentioned by colleagues, a few days ago intercommunal conflict occurred in the Mopti region of central Mali, causing many casualties. China is deeply appalled by such developments and extends condolences to the Malian Government and to the families of the victims. We hope that the parties concerned will resolve their differences through dialogue in order to restore stability on the ground.

At present, the peace process in Mali is at a critical juncture. The Government and the people of Mali have made tireless efforts to promote the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. China appreciates their efforts in that regard. At the same time, Mali continues to face severe challenges as terrorist forces continue to expand their activities, thereby affecting progress in the implementation of the peace agreement.

The international community should continue to provide support for peace and development in Mali.

First, it should actively promote the peace and reconciliation process in Mali. All parties to the peace agreement should prioritize the interests of the country and its people, fulfil their commitments and work together for national development and reconstruction. China appreciates the efforts of the Malian Government to promote dialogue and reconciliation and the progress made in reintegrating former combatants. We call on all parties to commit to resolving disputes by peaceful means, through dialogue and negotiations. The international community should respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Mali and help it improve its capacity for autonomous development and governance. The work of the Security Council's sanctions regime on Mali should aim to support the political process and strictly follow its mandate, as given by the Council.

Secondly, the international community should help Mali strengthen its security capacity-building

by assisting its Government in improving its security and counter-terrorism capacity so that it can gradually assume responsibility for security. Peace and security in Mali are closely linked to the overall security situation in the surrounding areas. As such, it is necessary to adopt integrated measures and conduct regional cooperation in order to respond to terrorist activities in and around Mali. China welcomes the formation of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel to independently respond to security threats, such as regional terrorism. We commend the United Nations and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for their work in support of the Joint Force.

Thirdly, the international community should promote economic and social development in Mali. It should continue to help Mali to build on the foundation of its economy in order to achieve self-reliance and sustainable development as soon as possible. That would help to address problems in Mali at their source. China calls on all parties concerned to continue to deliver on their aid commitments and help the Government to invest more resources in the development of northern and central Mali. We look forward to the early establishment of the northern economic development zone so that local people can live and work in peace as soon as possible.

Fourthly, the international community should support MINUSMA in fulfilling its mandate. MINUSMA and Special Representative Annadif have played an important role in maintaining stability, boosting security capacity-building and assisting the peace process in Mali. The continued fulfilment by MINUSMA of its mandate is extremely important to the security and stability of Mali and the Sahel. China supports a smooth MINUSMA mandate renewal and will actively participate in the relevant deliberations.

China pays tribute to MINUSMA peacekeepers and expresses condolences for those who laid down their lives in the line of duty. The Secretariat and MINUSMA have been actively improving the safety and security of peacekeepers. It is our hope that MINUSMA will continue to strengthen its work to ensure that supplies and equipment are in place for mandate implementation and security protection.

China is an important contributor of troops to MINUSMA. More than 400 Chinese peacekeepers are currently deployed in the Mission, performing medical

support, engineering and security-related tasks, among others. Their ability to perform their duties has been widely acclaimed. China will continue to work with the international community to steadfastly support the people of Mali in their pursuit of peace and development and contribute to peace, stability and development in Mali.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me to thank Mr. Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing and his unwavering commitment to peace and reconciliation in Mali, of which we are all aware.

I would also like to welcome Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, and thank him for coming all the way to New York to participate in today's debate.

Since our last debate on the situation in Mali in March (see S/PV.8497), regrettably, more Blue Helmets and Malian soldiers have fallen in the line of duty and more acts of violence against civilians, which have been particularly shocking, have occurred in the country. I would like to honour the memory of all of those victims.

The implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali has not progressed as quickly as we had all hoped. Belgium is deeply concerned about the delays in its implementation. Such delays serve only to bolster the enemies of peace, who are quick to denounce the path of dialogue and compromise as a dead-end and, instead, promote violence as an alternative. Such violence has now spread to central Mali and even beyond the country's borders. However, Belgium naturally welcomes the recent progress in the implementation of the agreement.

With regard to the constitutional reform process, we understand how crucial yet delicate it is. My country knows that to reach a compromise that satisfies everyone and ensure proper ownership, including on the part of women and young people, it is sometimes better to invest a little time in the process in order to achieve a solid outcome, rather than impose arbitrary deadlines. Inclusive political dialogue is crucial for Mali. However, it obviously cannot be allowed to slow the implementation of the agreement.

Those efforts and political courage are critical to carrying out State reform, but must be extended to the other major provisions of the agreement. I stress that this responsibility is incumbent upon three signatory

parties and I urge them to make it a top priority. In addition, those measures will be meaningful only if they are long-term and enjoy the resources necessary to sustain them.

Finally, the Council has specific tools to counter those who obstruct peace. Targeted sanctions have already been imposed and the Council must be ready to impose additional sanctions, as needed.

We note that the situation in central Mali is continuously deteriorating. Terrorist acts and intercommunal violence are leading to an alarming downwards spiral. Atrocities at this scale are unheard of in a country like Mali, a country of peaceful intercommunal mixing and coexistence. Terrorists and aggressive militias cannot be allowed to take root. I therefore encourage the Government to exercise its sovereign power to ensure the security of its population by immediately disarming the armed militias and putting an end to impunity for all criminals. It must launch investigations and, when it does so, bring criminals to justice as soon as possible.

More generally, as the Council constantly emphasizes, the solution cannot be based on security alone, although that is an essential precondition. The aspirations expressed with regard to governance, the fight against corruption, justice and basic services must be heard. Coexistence and refusal to stigmatize any particular ethnic group, local mediation and the fight against impunity are essential elements for restoring State authority and legitimacy throughout the territory.

In that connection, Belgium welcomes the implementation of the political framework for crisis management in central Mali. A solution to the crisis can be found only through a genuine, Malian-owned political process, which must be as inclusive as possible and take all of the dimensions of the conflict into account. In that regard, my country believes that the future mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) should promote intra-Malian dialogue in the centre of the country and focus particularly on the protection of civilians, in support of the primary responsibility of the State authority.

In conclusion, only the people of Mali hold the key, and the United Nations must support them in their efforts.

Mr. Schulz (Germany): Let me first thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Annadif for his briefing. Let me also welcome His Excellency Foreign Minister Dramé for joining us at our meeting.

At the outset, I would like to make a few remarks on the political process and the peace process. We welcome the swift formation of the new Cabinet and we hope for a very energetic approach to the most pressing issues. It is important that the new Government maintain the dynamic momentum in the peace process that has developed over the past year. As it is the primary responsibility of the Government of Mali to make progress in key reforms, as agreed in the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, with tangible results for the population, we very much count on progress in that regard.

The latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/454) presents a mixed picture. It acknowledges some progress, and rightly so, but at the same time it also makes clear that much more visible progress is urgently needed on a wide range of issues: decentralization, constitutional reform, security sector reform and strengthening State capacity and presence in all regions of Mali. It is a heavy agenda, but a leap forward is needed to regain the trust of the population in State institutions.

On the situation in central Mali, we very much deplore — as many other colleagues have done — the loss of lives and the ongoing violence, particularly the latest massacre in the region of Mopti a few days ago, which led to the death of a very high number of civilians. We offer our condolences to the people and Government of Mali. It shows and reminds us once again that quick de-escalation is urgently needed. Short-term measures, on the one hand, and the long-term commitment of the Malian State to responding to the grievances of the people in central Mali are required. Moreover, the root causes of the conflict in central Mali need to be addressed.

In our view, it is essential that any response not exacerbate the ethnic dimensions of the crisis by pitting one group's self-defence forces against others. Accountability and investigations into human rights violations are key to advancing the rule of law and, with it, to preventing the further alienation of the population from the State. Again, it is obvious that this is primarily the Malian Government's responsibility.

On the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the way forward, Germany has been a very significant troop contributor to that United Nations operation for many years. In our assessment, MINUSMA continues to be the key security provider enabling the implementation of humanitarian development and stabilization efforts. It is clear to us that support for the implementation of the peace agreement must remain the clear priority when discussing the renewal of the mandate. The Council should look at all the tools at its disposal not only to measure and acknowledge progress, but also to act decisively, including with targeted sanctions if there is no or insufficient progress. As many others have said before, the active participation of women in all stages of the peace process remains a key pillar for success.

In our assessment, northern Mali should remain the main focus. We need a realistic and achievable streamlined mandate. That is essential to securing the achievements in the north. But obviously, we also need to look into what MINUSMA can do to support the Government in responding to the deteriorating crisis in central Mali, which has the potential to destabilize the whole of Mali and beyond. As I stated before, it is essential that the Government address the root causes of the degrading security situation and investigate human rights violations.

However, we should be careful not to set unrealistic goals for the centre. In keeping with the Action for Peacekeeping commitments, we should strive to set achievable goals, which seems to be a key element for us. In order to better identify such goals, we need to continue our discussions with Special Representative Annadif and his team to clarify some key questions. For example, what are our expectations regarding MINUSMA's role in central Mali? And what can it actually achieve there with its limited resources? How can it make a difference? What is the Council's view on strengthening MINUSMA's civilian pillar in the centre?

Since MINUSMA has a limited number of troops and resources to operate in an increasingly complex environment, we are clearly in favour of maintaining the current troop ceiling and would not support any reduction. The Mission needs to have the means to allow it to fulfil its core tasks. We would also need to consider the political signal we would send if we were to reduce the number of troops. That is especially important when we consider focusing more on the crisis in central Mali.

Before I conclude, let me also stress that cooperation with other security actors, such as the European Union Military Training Mission in Mali, the European Union capacity-building mission Sahel Mali and Operation Barkhane, should be intensified. Closer cooperation with the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel) should also be looked into in a pragmatic way and within the remit of the current authorizations given by the Council. That could include, for instance, the provision of logistical resources for G-5 Sahel Joint Force troops by third-party transport.

Mr. Ugarelli (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the convening of this meeting and the detailed briefing we heard from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif. We also welcome the presence of Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, in the Security Council.

We regret the loss of human life that occurred on Sunday in Sobamé-Da, in central Mali, as a result of inter-ethnic violence. We wish to convey our sincere condolences to all those affected. This is yet another demonstration of a conflict scenario compounded by the actions of terrorist groups, clashes between armed groups, intercommunal violence and attacks targeting United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) personnel.

We believe that the full implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali should remain a top priority for the Government and the people of Mali. It is crucial that all stakeholders work together to stabilize the country with a view to expanding the vital presence of the State throughout the nation. We therefore welcome the recent political progress seen in Mali, which has paved the way for the establishment of an inclusive Government. This should serve as an incentive to tackle the difficult security situation and the persistent humanitarian crisis, particularly in the centre and north of the country. In that context, I would like to address three key areas on the matter.

First, with regard to the political process, it is critical to work without delay on the political and institutional reforms required to improve governance, security and socioeconomic development, as provided for in resolution 2423 (2018). We believe that reforms pertaining to decentralization, future elections and constitutional review are crucial in this context,

as is increasing the participation of women in the peace process.

Secondly, in the security field, we highlight the efforts of the Malian Government to implement the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme for ex-combatants, as well as the long-overdue security sector reform, aimed at enabling the deployment of new forces.

We consider it necessary to pay special attention to the actions of violent extremist groups, who take advantage of the limited presence of the State to expand their influence and establish their own administration and relations with the communities. We also recognize the role of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel in strengthening the regional response to terrorism and transnational organized crime. In that regard, and as we stated this morning (see S/PV.8546), there is a pressing need to establish measures aimed at local-level conflict prevention and resolution, as well as the protection of civilians, through dialogue and the strengthening of police functions.

My third point concerns development. In a country where more than 1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, achieving long-term stability and prosperity will be possible only if steps are taken to address the root causes of the conflict, focusing also on promoting development and respect for human rights. We underscore the need to provide humanitarian assistance, in line with the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel and its support plan, as a comprehensive framework for promoting coherent and integrated international support, in line with national priorities.

Furthermore, taking the current political and security context in Mali into account, we agree that the role of MINUSMA needs to be strengthened, in coordination with other international actors and the United Nations country team, in order to protect civilians and fulfil the implementation of the peace agreement and the necessary political reforms.

Peru recognizes the work of MINUSMA and Special Representative Mahamat Saleh Annadif in a particularly adverse environment and very challenging operational conditions. The presence of MINUSMA on the ground constitutes a fundamental contribution to stability in Mali. We agree with the Secretary-General that it would be pertinent to renew the Mission's mandate for another year so that it can continue to

support this country along the shared path towards peace and reconciliation.

Mr. Elé Ela (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to thank you and your delegation, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mali, His Excellency Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, to whom we wish every success in the new role entrusted to him by His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita.

We would also like to express our thanks to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, for his very detailed and useful briefing. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea highly values his leadership and praises his hard work and that of his entire team in constantly challenging conditions.

The security situation in Mali and the Sahel region is nothing short of a tragedy. Abductions, attacks on barracks and camps, improvised — yet skilfully programmed — explosive devices, ambushes and murders form the basis of a constant, heightened danger that puts all actors, whether national and international, on the defensive. Many of them are confined to their quarters with little else to do but fight to stay alive, in the best-case scenario. It may be politically incorrect to be so explicit, but we are facing a paradoxical situation. The state of affairs in Mali is deteriorating at the same pace the international community's interest is increasing, as is its involvement in the restoration of the stability and authority of the State throughout the country.

Indeed, despite the military and financial resources deployed, as well as the ongoing international mobilization and support for the full implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the current strategy is demonstrating its weaknesses in its ability to curb the jihadist threat. Worse still, these past few weeks have witnessed an outbreak in intercommunity conflicts — between Dogons, Fulanis, Mossis, Arabs, Baoulés and Malinkes — which have been skilfully exploited by Islamist strategists, masters in the art of inciting, exacerbating and executing attacks in a plethora of ways.

Equatorial Guinea strongly condemns such violence, including the most recent incident just a few days ago in the centre of the country, which left almost

100 civilians dead. The severity of this inter-ethnic conflagration suggests that the situation is getting out of hand. It is therefore essential, against this backdrop, that a national awakening lead the Malians to take ownership of the situation, to echo the point made earlier by Mr. Annadif.

Faced with such an explosive situation, which threatens Mali's very existence, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea urges national and international actors and partners to continue fostering broad consultations and exchanges in order to provide the tools required to prevent and combat violence in all its forms and manifestations, both at the national level and in the Sahelo-Saharan region.

My country welcomes the establishment of a new inclusive Government in Mali on 5 May and we note the commitment of the new Prime Minister to providing MINUSMA, within the next three months, with a road map to accelerate the implementation of the agreement. We underscore the need for this road map to establish a timeline for the organization and holding of a constitutional referendum and security and defence sector reform, as well as to create the northern development zone.

Moreover, we reiterate our categorical condemnation of the ongoing attacks perpetrated against the civilian population, Blue Helmets, United Nations personnel and the Malian armed forces. The Government of Equatorial Guinea expresses its gratitude and pays a heartfelt tribute to all the national and international defence forces participating in these courageous efforts to combat cross-border violence and organized crime in Mali and across the Sahel region. We also urge the Malian authorities to investigate all these barbaric acts and bring those responsible to justice. They cannot go unpunished.

Faced with the cycle of deadly violence in the centre of Mali and given the infeasibility of any military solution, it might be advisable for the Malian Government and all political and civil stakeholders to establish a dialogue with all opponents in the country. This new strategy would represent a notable change of course, combining military pressure, dialogue and disarmament to prompt local leaders to approach the negotiating table.

Aware of the continuing deterioration of the security situation in Mali, and in view of the upcoming renewal of the mandate of MINUSMA, Equatorial

Guinea will support any proposal or initiative aimed at further strengthening the Mission's mandate so that it is capable not only of defending itself properly, but also of maintaining the pressure on terrorists and jihadists until their final withdrawal from the country.

Equatorial Guinea recalls that all stakeholders — the national Governments of the countries of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel), the Economic Community of West African States and neighbouring States, the African Union and the United Nations — have the responsibility to mobilize their resources as part of a coherent and comprehensive stabilization approach that enables the restoration of security and development. We welcome the work of the Governments of the Sahel countries and of national and international stakeholders and the coordinating role of the United Nations. We underline the essential role of MINUSMA in bringing about stability, peace and reconciliation in Mali, including its role in the north and centre of the country. We particularly highlight its efforts to assist the extension of State authority, the protection of all civilians, without discrimination, the restoration of basic services and the use of good offices in support of the political process, which must be completed, as well as its capacity to interact with other security forces, including the essential support that it provides to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force.

I conclude my statement by recalling that the situation in Mali is a clear threat to international peace and security. The Security Council must therefore remain united on this matter and consider it a core issue on its agenda, providing and encouraging the greatest possible support to the Government of Mali.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): I, too, would like to take this opportunity to wish the very best to our friend François Delattre, an exemplary diplomat who has left his mark here in the Security Council. We wish him success in his next role in Paris.

At the outset, we thank Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif for briefing us on the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2019/454). We welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mali.

The Dominican Republic commends the peaceful way in which the Government, the opposition and other stakeholders reconciled their differences to reach a political agreement towards holding an inclusive

dialogue to discuss the constitutional review within a national consultative framework, form a representative Government and implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and, in turn, seek joint solutions to the various factors of instability affecting the country.

We urge all stakeholders in Mali's political life to put their differences aside and to see this time of transition as an opportunity for all to integrate and together overcome the prevailing challenges facing the country. We emphasize the crucial and urgent need for all Malians to desire and adopt a cohesive vision for change towards a Mali of peaceful and stable coexistence.

We deplore the security situation in northern Mali and the ongoing deterioration in the centre of the country and in the subregion. Attacks on the Malian defence and security forces, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and civilians and the large-scale intercommunal violence taking place in parallel to other factors, such as a lack of State control, poverty, religious violence and the situation in the Sahel, present us with a very worrying situation.

The Dominican Republic, like the Secretary-General, understands that in order to prevent an increase in violence, it is necessary to take the causes of the crisis into account. At the same time, properly equipping and training the security forces and the Blue Helmets, enhancing coordinated work among partners, together with an effective presence of the reconstituted and reformed Malian security forces, and curbing the resources of groups and the trafficking in small arms and light weapons are areas that must be strengthened.

It is also necessary to work alongside the Government of Mali and its institutions to establish channels of information and cooperation with local communities in order to expand early warning mechanisms to assist in the joint planning of conflict prevention strategies, in line with MINUSMA's multidimensional approach, while responding to the overriding priority of stability in Mali.

The Dominican Republic condemns the grave human rights violations and transgressions perpetrated by community self-defence groups and terrorist groups in a context of increasing humanitarian needs, in particular for protection. We urge the international community to redouble its efforts to establish the

necessary mechanisms for the protection of the most vulnerable, particularly internally displaced persons, especially women and children, who are exposed to high levels of insecurity and violence.

In that regard, we express our regret at the sad news of the attack on civilians in the village of Sobamé-Da, in the Mopti region, on 9 June, in which 95 people lost their lives. In that dire situation, we appreciate the efforts of MINUSMA to provide humanitarian assistance in support of those affected by the tragedy. We hope that the perpetrators will be brought to justice as soon as possible.

We would also like to express our concern about the humanitarian situation in the country, where, according to the March harmonization framework, 3.8 million people will suffer from food insecurity and 106,000 people have been internally displaced due to the lack of access to water resources, among other things. Those consequences are to a great extent the result of changing climatic conditions, which are difficult for populations already vulnerable due to conflict to mitigate. Tackling the effects of climate change has been an unprecedented challenge both for those populations and for humanitarian actors on the ground, who deal first-hand with the humanitarian consequences of the interplay between adverse climate conditions and security on a daily basis. It is therefore necessary to find ways to deliver a humanitarian response commensurate with that growing reality and to have the necessary funding for that task.

A fundamental part of that approach is to better understand climate-related risks that directly affect the security situation in the country and their role as a multiplier of threats and vulnerabilities for already greatly affected populations. We believe that that is a key task for the Security Council, and in particular MINUSMA and all humanitarian actors on the ground.

We regret that, in the reconfiguration of the new Government, the number of women in ministerial positions has decreased and that there has been no progress in women's participation in the peace process. However, we welcome the adoption of the third national action plan for the period 2019-2023 on women and peace and security to promote women's participation in the peace process and governance.

We firmly believe that the inclusion of women has great potential to transform societies and contribute to peace and security. We also believe that the

participation of young people in stabilization efforts in Mali is necessary. The resolve of young people and their innovative ideas, as well as their peacebuilding projects, create a multiplier effect and hope for a generation that deserves and needs a more promising future for its communities.

The future for which young Malians yearn today is increasingly obscured by a lack of jobs, underdevelopment and the more than 953 closed schools in the northern and central regions of the country. No country can achieve development without educational and training opportunities. We therefore urge national, regional and international stakeholders to redouble their efforts to control the activities of armed groups in order to restore peace and stability to the people of Mali, which in turn would facilitate the reopening of schools, thereby contributing to the development of young people and in turn the future of the entire country.

In conclusion, we deeply regret the deaths of four Blue Helmets and a number of Malian armed forces personnel. We commend Mr. Annadif and MINUSMA for all their efforts in such a difficult environment. We look forward to the effective implementation of the action plan to improve the security of peacekeepers. We also thank the Group of Five for the Sahel, Operation Barkhane and the entire international community. To echo the words of the Secretary-General, we want to reiterate that impunity fuels violence and we therefore hope to see all the perpetrators prosecuted.

Improving the current violent and unstable situation in Mali demands the full participation and support of all Malians, especially all the signatory parties, in fulfilling their commitments under the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. A fully implemented agreement, along with dialogue and firm, clear and proactive measures, will help to create a safer environment for confronting the pressing challenges facing Mali and the Sahel region and guiding Malian society towards more solid and sustainable socioeconomic development.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Kuwait.

At the outset, I would like to join previous speakers in offering my condolences to the people and the Government of Mali for the heinous attack that took place in the village of Sobamé-Da in central Mali, killing some 95 people. We are seriously concerned

about the recent increase in such attacks, including the attack in March during the Council's visit to Mali in which 157 people died.

We would like to sincerely thank Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali, for his valuable briefing on the latest developments in the country. I commend his efforts and those of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to facilitate the peace process and engage with all stakeholders with a view to making progress on the political track. We also welcome the presence and participation in the Security Council for the first time of Mr. Tiébilé Dramé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali. I congratulate him on his new post and wish him every success. We would like to convey our congratulations to the new Prime Minister, Mr. Boubou Cisse, through him.

I will focus on three main issues. The first is security, and our serious concern about the deteriorating security situation in central Mali. The number of attacks there is on the rise, and we have seen a significant increase in intercommunal violence. We stress the importance of containing the situation, which has deteriorated severely since last year. We welcome the recommendations of the Secretary-General for supporting MINUSMA in central Mali and call on the Government of Mali to undertake the necessary investigations and hold the perpetrators accountable, which will help to build confidence between it and the people. We also urge the Government to intensify its efforts to implement its plan for securing this region, where the situation has deteriorated alarmingly.

As we heard in last month's meeting on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (S/PV.8526), terrorism is affecting the countries of the Sahel. There are many regional and international military forces in the region, and MINUSMA has an important role to play in coordinating their efforts. We would like to take this opportunity to once again express our support and appreciation to the efforts of MINUSMA, which is operating in a high-risk environment, as well as the role that the Mission's personnel are playing in ensuring stability in Mali.

My second point is about the peace process. Four years have passed since the signing of the 2015 Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, and while the progress made during that time has not been

optimal, in the past six months we have seen things improve faster than before. We urge all parties to build on the small gains that have been achieved by completing the constitutional reform process in consultation with all stakeholders, and to take the necessary action to advance the establishment of a northern economic development zone, following the steps outlined in the Secretary-General's report (S/2019/454), which will help to build confidence between the Government and the people in northern Mali.

One of the major steps for ensuring stability and security in Mali is the redeployment of the reconstituted army. We welcome the recent progress in that regard and encourage all the parties to resolve any disagreements in order to forge ahead, thereby supporting the peace process and improving security in northern Mali. I also want to welcome the positive steps that have been taken in the past month, particularly the formation of a new Government that includes all political parties, as well as the signing of an agreement on holding a national political dialogue.

With regard to the third issue, the renewal of the Mission's mandate, Kuwait welcomes the options laid out in the Secretary-General's report for adapting MINUSMA in response to the requirements expressed in the April presidential statement on Mali (S/PRST/2019/2). The Security Council must examine all the options and recommendations before it and take them into consideration in the discussions on the mandate renewal. We look forward to those discussions and are ready to cooperate constructively with all Council members to ensure that MINUSMA receives an appropriate mandate that enables it to carry out its responsibilities and support the peace process in Mali, in addition to providing it with the necessary resources, especially in the light of its high-risk operating environment.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali.

Mr. Dramé (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on Kuwait's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June, and to express the delegation of Mali's great appreciation for the outstanding work of the Indonesian presidency last month. I also want to reiterate the deep gratitude of the people and the

Government of Mali to the Security Council, the Secretary-General, the countries that contribute troops to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and to all of Mali's bilateral and multilateral partner countries and organizations for their invaluable and tireless efforts to bring about peace and stability in Mali and the Sahel.

The Government of Mali takes note of the report of the Secretary-General under review (S/2019/454), and I thank Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of MINUSMA, for his accurate briefing and his update on the latest developments in Mali.

I have taken note of the remarks and high expectations of the members of the Council with respect to the situation in Mali. I would now like to share with the Council the comments of the Government of Mali on the report. As the Council is aware, the significant events in the period under review, politically and institutionally, included the appointment of a new Prime Minister and the formation of an inclusive Government, established on 5 May, and the signing of a political agreement on governance on 2 May between the Prime Minister and numerous majority and opposition political parties, in the presence of the representatives of the signatory groups to the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, which was a demonstration of their support for the emerging political consensus. The goal is to create the conditions for a national gathering to promote the search for consensus solutions to the multidimensional crisis in our country.

I would like to take this opportunity to testify to the role that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali has played in easing the political climate and in the process that led to the political agreement on governance. The agreement includes a road map that will give fresh impetus to the country's stabilization process. On 8 May, at the first meeting of the Council of Ministers, the President of Mali therefore laid out the main priorities for Government action in accordance with the political agreement. The first is organizing an inclusive political dialogue with all of Mali's political and social forces as soon as possible. The second is ensuring further implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali that resulted from the Algiers process, within the framework of national ownership of the peace process. The third is carrying out the consensus-based political, institutional, economic and social reforms that are

essential to our country's stabilization and economic progress. The fourth is stabilizing the country's central region and combating terrorism, and the fifth is holding referendum consultations and legislative, local and regional elections within the time frames agreed on during the inclusive political dialogue.

In accordance with those guidelines, the Head of State appointed the following national figures to lead the process of inclusive political dialogue following broad consultations with all segments of society: Mr. Baba Akhib Haïdara, Mediator of the Republic, Mr. Ousmane Issoufi Maïga, former Prime Minister, and Mrs. Aminata Dramane Traoré, former Minister. To facilitate these eminent figures' work, a consensus-based organizational committee will be established to ensure the preparation of the material and information needed for the inclusive political dialogue that the Malian people have waited for so long, to guarantee mass support for the planned political and institutional reforms. The committee will be presided over by a former colleague of Council members, Ambassador Cheick Sidi Diarra, who was the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, as well as United Nations Special Adviser on Africa for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Together with that measure, the Council of Ministers recently adopted a draft law extending deputies' term of office. This second extension of the mandate is intended to enable the National Assembly to enact the political and institutional reforms that will be decided on during the national dialogue, and thereby providing a legal framework for reforms that are crucial for our country's future. I want to take this opportunity to affirm the resolute determination of the Government of Mali to carry out political and institutional reforms by consensus in order to strengthen national reconciliation and democracy.

With regard to the redeployment of the reconstituted national army, whose role is to support the gradual restoration of State authority throughout the country, we should once again note the determining role played by Mr. Annadif, which has been instrumental, to use an Anglicism. We have achieved the definitive reintegration into the military of 529 former defence force troops who had deserted during the conflict. To that, in the framework of the accelerated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, we can add

the registration of 1,840 ex-combatant members of the Operational Coordination Mechanism, of whom more than 1,300 have been declared fit for service and as of yesterday had already begun training in training centres. Large numbers of them are trying to leave the north to return to Bamako in order to go to training centres and join the reconstituted national army. The Government and the signatories to the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali are continuing consultations to finalize a draft decree defining the assignment of ranks and responsibilities to commanding officers and ex-combatants integrating into the reconstituted army. This is a process involving consensus with the peace agreement signatory movements on setting up a framework to determine how to assign ranks.

With regard to the question of development in the north, I am pleased to be able to inform the Security Council that at its meeting on 29 May the Government adopted and transmitted to the National Assembly draft laws establishing the fundamental principles for the establishment, organization and control of development zones in the Republic of Mali. Those laws establish a development zone in northern Mali, as provided for in the agreement. They include laws on the basic principles for the development zones' establishment and their creation and organization, as well as on the organization and operating procedures of the interregional consultative framework for the northern development zone. We have therefore made significant progress on the process of establishing development zones in northern Mali, which we know has been a concern of the Security Council for some months.

The Government has also created the Sustainable Development Fund, the financial instrument for implementing the development strategy for the northern regions. We have already set aside \$20 million for urgent priority expenditures in Kidal, Ménaka, Timbuktu and Gao regions and have provided \$72 million to the Sustainable Development Fund, showing that the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali remains a top priority for the Government. That is also reflected in our multi-year budgetary and economic document, which outlines budget expenditures for the period from 2019 to 2023. The Government has already allocated 30 per cent of the national budget to implementing the agreement and is working to further decentralize the budget with a view to reaching the agreed amount of revenue to be transferred to the territorial collectivities. I am pleased

that the Secretary-General has noted in his report the efforts made by the State of Mali to that end.

I should not conclude the part of my statement on the implementation of the agreement without stressing that the Government is working diligently with all the signatory parties to adopt a new updated road map with a realistic timeline. At the beginning of next week, on 17 June, we are hosting the Foreign Minister of Algeria, who will preside over the Agreement Monitoring Committee, during which the signatories will come to an agreement on the new revised road map.

The situation in the central regions of Mali is a matter of deep concern for all the Malian people, who have once again been plunged into mourning following the tragic events that occurred on the night of 9 to 10 June in the village of Sobamé-Da, near Sangha, in the heart of the Dogon plateau, which before the crisis was a centre of tourism. The Government strongly condemns those criminal acts and reiterates its condolences to the families of the victims, who number 35, not 95 as was previously announced in the media. In its recent history our country has never seen so many victims and material damage as a result of intercommunal violence, fuelled by the pressure of terrorist groups and combined with forces competing for access to natural resources and control over them, often against a backdrop of resurgent former conflicts.

The Government has adopted a series of strong measures in response to those barbaric acts in the wake of the Prime Minister's visit to the martyred village of Sobamé-Da yesterday, accompanied by a number of ministers, including the Ministers of Defence and the Interior. It was decided to open a preliminary investigation by the Prosecutor of the Specialized Judicial Unit to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime, investigate and arrest six persons in connection with these tragic events, two of whom were apprehended by MINUSMA troops, and deploy ground patrols in various villages to deter attacks and reprisals, detain suspects, search for stolen livestock and encourage people to return to their villages under the protection of the Malian security forces. Malian army helicopters are providing aerial support to the patrols on the ground. Food assistance and medical care are being provided for the injured in the village.

The Government is determined not to tolerate such egregious acts and our defence forces are continuing to carry out these measures, while our Minister of

Defence is in the Mopti region to coordinate the action of our forces on the ground and the helicopters that are supporting the ground patrols.

The arrests and questioning of suspects continue to this day. New people were arrested this very morning in several villages in the region. Aerial reconnaissance patrols are being conducted in the main towns of the Dogon plateau to deter militias and groups of hunters from retaliating against Fulani villages.

Furthermore, with regard to the fight against impunity, I am able to inform the Security Council that the number of persons detained at the Mopti detention centre in connection with the intercommunity conflicts in the Koro and Bankass districts is over 70. These people are now in detention and are being questioned by the prosecutor in Mopti.

Similarly, the judicial unit specializing in the fight against terrorism has opened an investigation into the Ogossagou matter, the results of which are as follows: a judicial investigation was commenced and, as of 10 June 2019, 10 persons have been arrested in connection with the events that took place in Ogossagou in March. They are charged with terrorist acts, murder, assault, arson, robbery, and damage to the movable property of others. Several objects were seized and placed under seal.

In addition, aware of the limits of the overall security situation and taking full account of the complexity of the situation, the Government resulting from the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation has created a political framework for crisis management in the central region, bringing together some 10 Ministers and the main leaders of the armed forces and security services, with the objective of combining the political and military/security approaches, in order to calm the situation in the centre and resolve the crisis on a sustainable basis.

Dialogue within and between communities in crisis will be a key focus. The same will apply to the action resulting from knowledge of the field, the intelligence available on violent groups and the raising of awareness of the main actors with a view to their return to the peace camp. It is a multifaceted action that is being taken because this political framework for crisis management has already begun its work, having already held meetings. It meets on a weekly basis — every week — around the Prime Minister. The main Ministers concerned and the heads of the main services will meet to discuss the situation in the north. The Council of

Ministers, which ended just as the Security Council was beginning its work, decided to dismiss the Governor of Mopti and to take other measures to show that impunity will no longer be the rule there. The Governor of Mopti is a general officer — a Major General — and the Government just dismissed him. The message came to me while the Council was already in session.

It is worth recalling that the crisis in central Mali is an extension of the northern crisis and a direct consequence of the occupation of part of this region in 2012-2013 by terrorist groups. The first adherents to violent-extremist ideology were recruited by the Mouvement pour l'unicité et le jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (MUJAO), which is a non-Malian-led international terrorist organization. The main leaders of this terrorist group are now the Heads of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara. The Governor of Gao during the occupation has now withdrawn south of the Niger River into the Malian Gourma and officiates on behalf of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara. They are causing bloodshed in the Malian Gourma and the north-east of our country. The spokesman of MUJAO during the occupation, who is now Head of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, is staining the north-east of Mali on the border with the Niger with blood. The main figure of jihadism in central Mali is affiliated with the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims.

The logistics used against our forces come from the north. During major attacks on our garrisons in the centre, the columns and commanders come from the north, as they did a few weeks ago in Dioura, Guiré and last year in Soumpi and the year before in Nampala. This shows the close link between the northern crisis and the crisis in the centre and that it is therefore difficult to separate them or to build a Chinese wall between these two geographical regions and between these two crises.

This is an opportunity to reiterate the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Mali to accountability and justice and to recall our total rejection of impunity, as demonstrated by the measures that have been taken in recent weeks on the ground, including most recently — today — the Government's dismissal of the Governor of Mopti, the main city in central Mali, and the arrests that took place on the Dogon plateau today following patrols by the national gendarmerie with military support from the army.

The Government is committed to conducting military operations in strict compliance with all international instruments that Mali has sovereignly signed and incorporated into its domestic legislation, in particular with regard to respect for fundamental human rights. In accordance with this commitment, I would like to inform the Council that eight cases involving military personnel are under investigation at the Mopti military court. The interrogations begin tomorrow, 13 June 2019.

I can assure Council members that the objective of the military institution is zero cases of human rights violations, and the Minister of Defence has visited the military several times since his appointment in order to send a message about respecting right to life and the physical integrity of persons, even suspects who have been arrested. To achieve this objective of zero cases of human rights violations, Mali needs to strengthen fruitful partnerships in the areas of adequate training in expertise on finding and preserving evidence and in conducting investigations.

The cases of human rights violations perpetrated by MINUSMA officers identified in the report before us testify, if there was any need, to the complexity of the security environment. Moreover, the Government reaffirms its willingness to do justice to peacekeepers who are regularly attacked by hostile armed groups, through the prosecution and trial of the perpetrators and accomplices of such attacks, which may constitute war crimes under international law.

I know that in a few days' time the Security Council will renew the mandate of MINUSMA. This Mission, whose strategic priority remains to support the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali emanating from the Algiers process, is striving to properly fulfil its mandate in a particularly difficult and complex environment in more than one respect.

The members of the Security Council and the representatives of the troop- and police-contributing countries can be proud of the brave men and women who make up MINUSMA and who work daily to implement the Mission's mandate on the ground, often at the risk of their lives. MINUSMA's support both for the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation and for the overall stabilization of Mali is invaluable. Today, in addition to ensuring a security network in the northern regions pending the

redeployment of the reformed and reconstituted Malian defence and security forces, the presence of MINUSMA reassures our populations, promotes humanitarian access and strengthens confidence among the Malian parties to the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation.

I do not forget the support in the area of quick-impact projects and the provision of basic social services to the most vulnerable populations. Nor do I forget the support we are looking forward to receiving in the upcoming elections; the organization of the referendum; the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process through the Mission's programmatic activities; the strengthening of political dialogue and assistance in the protection of human rights; and, as I mentioned earlier, the important role played by the representative of the Secretary General in the defusing of political tensions, leading to the political agreement on governance. Likewise, MINUSMA contributes to the stabilization of the Sahel region through its important role in supporting the forces directly involved in the fight against terrorism, including the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the Barkhane force.

It is for all these reasons and in order to consolidate the gains already made that the Government of the Republic of Mali asks the Council, following the recommendations of the Secretary-General in his report, to extend the mandate of MINUSMA for an additional year. It is also for all these reasons that the Government of Mali requests the Security Council to provide MINUSMA with adequate human, financial, technological and equipment resources, enabling it to properly carry out its mandate of protecting civilians and to better protect its staff and facilities.

It is also for all these reasons that the Government of Mali is asking for an increased presence of MINUSMA in the regions of central Mali, alongside the Malian defence and security forces, in order to help protect civilian populations and their property, to end the cycle of violence and to allow the restoration of administrative and basic social services. Such an increased presence is the key condition for the success of the political process and the political approach we

intend to launch in the coming days. I emphasize that this strengthening of MINUSMA's presence in central Mali should not be undertaken to the detriment of the northern regions of Mali, because we do not want to create a security vacuum in that part of our country, which could be reoccupied by forces hostile to the peace process.

In conclusion, I wish above all to assure the Council of our Government's resolve to relentlessly pursue the diligent and inclusive implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, emanating from the Algiers process. In that regard, we attach particular importance to the renewal of the mandate of the MINUSMA and its equipment in a form adapted to the situation.

I would like to conclude as I began, by reiterating the gratitude of our people to the United Nations and to all our bilateral and multilateral partners for their multiform and unwavering support since the beginning of the crisis in 2012. I thank them yet again for all their support over the years to Mali in exercising its sovereignty over its entire territory; for their respect for Mali's territorial integrity and national unity and the republican and secular nature of the State; and, finally, for all the support provided throughout the Algiers process and the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation.

I reiterate the tribute of the entire Malian people to the memory of all the victims of the Malian crisis, civil and military, foreign as well as Malian, fallen on the field of honour in Mali since the beginning of the crisis. I extend our ardent wishes to the wounded for a speedy recovery .

Finally, I would like to address special words of thanks, as others have done before me, to Ambassador François Delattre, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, for his leadership on the Mali issue. At the moment when he is preparing to take up new duties in his country, the Government of the Republic of Mali, through me, expresses its infinite gratitude.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.