



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

9082nd meeting

Wednesday, 29 June 2022, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Spasse	(Albania)
<i>Members:</i>	Brazil	Mr. De Almeida Filho
	China	Mr. Xing Jisheng
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon	Mrs. Ngyema Ndong
	Ghana	Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
	India	Mr. Raguttahalli
	Ireland	Ms. Moran
	Kenya	Mrs. Toroitich
	Mexico	Mr. Gómez Robledo Verduzco
	Norway	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
	United Arab Emirates	Ms. Shaheen
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America	Mr. Mills

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2022/446)

Letter dated 1 June 2022 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2022/448)

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2022/446)

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

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

Members of the Council have before them document S/2022/517, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2022/446, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali, and document S/2022/448, which contains a letter dated 1 June 2022 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Albania, Brazil, France, Gabon, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

China, Russian Federation

The President: The draft resolution received 13 votes in favour, none against and two abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2640 (2022).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): France welcomes the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

The situation in Mali is fragile. Insecurity is increasing, and civilians are the primary victims. The Blue Helmets' mission, just as that of the Malian armed forces, is a difficult one. The country still needs MINUSMA. During the negotiations, France listened carefully to the positions of each member of the Council and of Mali. We regret the fact that there were abstentions, of course, because MINUSMA needs our unanimous support. In order for it to be able to discharge its mission, however, the Malian transitional authorities must also shoulder their responsibilities. Resolution 2640 (2022), which we have just adopted, contains three messages that I would like to highlight.

Obstacles to the work of the Mission and contingent rotations troops must be overcome. MINUSMA's freedom of movement must be ensured, because that is a precondition for its effectiveness. Violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law must end. Such violations have been committed not only by terrorist groups but also by elements of the Malian armed forces along with Wagner Group mercenaries. MINUSMA must be able to gain access to the areas affected in order to carry out its mandate and publish quarterly reports on human rights. The perpetrators of violations must be brought to justice.

Finally, the Security Council takes note of the announcement in the resolution of a two-year extension of the transition period. The text also calls upon Mali and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to continue their discussions in order to reach agreement on a return to constitutional order and the convening of elections. We hope that the 3 July ECOWAS Summit will help us make progress in that respect.

We call for the early resumption of the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, which has been at a standstill since October 2021. We remain convinced that the agreement is the appropriate framework to ensure a lasting improvement in the situation in Mali.

In that context, France hopes that the strategic review of the Secretary-General, set to take place in six months, will provide us with an in-depth analysis

of the conditions in which MINUSMA can carry out its mandate and draw the appropriate conclusions.

Mr. Mills (United States of America): The United States voted in favour of resolution 2640 (2022) to extend the crucial support of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to the people of Mali for another year.

We are grateful to France for its collegial engagement as the penholder on this important resolution. However, we regret the fact that two Council members abstained and stood in the way of the Security Council's unanimous adoption of today's renewal of the mandate for MINUSMA — a Mission that has enjoyed unanimous adoption every year since its establishment in 2013.

We believe it was important to vote for this renewal so that the Malian transition Government has a renewed opportunity to work with MINUSMA to fully implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, hold free and fair elections, and protect civilians. We hope to see the Malian transitional Government and the Economic Community of West African State reach agreement on a robust monitoring mechanism with tangible benchmarks for the remainder of the transition.

We also voted in favour of the resolution because it strongly condemns the alarming increase in violations and abuses against civilians and again calls for all parties to cease committing or abetting any violation or abuse. That includes terrorist armed groups, the Malian armed forces and the Kremlin-backed Wagner Group.

Through this important vote, the Council has renewed MINUSMA's critical mandate to monitor, investigate and publicly report on the human rights situation in Mali and to protect civilians from further attacks. The resolution sends a clear message that MINUSMA's freedom of movement must be respected in order for it to do its job.

Along those lines, we supported this mandate renewal because the resolution also calls on the transition Government to respect the status-of-forces agreement and end restrictions on MINUSMA's flights and movements. I would like to underscore the need for the Malian authorities to immediately grant access to the reported massacre site and mass graves in Moura and all other such sites of reported attacks against civilians.

Importantly, the resolution clearly puts a check on all support provided by MINUSMA to the Malian Defence and Security forces. MINUSMA's support must comply with the United Nations Human Rights Due Diligence Policy across all phases of operations, ensuring that the recipients comply with the status-of-forces agreement and human rights and international humanitarian law.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation abstained in the voting on resolution 2640 (2022), submitted by France, on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which plays an important role in the stabilization of the country.

We sought to convey our views during the negotiations on the draft but deem it important publicly to reiterate them today.

We firmly believe that the resolution's intrusive language on the Mission's human rights mandate will not advance the Malian people's exercise of their sovereign right to protect their citizens and investigate incidents. Bamako is meaningfully committed to that. We are concerned that the resolution could be used by those who are displeased with the independent approach to foreign policy of the transitional Government to damage its reputation.

We have become somewhat inured to the fact that our Western colleagues continue to feed the Security Council with false stories about Russia's allegedly destructive activities in Mali. They do not want to hear from us or our Malian colleagues, who have thanked Russia, along with others in this Chamber, for its bilateral assistance in combating terrorism. Moreover, we have not hear any complaints about us from other African partners.

However, something else comes as a surprise to us. Mali is engaged in a difficult struggle against terrorism. Every month, hundreds of civilians and dozens of peacekeepers are killed by extremists there. MINUSMA is finding it increasingly difficult to fulfil its mandate in the face of the increasing security threats that have resulted from, inter alia, the withdrawal of French forces.

Nevertheless, for our Western colleagues all such dire challenges fade into the background when it comes to Russian assistance to this African country. Instead

of working to ensure that our assistance to the Malians is more effective, and thereby resolving rather than exacerbating existing regional disagreements, our Western colleagues would rather focus on issues that have nothing to do with the priorities of MINUSMA, or Mali itself for that matter. That raises the question of what their true motives are with regard to MINUSMA's activities.

Despite the external pressures placed on them, we are confident that the United Nations and the Mission's leadership will remain impartial, act only in the interests of the Malian people and resolve all issues that arise through constructive engagement with the authorities of the host country.

Mr. De Almeida Filho (Brazil): As the Security Council comes together to fulfil its purpose by renewing the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), we would like to pay tribute to the peacekeepers and civilians who perished in the recent terrorist attacks and reiterate our commitment to improving the Mission's mandate in order to better protect the lives of United Nations personnel and Malians.

The renewal process offered us an opportunity to take a step forward in that direction, as well as to seek other improvements in the provisions of resolution 2640 (2022). Brazil regrets that such an opportunity was missed with regard to climate change, in particular the way the current language associates it with security. It is one thing to recognize that environmental factors and extreme weather events may concretely impact conditions on the ground, thereby having possible indirect adverse effects on an existing situation of instability.

However, as we understand it, it is another thing that the reference to security in one of the preambular paragraphs — the eighteenth preambular paragraph — suggests a direct cause-and-effect linkage between climate change and violent conflict. In our view, that is inconsistent with the assessment of the concrete causes of the Malian conflict, as well as the general findings of the sixth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change with regard to the impacts and vulnerabilities associated with climate change.

The root causes of conflict and terrorism in Mali are political and socioeconomic in nature. Therefore, despite their impact in terms of affecting the existing

situation of instability on the country, climate events are not the cause of the Malian conflict. Therefore, we regret the retention in the text of language that implies an automatic association between climate and security, which lacks a scientific basis and does not adequately reflect the nature of the conflict.

Mr. Xing Jisheng (China) (spoke in Chinese): The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has been working tirelessly to achieve the maintenance of peace and stability in Mali for many years. In that regard, troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs) have also made tremendous efforts, which China commends. China supports MINUSMA's mandate renewal and hopes that the Mission will continue to play a constructive role in improving the situation on the ground. We pledge our continued support to MINUSMA and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in their work.

We must note, however, that Member States bear the primary responsibility for the protection and promotion of human rights. The Mission's main task is to assist the Government of Mali in implementing the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and restoring the State's authority in the north. That should remain a top priority. In fulfilling its human rights mandate, the Mission should communicate and cooperate closely with the Malian Government and listen carefully to its views. Resolution 2640 (2022) lends too much prominence to human rights issues and excessively emphasizes the Mission's human rights-related mandate. As a result, it is out of touch with the reality on the ground and does not reflect full respect for the Malian Government's ownership. Therefore, China abstained in the voting on resolution 2640 (2022).

The security situation in Mali is complex and grave. The international community should continue to support the Malian Government's efforts to combat terrorism and maintain stability, while respecting Mali's right to carry out external security cooperation independently. The security of the Blue Helmets attached to the Mission has become a prominent concern. This month alone, many deadly attacks have been carried out against them, which we find very distressing. TCCs/PCCs are generally concerned about the security risks posed to the Mission as a result of the withdrawal of foreign troops. When the United Nations conducts a comprehensive assessment of the work of the Mission in the next phase, it should carefully identify the

outstanding risks and weaknesses in the context of the security of peacekeepers and take effective measures.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and I thank our French colleagues for their hard worker as penholder.

MINUSMA has a key role to play in helping to build long-term peace in Mali. The mandate renewal takes place in a particularly difficult political and security context in Mali. MINUSMA itself faces significant challenges. Restrictions by Mali's authorities limit its ability to protect civilians and to monitor and report on the recent surge in human rights violations and abuses. That jeopardizes both the safety and the security of peacekeepers and civilians.

In that context, the United Kingdom would have preferred a greater emphasis on human rights and the freedom of movement in resolution 2640 (2022). Nonetheless, MINUSMA has a clear mandate to conduct human rights investigations and to report swiftly and publicly. Its mandate must be respected, and we call on the Malian authorities to cease all restrictions and uphold the status-of-forces agreement. It is vital that the Security Council be kept informed of obstructions to MINUSMA discharging its mandate. We therefore welcome the new reporting requirement in the resolution.

Following the allegations against State forces and Wagner Group personnel, we welcome the reinforced conditionality governing MINUSMA's support for the Malian defence and security forces in order to ensure that is not misused. Given the scale of challenges facing Mali and MINUSMA, we support a United Nations review and expect it to assess whether and how the Mission may need to adapt in order to ensure its future success.

Finally, the United Kingdom hopes that MINUSMA can continue to provide effective support towards establishing Mali's long-term stability. It is now up to the Malian authorities to deliver on their stated commitments to human rights, to a timely political transition in agreement with the Economic Community of West African States and to upholding MINUSMA's freedom of movement.

Mr. Raguttahalli (India): I take the floor to explain India's position on resolution 2640 (2022).

Terrorism remains the single most serious threat to peace and security in Mali and the Sahel. We thank the French delegation, the penholder, for taking into consideration our suggestion to reinforce the language on terrorism and on the pressing need to address that challenge.

The primary responsibility of fighting terrorism and providing security to its population lies with the Malian authorities. The peacekeepers of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) need to support the relevant Malian authorities in countering terrorist groups.

However, MINUSMA peacekeepers cannot be tasked with undertaking counter-terrorism operations. Ambiguous phraseology in the resolution — such as wording that refers to a robust posture, robust and proactive steps to protect civilians, and enhancing the robustness of the posture of MINUSMA — may possibly place United Nations peacekeepers on the ground at a disadvantage.

The interpretation of peacekeeping mandates must be well defined and have a strong legal basis, without any scope for creative interpretation. In addition, the issue of climate change should be addressed holistically through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in accordance with its provisions and principles, as well as through the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. No artificial link should be drawn between climate change and security-related issues without any firm scientific basis.

Mali needs the continuous support of its bilateral and international partners, including the United Nations, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, to overcome capacity gaps. We reiterate our commitment to supporting Mali in its pursuit of lasting peace, stability and security.

Mrs. Ngyema Ndong (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Gabon voted in favour of renewing the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), in the light of our concerns about maintaining consensus on an African issue and so as to enable MINUSMA to work in the best possible conditions.

Nevertheless, we do not believe that the mandate meets the main aspirations of the Malian people. Mali

is at a critical juncture in its history and must face major security challenges, while at the same time fighting against armed groups and violent recurring attacks perpetrated by terrorists. We are convinced that, at this stage, Mali's people need more substantial support from the international community, instead of a barrage of insults and admonitions, which serve only to worsen the situation on the ground.

We also deplore the rejection of the request submitted by the three African members of the Security Council — Gabon, Ghana and Kenya — for a firmer commitment to protecting civilians and combating the effects of climate change, which without a doubt have an impact on the people of Mali and their lifestyle.

Resolution 2640 (2022), which focuses only on human rights, does not serve the interests of the people of Mali but, as is often the case, serves only the interests of foreign Powers. The resolution does not support the commitment of the United Nations to continuing to support Mali on the long road of restoring peace and stability.

Finally, the resolution violates the sovereignty of Mali. It does not take into account the efforts made by the Malian defence forces in honour of their sovereign duty to defend their territory, in conditions that are very often challenging. We believe that the international community should review its objectives and priorities in Mali and focus only on the interests of the people of Mali.

Ms. Opong-Ntiri (Ghana): Since the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) last year, there have been several developments in Mali on the political, security and humanitarian fronts. We therefore engaged in the negotiations on the mandate renewal with the expectation that there would be broad appreciation for the need to ensure that the new elements introduced in the text reflected the current realities and position the Mission to overcome the known challenges in order to make it more responsive to the security needs of Mali.

We also approached negotiations in a manner that sought to enhance cooperation between the two host authorities and the Mission by calling for a more focused, constructive and balanced text.

While acknowledging the constructive engagement by all delegations and the efforts made by the penholder

towards reaching a balanced text, we regret the fact that the text does not fully capture our concerns, including those related to the protection of civilians, human rights and climate and security.

Despite the concerns I mentioned, my delegation strongly believes that the peace for which the good people of Mali yearn cannot be achieved or sustained without the presence of MINUSMA. The gallant troops on the ground serving under MINUSMA are also committed to supporting efforts to find peace in Mali. Consequently, in the spirit of compromise Ghana voted for the renewal of this very important mandate.

We believe that the request to the Secretary-General in paragraph 58 to provide, no later than 13 January 2023, a detailed analysis of the political and security challenges that impacted on the Mission's ability to implement its mandate and an assessment of the cooperation with the host authorities and movement restrictions, among other things, will help identify issues and inform perspectives on ways to better strengthen the Mission's efforts to address the security situation in Mali.

Mrs. Toroitich (Kenya): Kenya's vote in favour of resolution 2640 (2022) is based on our belief that the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) plays a key role in Mali. We also note an overall improvement in the adopted resolution as compared to the original draft resolution.

Nevertheless, the growing security threats posed by terrorist acts, as well as the lack of adequate resources, leave Mali struggling to secure its borders with very limited resources. Kenya also believes that a legitimate Government in Mali remains the key to establishing the conditions required for effective counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency actions. The worsening effects of climate change, which trigger food insecurity, poverty and displacement in Mali, are also a major concern for us.

We would therefore have preferred that the resolution placed a stronger focus on positively supporting Mali in its efforts to rebuild its democracy, protect civilians and counter the effects of climate change in order to reflect the situation and needs on the ground.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Albania.

Albania draws attention to the deteriorating security situation and the dire humanitarian situation in Mali. We thank France, as the penholder, for leading the challenging negotiations on the mandate renewal.

We are in full support of the one-year extension and believe that resolution 2640 (2022) provides the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) with the necessary mandate to support Mali and its people. It is undeniable that the security situation in Mali remains complex and is further challenged by the presence of foreign military personnel.

The recent sharp increase in human rights violations remains of great concern. We urge the Malian forces to adhere to international human rights law and international humanitarian law in conducting military operations. MINUSMA must be guaranteed the freedom of movement in order to implement its mandate in full. Any restrictions may impact the Mission's effectiveness in carrying out its mandated tasks.

Finally, we encourage the Malian authorities to work constructively with the Economic Community of West African States and develop a transition calendar for the holding of elections and the return to constitutional order.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Mali.

Mr. Konfourou (Mali) (*spoke in French*): The Government of the Republic of Mali takes note of resolution 2640 (2022), which renews the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for an additional year. Members will recall that the Government of Mali expressed its support for the renewal of MINUSMA's mandate, while clearly formulating its expectations and strong reservations with regard to the new mandate.

However, the Government of Mali regrets that some of its strongest reservations were simply ignored in the final version of the resolution on which the Security Council voted. The Government of Mali reiterates its firm opposition to the freedom of

movement of MINUSMA in the execution of its human rights mandate.

As members are well aware, Mali has always cooperated in good faith with the United Nations Mission since its establishment in 2013. However, in line with the principle of respect for Mali's sovereignty, as well as for coordination and security reasons, MINUSMA's movements can take place only with the agreement of the competent Malian authorities. Similarly, Mali is not in a position to guarantee the freedom of movement for MINUSMA investigations without the prior agreement of the Government.

Consequently, Mali does not intend to implement those provisions of the resolution, despite their adoption by the Security Council. In any event, the Government of Mali believes that allegations concerning human rights violations are the primary responsibility of the Malian authorities. MINUSMA's role is to provide them with the necessary assistance in that regard; it is not supposed to replace the Government of Mali.

The delegation of Mali calls on the Security Council to allow MINUSMA to devote itself to the priority tasks for which it is deployed in my country, namely, to support the restoration of security and State authority throughout our national territory, which is an essential condition for better protecting the population and their property.

The people of Mali expect MINUSMA to contribute to the search for lasting solutions to Mali's challenges. They do not want MINUSMA to become part of the problems in our country, and neither do they want human rights to be used for hidden political purposes.

On behalf of the Government of Mali, I would like to thank Russia and China for abstaining from the voting on the resolution.

I conclude by reiterating the gratitude of the people and the Government of Mali to the United Nations for its constant support for our efforts to end the crisis. I pay tribute to the memory of all the victims of the Malian crisis — both civilian and military, Malian and foreign — who have lost their lives in my country.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.