



Security Council

Distr.: General
11 May 2016

Original: English

Report of the Security Council mission to Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal

I. Introduction

1. In a letter dated 10 February 2016, the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the Council had decided to send a mission to West Africa (Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal). The composition of the mission and its terms of reference were communicated to the Secretary-General on 3 March 2016 in a letter from the President of the Council (S/2016/215) and are set out in annexes I and II to the present report. The Mali leg of the mission was led by the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, François Delattre, and the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations, Fodé Seck. The Guinea-Bissau leg of the mission was co-led by the Permanent Representative of Angola to the United Nations, Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, and Mr. Seck. The Senegal leg of the mission was led by Mr. Gaspar Martins.

II. Mali

A. Background

2. The Security Council mission was the third Council visit to Mali following its visits in October 2000 (see S/2000/992) and February 2014 (see S/2014/173). Its primary purpose, in line with the press statement by the Council dated 12 January 2016, was to reiterate the Council's call for urgent and concrete progress in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and to assess the increased level of insecurity, including in central and southern Mali. The mission was further aimed at assessing progress in the implementation of Council resolution 2227 (2015), notably the supervision of the ceasefire arrangements, the provision of good offices and reconciliation support, stabilization and the protection of civilians, and the protection, safety and security of United Nations personnel, in addition to the progress and challenges in the deployment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The mission liaised with the full complement of representatives of the Government of Mali, women's groups, the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA) and the Platform coalition of armed groups and the international community.



B. Meetings in Bamako, Mopti and Timbuktu

3. Upon their arrival in Bamako, on 4 March, the members of the Security Council were welcomed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and African Integration, Abdoulaye Diop, and representatives of MINUSMA and the diplomatic community. On 5 March, the members met the Prime Minister, Modibo Keita, in Bamako before travelling to Mopti, where they met local authorities and MINUSMA representatives. Later that day in Timbuktu, the members met the Governor of Timbuktu and other local officials, as well as imams of the region and MINUSMA representatives. Upon their return to Bamako, the members received a briefing from MINUSMA on security trends and threats in Mali and the Sahel and participated in a dinner reception attended by representatives of the Government, MINUSMA, political parties, the Platform, CMA, international financial institutions, international non-governmental organizations and the international community, including MINUSMA troop-contributing countries and the United Nations country team.

4. On 6 March in Bamako, the members of the Security Council were briefed, successively, by representatives of the French Operation Barkhane, the European Union military mission to contribute to the training of the Malian armed forces, the MINUSMA leadership and the international mediation team. They then held a meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and African Integration and representatives of the Ministry of Solidarity, Humanitarian Action and Reconstruction of the North, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and Family, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry for National Reconciliation, the Ministry of Security and Civil Protection and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. At MINUSMA headquarters, they met representatives of the Platform and CMA in a joint meeting, and MINUSMA, the United Nations country team and the extended troika of development partners in Mali hosted a lunch reception for the members. They also met the political parties of the presidential majority and, separately, opposition political parties. The members then met the President of Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and, after a press conference, participated in a dinner reception hosted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and African Integration.

C. Key issues raised

1. Meetings with the President and the Prime Minister

5. In his meeting with the members of the Security Council, the President of Mali recognized the need for the specific and speedy implementation of the peace agreement. He also noted the need to make compromises and reach consensus among all the parties based on a relationship of trust that needed to be strengthened and nurtured. He highlighted some of the recent steps taken to implement institutional reforms, such as the creation of two new regions in northern Mali and the launch of a constitutional reform process. He informed the Council of plans for the three signatories to the agreement, who had met in Bamako on 27 February, to develop and agree on, within the coming two months, a new timeline for the implementation of the agreement. On security sector reform, he explained that Mali was on the path of recovery and that, for the sustainability of peace and security, particular attention would need to be given to the strengthening of the armed forces,

including their training and equipment. While acknowledging the problem of corruption in Mali, he urged the international community to fulfil the pledges made at the high-level international conference for the economic recovery and development of Mali, held in Paris on 22 October 2015. He expressed his appreciation for the work of MINUSMA and his desire to jointly reflect on how the Mission could better address security threats. He called for an extensive review of the mandate of the Mission, including the strengthening of its capacities, so that it would be adapted to the current context, in which MINUSMA had become a prime target of terrorist attacks.

6. The Prime Minister highlighted that Malian expectations were high and that the success of the peace agreement would be measured through the specific improvement of living conditions. He noted the areas of progress and the actions of the Government for the further implementation of the agreement, adding that insecurity remained a significant obstacle. He deplored the numerous violent attacks against national and international forces in Mali and advocated additional support in the reform and strengthening of the armed forces. Regarding cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, delays in those processes could cause elements of the signatory armed groups to be tempted to join the ranks of terrorist groups, he said.

7. The members of the Security Council emphasized to the Prime Minister, as with the President and other government interlocutors, the need to implement the peace agreement concretely and speedily. They suggested a particular focus on decentralization and the interim administrative authorities in the north, local elections, cantonment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform, reconciliation and combating impunity.

2. Implementation of the peace agreement

8. In their discussions with the members of the Security Council, the CMA and Platform representatives highlighted the need for them and the Government to accelerate the implementation of the peace agreement. The members of the Council noted that the CMA and Platform armed groups appeared united, attending a single meeting with them. They handed to the members of the Council a joint assessment of the progress made and the challenges faced in the implementation of the peace agreement, highlighting the risk of further delays. The CMA and Platform representatives suggested that increasing the participation and representation of the Malian people in the peace process would not only contribute to reconciliation and advancement in the implementation of the agreement but also prevent radicalization and counter extremism.

9. The members of the international mediation team commended the progress made since the signing of the peace agreement, especially the cessation of hostilities between the signatories and the intercommunal reconciliation, while observing that the security situation had deteriorated owing to the increase, during the same period, in terrorist attacks. They called for the accelerated implementation of the agreement, with an emphasis on the political and security provisions, and warned against the apparent competition between armed groups supporting the agreement and terrorist groups fighting for the agreement not to be implemented.

10. The MINUSMA leadership discussed the recent call for the Mission to develop an exit strategy and the relevance of engaging with the Government on mutual

commitments. In that regard, the MINUSMA leadership stressed the importance of a clear division of labour based on comparative advantages towards the strengthening of the country's own capacity to address the political, security and development challenges that it was facing. The reconciliation meeting announced by the Government, CMA and the Platform, expected to be held in Kidal from 27 to 30 March, was seen by the MINUSMA leadership as a milestone and an opportunity to address, through a nationally owned initiative, challenges in the peace process.

11. The CMA and Platform representatives noted that the National Council on Security Sector Reform was of paramount importance, given that it would provide direction to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and integration processes for which political and institutional reforms were needed. The two coalitions of armed groups explained that, on the basis of past experience, without progress on security sector reform and further clarity on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and integration, further steps relating to the defence and security elements of the peace agreement would be difficult. Meanwhile, MINUSMA representatives stressed the importance of moving forward on security sector reform, including for the purpose of providing a strategic framework for the inclusion of former combatants into State institutions. They highlighted that, while many strands of security sector reform were already in progress, there remained a need for a broader and holistic vision encompassing and linking up those many strands.

12. In the area of army reform, the European Union military mission to contribute to the training of the Malian armed forces provided a briefing on its activities, including its assistance with the implementation of the military planning law, which was synchronized with those of other actors through the existing strategic and technical security sector reform coordination mechanisms. It also stressed that the future strengthening of the Malian armed forces would need to focus on leadership education and logistics.

13. Lastly, the CMA and the Platform representatives mentioned the reluctance of combatants to engage in a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in the absence of guarantees and commitments as to their future, including with regard to integration into State institutions. They also expressed concerns and reservations at engaging in the cantonment of their combatants while terrorist groups operated in the north of Mali with significant freedom of movement. Recognizing the challenges faced, members of the Security Council reiterated that it was important for the armed groups to provide lists of combatants, which was key to better preparing the cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes.

3. Security situation

14. Government representatives commented that the mandate of MINUSMA had to be adapted to the current context, in which transnational organized crime and terrorism were the main challenges. The members of the Security Council explained that the strategic review of MINUSMA would provide an analysis of the needs and recommendations on the way forward, including on the mitigation of security threats, which the Council would consider ahead of the renewal of the Mission's mandate. Government representatives also pointed to the need to consider the country's security in the broader context of the Sahel, especially given the

transnational nature of the security threats. They called for better cooperation and coordination with MINUSMA on security issues and for the establishment of a new counter-terrorism force to assist in efforts to combat terrorists in the north of Mali. The establishment of a specialized judicial unit on terrorism and transnational organized crime was highlighted as part of the efforts to tackle those threats.

15. Government representatives in Mopti mentioned the current efforts to deradicalize elements of terrorist groups and requested the assistance of the international community in that regard. Government interlocutors in Timbuktu highlighted insecurity as the priority issue, which persisted despite the implementation of mitigation measures and significantly impaired freedom of movement.

16. The CMA and the Platform representatives also commented on the spread of insecurity towards the central and southern parts of Mali, calling for all stakeholders to counter negative forces together. They added that their combatants were already engaged in efforts to combat terrorism and that, once integrated into State institutions, would foster those efforts. They deplored the delays in the implementation of the peace agreement, which they assessed as providing opportunities for terrorists to strengthen and better organize themselves. They added that, alongside military options, other approaches should be considered in countering negative forces in Mali.

17. MINUSMA representatives explained that the Mission was already contributing to efforts aimed at preventing or countering terrorism, including by building the capacity of Malian institutions and patrolling. They expressed the hope that Operation Barkhane would continue to operate until the threat of terrorism had been sufficiently reduced and Malian capacities sufficiently strengthened.

18. The representative of Operation Barkhane in Mali provided a briefing on its counter-terrorist activities and highlighted the challenge of distinguishing between the various compliant and non-compliant armed groups present in the north. The representative also highlighted the apparent desire of criminal and terrorist groups to destabilize the central area of Mali, including through increased attacks against the defence and security forces and thriving banditry. The representative also commended the realistic and efficient approach of the Group of Five for the Sahel in its actions to combat terrorism.

4. Women and peace and security

19. Women's groups that met the members of the Security Council described the very low participation of women in the peace negotiations in 2013 and 2014-2015 and in the institutions established to implement the peace agreement. They highlighted how discrimination against women was felt in their daily lives and also present in Malian legislative texts. The issues of women's access to justice, education and health, and of women's poverty, were highlighted.

5. Deployment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

20. Political parties of the presidential majority advocated the strengthening of the military and police capacities of MINUSMA in the areas in which they were currently deployed. They handed to the members of the Security Council a

document that contained an analysis of the implementation of the peace agreement, together with recommendations on the role and mandate of MINUSMA. Also highlighted therein was the deterioration of the security situation in Mali, with a call made for greater support from MINUSMA, especially in efforts to combat terrorism.

21. MINUSMA representatives highlighted the current difficulties in delivering on the Mission's existing mandate and on the overstretch of resources and assets, especially military. The multiplicity of tasks and continuous violent attacks against the Mission were limiting the ability of MINUSMA to implement its mandate, which most senior staff viewed as sufficiently robust, but there was a need for additional or improved resources and assets for the Mission to accomplish its tasks effectively. They stressed the need for deficits in training and equipment, in particular in terms of armoured vehicles, to be addressed urgently and to further enhance the capacities and assets of MINUSMA contingents. Lastly, they called for budgetary and administrative procedures deemed slow or ineffective to be reviewed in the light of their negative impact on the further operations and security of the Mission and its personnel.

22. MINUSMA representatives in Mopti and Timbuktu pointed to the dichotomy between the tasks given to the Mission and the resources allocated. The members of the Security Council noted the specific governance, security and development opportunities and challenges faced by the region of Mopti, which were characteristic of the issues at the heart of the mandate of MINUSMA. Those challenges included a deterioration in the security situation, owing mainly to terrorist attacks, criminal activities and intercommunal violence, and in the socioeconomic situation, as evidenced by a decrease in economic activities and the closure of almost a quarter of the schools.

D. Observations

23. The members of the Security Council noted the progress made in the implementation of the peace agreement, but called upon the signatory parties to implement it concretely and as swiftly as possible, with the support of the members of the Agreement Monitoring Committee. They supported the development by the parties of timelines for the implementation of the agreement, in coordination with Committee and other key partners.

24. The members of the Security Council expressed concern at the lack of inclusiveness of the peace process, especially with regard to the inclusion and representation of women, disenfranchised young people and individuals at risk of recruitment by negative forces. They expressed the belief that a more inclusive process was key to more sustainable solutions and reconciliation, and to averting further tensions or a relapse into conflict.

25. The members of the Security Council noted that, as part of the implementation of the peace agreement, the most pressing issues appeared to be related to decentralization and the interim administrative authorities in the north, local elections, cantonment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform, reconciliation, efforts to combat impunity, stabilization and counter-terrorism.

26. More specifically, the members of the Security Council strongly encouraged the signatory parties to the peace agreement and the country's partners to support further progress in the security sector reform, cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, which were highlighted by most interlocutors as crucial confidence-building and enabling processes linked to other aspects of the agreement. They recognized the political, institutional, governance, security, development and reconciliation deficits at the heart of the crisis in Mali and the contribution that the security sector reform, cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes could make to addressing some of those root causes.

27. The members of the Security Council took note of the ongoing strategic review of MINUSMA and looked forward to its findings and recommendations ahead of the discussions on the renewal of the Mission's mandate. In that context, they noted the calls by many stakeholders, including the Government, for a revision of the role, posture and capacities of MINUSMA to ensure that its direction, priorities, configuration, internal organization and strength and assets were adapted to the new environment.

28. The members of the Security Council supported the proposal for MINUSMA and the Government to agree on mutual commitments and a division of labour towards the strengthening of the country's capacity to address the political, security and development challenges.

29. The members of the Security Council expressed serious concern at the deterioration of the security situation, especially in the central and northern areas, and strongly condemned the violent attacks against civilians, government institutions, armed groups, MINUSMA and Operation Barkhane. In that context, they discussed the relevance of creating a more structured coalition against insecurity to better identify the contributions, comparative advantages, complementarity, coordination and information-sharing mechanisms for the actions of MINUSMA, Operation Barkhane, the Malian defence and security forces, CMA and the Platform to tackle insecurity.

30. The members of the Security Council also noted the deficits that MINUSMA contingents still suffered from and expressed commitment to ensuring that MINUSMA reached its full operational capacity, including in terms of training and equipment, without further delay.

31. The members of the Security Council noted the regional and transnational nature of many of the challenges facing Mali and expressed concern at the role that organized criminal and terrorist groups in Mali played in the destabilization of West Africa and the Sahel. They encouraged all stakeholders to continue and, if possible, increase their involvement in and support for regional and subregional mechanisms and processes, including the Group of Five for the Sahel and the Nouakchott Process on the enhancement of security cooperation and the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Saharan region, with a particular emphasis on information-sharing, border security and management and community-focused initiatives.

32. The members of the Security Council took note of the call for the fulfilment of the pledges made at the high-level international conference for the economic recovery and development of Mali, held on 22 October 2015, and called upon all

partners to honour those commitments without delay. They also encouraged the Government to make progress on the creation of dedicated strategies, funds and zones for the development of the north.

III. Guinea-Bissau

A. Background

33. This was the third Security Council mission to Guinea-Bissau since its previous visits, in 2003 and 2004, respectively. The primary purpose of the visit on 7 March 2016 was to meet and gather first-hand information from the main sovereign organs of the State and to deliver key messages to national stakeholders. The mission was also aimed at assessing the situation on the ground in a context of political tensions that had intensified since August 2015, with the dismissal of the first Government following the general elections of 2014. The visit provided an opportunity for the Council to express concern about the political tensions and to call for continued respect for the rule of law and the promotion of dialogue to resolve the political impasse.

B. Meetings in Bissau

34. The schedule of the mission altered as a result of the mission's delayed arrival owing to heavy fog. Upon their arrival in Bissau, the members of the Security Council received a briefing package on the security situation in the country from the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS). Thereafter, the delegation proceeded to the government palace, where the two co-leads briefly met the Prime Minister, Carlos Correia, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Artur Silva, before joining the rest of the delegation for a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister with several members of his Government, including the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Parliamentary Affairs, Defence, Justice, and Social Communication. The members subsequently met, separately, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Cipriano Cassamá; the President of the ruling African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC), Domingos Simões Pereira; and the Vice-President of the major opposition party, the Party for Social Renewal (PRS), Certorio Biote, on behalf of the party's President, who was abroad at the time of the meeting. The final meeting was held at the presidential palace with the President, José Mário Vaz. At the end of the visit, a press stakeout was held at the airport by the Permanent Representative of Angola to the United Nations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of UNIOGBIS, Miguel Trovoadá.

35. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General accompanied the members of the Security Council at all meetings. The planned encounters with civil society, members of the United Nations and the diplomatic corps had to be cancelled as a result of the delayed arrival of the mission in Bissau.

C. Key issues raised

1. Political situation

36. In their meetings with the national authorities and political parties, the members of the Security Council voiced their concern about the risks of continuing political instability in the country and expressed their full support for the authorities to resolve the political issues and ensure stability. They appealed to the main conflicting parties to make all efforts to resolve their political grievances and differences and show flexibility in doing so. They recalled the political and socioeconomic advances made following the successful general elections in 2014, which should not be reversed, including the pledges made by international partners at the international conference held in Brussels in March 2015.

37. The members of the Security Council called upon the President of Guinea-Bissau to keep in mind the regional implications of a continuing impasse. They requested him to finalize the formation of a complete cabinet by appointing the remaining two ministers, the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of Internal Administration. They also stressed the importance of respecting the rule of law to resolve the crisis, noting that politicians were also subject to the rule of law. They appealed to national stakeholders to reach a permanent agreement, through dialogue, towards an inclusive, functional government to implement key reforms, including in the defence, security and justice sectors. They also emphasized the benefits of political participation and multiparty systems in democratic processes.

38. The President expressed his commitment to overcoming all institutional challenges in the country and promoting reconciliation and the good functioning of State institutions. He was of the view that the current crisis was political in nature and therefore required a political solution. The legal path would only complement political efforts and should not be the sole approach. Relying on the courts alone would further undermine the situation and risk politicizing the judiciary. He gave assurances of his commitment to respecting the decisions of the judiciary, citing his acceptance of the ruling of the Supreme Court of Justice regarding the unconstitutional nature of the presidential decree appointing the third Vice-President of PAIGC, Baciro Djá, as the Prime Minister. Everyone had to abide by the law; no one was above the law.

39. The Prime Minister stressed that Guinea-Bissau had operated a multiparty system since 1994, with about 40 political parties. He recalled the semi-presidential nature of the political system, involving the President, the Head of Government and the Speaker of the National Assembly as among the main sovereign organs. Following its victory in the most recent legislative elections in 2014, with 57 seats, PAIGC had formed an inclusive Government, offering six cabinet positions to PRS and one each to the remaining three parties represented in the parliament. In that favourable context, the Government, the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme had co-hosted an international conference in support of Guinea-Bissau in Brussels 2015, at which donors had pledged \$1.2 billion in response to the Government's request for \$500 million.

40. However, that positive momentum had not precluded the dismissal by the President of the Government of Mr. Simões Pereira in August 2015. Subsequently, the President had taken a presidential initiative, appointing the third Vice-President of PAIGC as the new Prime Minister, without the approval of the party. The

Supreme Court of Justice had subsequently declared the presidential decree appointing Mr. Djá as unconstitutional. Consequently, following the resignation of the Prime Minister and his Government, the President had requested PAIGC to nominate another candidate. Mr. Correia, as the party's first Vice-President, had accepted the nomination and thereafter formed a new Government in October 2015. He concluded that, given that the National Assembly and the Government were functioning, currently there was no political crisis.

41. The Speaker of the National Assembly also denied that the country was going through a political crisis. He emphasized that the initial crisis had begun with the dismissal of the Government of Mr. Simões Pereira, against all expectations. He outlined the major political events following the dismissal, in particular, the appointment of Mr. Djá as Prime Minister, the above-mentioned decision of the Supreme Court of Justice, the debates at the National Assembly on the Government's programme and the situation of the 15 parliamentarians who had been expelled from PAIGC.

42. Furthermore, he deemed the incomplete nature of the Government of the Prime Minister a result of the "direct intervention" of the President, whom he blamed for being responsible for the impasse, adding that the President had wished to dismiss the current Government and exert executive power, in common with his counterparts in the subregion.

43. In the interest of time, the leader of PAIGC handed over the following documents to the members of the Security Council: the party's counterproposal to the President's draft political agreement, the party's initial observations on the proposed document and the party's correspondence on the consultation process. He recalled the inclusive approach of PAIGC following the elections in 2014, which had enabled the party to bring all political forces together in the Government and to promote concerted solutions to the country's problems. He highlighted that the main concern for his party was that the law should be respected and democratic and State institutions reinforced, thence the importance for national actors to abide by the decisions of the courts.

44. Members of the Security Council expressed the hope that national stakeholders would agree on a final solution to their problems, within the Constitution, to avoid an escalation of the situation and a negative impact on the population. They wondered whether PAIGC was ready to make a political compromise to that end.

45. The leader of PAIGC expressed his party's readiness to consider making the necessary compromise, including the formation of an inclusive Government with PRS, provided that all parties would abide by the law. For him, that PAIGC had accepted the dismissal of his Government was evidence that the party was acting in good faith and respecting the law and State institutions, as was the nomination of Mr. Correia for the position of Prime Minister instead of the party leader. He described his party's efforts to reach out to PRS and the President to discuss specific proposals. He called for the President to respect the outcome of the elections of 2014 and to allow PAIGC to lead the Government.

46. Speaking on behalf of the President of the party, the Vice-President of PRS noted that during the electoral process of 2014, his party had consistently promoted peace and stability and expressed its readiness to form an inclusive government in case of victory. Consequently, PRS had joined the inclusive Government of

Mr. Simões Pereira following the victory of PAIGC. He deplored the fact that PAIGC had not proposed a political agreement towards the formation of the Government of Mr. Correia and had allegedly sought to buy the conscience of members of PRS, instead. For that reason, PRS had not agreed to join the new Government.

47. For PRS, even though PAIGC was holding the presidency, the Government and the majority in the National Assembly, its internal divisions, which remained a chronic problem, were at the root of the current crisis. He emphasized his party's commitment to overcoming the impasse, while noting its willingness to have a political framework whereby PAIGC would rule the country as the party with the most votes in the legislative elections of 2014.

2. Situation at the National Assembly

48. The members of the Security Council praised national efforts to conduct successful elections where the people were able to freely express their votes to elect their representatives at the National Assembly, deserving the confidence of the international community.

49. The President of Guinea-Bissau stated that the non-approval of the Government's programme on 23 December had been the result of a severe crisis in the country. PAIGC had expelled 15 parliamentarians from the party and requested the National Assembly to remove their mandates and replace them with others who would vote in favour of the programme, which had been accepted by the Permanent Commission of the Assembly. The decision by the Commission to withdraw the parliamentary mandates had had a negative impact on the functioning of the parliament.

50. The Prime Minister spoke to justify the decision of the Permanent Commission to remove the parliamentary mandate of the 15 former PAIGC members, after the latter had joined PRS and abstained from voting in favour of the Government's programme in December 2015. According to the statutes of PAIGC, candidates in legislative elections were proposed and supported by the party. In addition, before doing so, they had to declare that they would accept the conditions of the party and support it. By deciding not to support the Government's programme, the 15 parliamentarians had lost both the party's support and membership. Furthermore, the electoral law did not provide for independent candidates in legislative elections.

51. The Speaker of the National Assembly stressed that, on the basis of the statutes of the National Assembly and the Constitution (copies of which he handed over to the members of the Security Council), the Assembly had sought the legal opinion of its ethical commission and thereafter concluded that the 15 parliamentarians were no longer meeting the eligibility requirements contained in the electoral law necessary to maintain their seats. He claimed that the President and the 15 expelled parliamentarians had enticed a judge of the Regional Court of Bissau to make a second ruling contradicting a previous decision of the same court in favour of PAIGC.

52. He recalled that the second debate on the Government's programme had been held on 18 January and been disrupted by the 15 former PAIGC members and PRS. The debate had eventually resumed on 28 January, with the adoption of the programme, in the absence of the above-mentioned 15 individuals and PRS.

53. He also indicated that, at the request of PAIGC, the National Assembly had created a commission of inquiry to investigate the veracity of the crimes, including corruption, nepotism and misuse of State revenue, alleged by the President. The report of the commission would be discussed at the next session of the Assembly. He alleged that the President was concerned that the commission would instead reveal his or his supporters' wrongdoing.

54. The PAIGC leader, for his part, observed that the competent institution to resolve the case of the 15 individuals was the Supreme Court of Justice. He suggested that, if the 15 former parliamentarians were committed to promoting peace and dialogue, they should go to court and present all their arguments to make their case. PAIGC could reconsider its position, should the 15 individuals so request and apologize for their actions.

55. The Vice-President of PRS underscored the key position of his party at the National Assembly with 41 seats. He justified his party's current standing at the Assembly, highlighting the alleged failure of the Prime Minister to meet the legal deadlines for submitting the Government's programme to a second vote. He added that PAIGC had lost the legal process in court and was not respecting the court decision.

3. Dialogue

56. The members of the Security Council consistently called for national stakeholders to remain committed to genuine political dialogue to resolve the impasse and deliver on the electoral promises made to the people of Guinea-Bissau.

57. The President of Guinea-Bissau informed the members about the consultation process that he had initiated, following a request from the Speaker of the National Assembly, to help to resolve the crisis. The consultations had involved all major stakeholders in the country, namely, the Assembly, political parties with and without parliamentary seats and civil society, and been held in the presence of the international community (the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union and the United Nations). In their wake, he had subsequently held several bilateral, consultative and joint meetings with the parties in conflict to reach an agreement towards governance stability until the completion of the current legislature. Consequently, he had proposed a draft parliamentary political agreement. All parties had commented on the draft, but their proposals had yet to be harmonized, as initially planned. He undertook to make all efforts to promote common understanding among national stakeholders and ensure stable governance.

58. The Speaker of the National Assembly stressed that, because the 15 former PAIGC militants had been expelled from the party, they lacked the institutional legitimacy necessary to participate alongside institutions in the consultation process launched by the President of Guinea-Bissau. PAIGC had already protested against the format of the consultations, requesting them to be held at the level of State institutions, including the Presidency, the Government and the Assembly. He insisted that he would not take part in any dialogue at the same level as the 15 expelled parliamentarians, and said that the President should have referred the case of those 15 individuals to the Supreme Court of Justice instead.

59. The leader of PAIGC reiterated his party's continued availability to engage in dialogue with political parties and other institutions to find a lasting solution to the current situation. In common with the Prime Minister and the Speaker, he rejected the format of the consultations promoted by the President, which should remain at the level of State institutions. Notwithstanding the situation, PAIGC had presented a counterproposal to the President's initial draft political agreement.

60. The Vice-President of PRS insisted on the need for profound national dialogue to bring Guinea-Bissau out of the crisis, and assured the members of the Security Council of his party's commitment to continuing to give priority to dialogue for the good of the country.

4. Security, transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, and human rights

61. The members of the Security Council underscored the possible negative consequences of the crisis on the security environment and the people of Guinea-Bissau, as well as the importance of improving the population's living conditions, while recalling the regional peace and security context. They insisted on the importance of patrolling the border to respond to the threat of transnational organized crime networks. They pointed to the risk of the worsening of transnational threats, such as drug trafficking, and even the possibility of extremist terrorist groups taking advantage of the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

62. The members of the Security Council reiterated their support for the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB), to contribute to enhancing security in the country. They also recalled the financial contribution of the European Union to secure the operationalization of ECOMIB.

63. The Prime Minister welcomed the support of ECOMIB and assured the members of the Security Council that his country was planning for the reform of the defence and security sectors, calling for the support of the international community in that regard. He underscored that a specific financial package would be necessary to secure the demobilization and reintegration phase of the reform. He insisted that the military were anxious and ready to demobilize and return to civilian life, provided that they received the funds promised.

64. The President of Guinea-Bissau praised his first year in office as having been free from gunshots, killings, beatings and arbitrary arrests. On the contrary, there had been freedom of speech and the press, with the military remaining away from the political sphere.

5. United Nations

65. The President emphasized the important role played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of UNIOGBIS and expressed thanks to him for his patience and facilitation efforts in the consultation process towards finding a solution to the crisis. He also welcomed the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of UNIOGBIS to contribute to the consolidation of the rule of law and democracy and the materialization of the security sector reform. He undertook to make all efforts to transform Guinea-Bissau into a productive partner of the United Nations. In that connection, he asked the members of the Council to consider the return of the country's armed forces to peacekeeping operations, a request also made by the Prime Minister.

66. The Speaker of the National Assembly also commended the Security Council for extending the mandate of UNIOGBIS and called for a redefinition of the mandate to enable the Office to promote the principles of democracy. He also suggested a more interventionist role for UNIOGBIS to implement mandated support to combat drug trafficking and violent extremism.

D. Observations

67. National stakeholders welcomed the visit of the members of the Security Council, which they viewed as a sign of the importance that the Council was attaching to Guinea-Bissau, as well as the Council's commitment to supporting the country's efforts towards stabilization.

68. The members of the Security Council observed that the parties were deeply divided and called upon them to give priority to dialogue in resolving their differences, in line with the country's laws and Constitution. They agreed that the problems of Guinea-Bissau must be solved by the people, highlighting the importance of respecting the rule of law, combating impunity and promoting accountability. Searching for lasting political stability should be a must for the national authorities in order to tackle the problems of the people and respond to their critical needs. That required the Government to play its executive role and the National Assembly to function in accordance with the law. While underscoring that the situation was fragile, the members of the Council acknowledged that, with patience, a commitment to seeking solutions and some flexibility, the political divergences among the political class and the organs of sovereignty could be solved.

IV. Senegal

A. Background

69. On 8 March 2016, the members of the Security Council visited Dakar on the final leg of their mission. The mission was led by the Permanent Representative of Angola to the United Nations. They held first a meeting with the leadership of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), then with the Senegal-based diplomatic corps, which included France (Senegal and the Gambia), China, the Russian Federation (Senegal and the Gambia), Japan (Senegal and the Gambia, Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau), Malaysia (Senegal and the Gambia, Cabo Verde and Burkina Faso), Spain (Senegal), Ukraine and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (several countries). Later, they met the President of Senegal, Macky Sall.

B. Meetings

70. The aim of the visit to UNOWAS was to exchange information on the political and security situation in West Africa and in the Sahel and to be briefed on the level of implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. The mission was further aimed at assessing the implementation of the decision (see [S/2016/89](#)) to merge the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel (OSES). The visit was an opportunity for the members of the Security Council to express their full support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa

and the Sahel and welcome the activities of UNOWAS in the framework of its mandate. The meeting with the diplomatic corps was aimed at exchanging information on peace and security challenges in the region and on the Council's visit to Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal.

71. In his remarks, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General described the situation in the subregion and the implementation of the UNOWAS mandate. He highlighted that security challenges and the international community response remained at the heart of the discussions in the region. He noted that, since his arrival at the head of UNOWA, he had witnessed the growing efforts aimed at improving regional coordination and cooperation, such as the African Union Peace and Security Architecture and the Group of Five for the Sahel. He said that there was a greater regional awareness of the vulnerabilities of the countries to terrorism and other security threats, which had fostered a common determination to unify forces.

72. Subsequently, the members of the Security Council held a meeting the President of Senegal in his capacity as Chair of ECOWAS. They interacted with him on the situation in West Africa, expressing interest in his evaluation of issues affecting the region, including the threat of terrorism. He shared his views on the situation in Mali and voiced the need to ensure the territorial integrity of the country. He suggested that MINUSMA should be empowered to perform its mandate in the light of the current violence affecting Mali.

73. Regarding terrorism, he emphasized the transnational nature of the problem and called for the combined efforts of all the international community to support work to combat terrorist groups in the region. He also noted the need for West African countries to develop their capacities to deal with that threat.

74. In response to a request for his views on resolving the crisis in Burundi and Guinea-Bissau, he said that the latter country's semi-presidential system was the main reason for the crisis, given that it had multiple sources of power. He suggested a constitutional review to resolve the situation in the future and urged the authorities to work together until the end of the term of office of the current President.

75. He also emphasized the role of ECOWAS in resolving the crisis in Guinea-Bissau and the financial difficulties facing ECOMIB, which was playing an important role in the maintenance of peace and security. He highlighted the danger of violence if ECOMIB were to leave Guinea-Bissau as a result of financial problems, saying that Senegal allocated an annual budget of \$20 million to support the Mission.

76. He explained that he had been in Burundi on 25 and 26 February as part of the high-level delegation of the African Union, which also comprised the Presidents of Ethiopia, Gabon, Mauritania and South Africa. They had asked the President of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, to conduct an inclusive dialogue with all Burundian stakeholders, including those who had left the country, and to release all political prisoners.

77. He noted the importance of the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, as facilitator of the inter-Burundian dialogue and of finding ways to reduce tensions with Rwanda. He said that the African Union should lead the negotiations in Burundi and would send 100 military observers and 100 human rights observers to the country after the refusal of the President to accept its proposal to dispatch an

African peacekeeping mission. He requested the Security Council to support the observer mission to Burundi.

C. Key issues raised

1. Elections

78. The Special Representative briefed the members on his good offices activities relating to the elections in Benin and the Niger and the continuing preparations in Cabo Verde. On the elections in Benin, he said that he had just returned from the country, where, after a peaceful campaign, the first round of the presidential elections had been successfully organized. The only contentious issue had been related to the voting cards to be used, given that the biometric cards for 2016 had not been distributed on time. He explained how, on behalf of international partners, including the African Union, ECOWAS, the Council of the Entente, present in Benin to monitor the elections, he had successfully led good offices consultations to resolve a contentious confusion between the Constitutional Court and the National Independent Electoral Commission on the issue. He would, in collaboration with other international partners, continue to carry out his good offices activities in view of the second round of elections on 29 March.

79. In relation to the Niger, he explained that the first round of elections had been held peacefully, notwithstanding the highly complicated situation in which one of the presidential candidates and a former Speaker of the parliament, Hama Amadou, was in prison on charges of trafficking in children. He noted that that matter was mainly legal and that Mr. Amadou's party had thus far exercised restraint and showed a great sense of responsibility. He added that the second round of the elections was scheduled for 20 March and he had a team on the ground and would continue his good offices in that regard. On Cabo Verde, he indicated that he would travel to Praia to meet the President and other key actors in the electoral process to encourage them in the peaceful organization of the elections on 20 March. On the political situation in Senegal, he stressed that Senegal enjoyed a well-deserved reputation as a solid democracy in Africa and that he was encouraging Senegalese actors to conduct a serene debate in view of the referendum of 20 March on constitutional reforms.

2. Terrorism and violent extremism

80. Concerning the security challenges posed by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin area, the Special Representative indicated that he and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa, Abdoulaye Bathily, had conducted a tour of countries affected by Boko Haram. In this connection, they had both visited the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Multinational Joint Task Force headquarters in N'Djamena, where they had been briefed on the progress in relation to the coordination of action among the countries concerned and on the level of deployment of troops. He highlighted that countries had even exceeded the African Union-designated level of 8,500 troops to be deployed for the Task Force. He noted that forces from Cameroon and Nigeria were working jointly to conduct cross-border operations against Boko Haram. He stated that he and the Special Representative for Central Africa had encouraged the States concerned to strengthen their unified front against the asymmetric warfare of Boko Haram and called for

synergy of efforts between the African Union and the Basin Commission with regard to access to resources. He highlighted that better coordination with the African Union was needed to ensure that international resources provided through it trickled down to the Task Force. A high-level consultative meeting in May would bring together the concerned countries. He strongly encouraged international partners to attend the meeting at the highest level.

81. Responding to the concerns voiced on the growing threat represented by terrorism and violent extremism in communities, he mentioned that at the root of violent extremism was the low level of socioeconomic development and opportunities. He highlighted that more mobilization was needed, as was currently done by United Nations country teams through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, to address social and economic marginalization and to provide support to communities affected by Boko Haram. He stressed that that would be the means of weakening the capacity of terrorists to build networks and to kill and destroy communities, given that Boko Haram appeared to receive support from everywhere, including from Al-Shabaab and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. He stressed that young people in areas affected by Boko Haram in northern Cameroon, north-eastern Nigeria, the southern Niger and Chad should be provided with more creative social and economic opportunities to open up those regions.

3. Merger of offices

82. Regarding the decision of the Security Council to merge UNOWA and OSES into UNOWAS, the Special Representative gave assurances that steps were being taken to move forward with the merger. A technical assessment team had just returned to New York and would continue to work on the draft recommendations that would be validated by the leadership of the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Field Support of the Secretariat, in consultation with the mission. He expected that in the coming weeks the new unified structure would be formally adopted. In the meantime, the team was already working towards the merger.

83. On the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, he informed the Security Council that a liaison cell to the Group of Five for the Sahel was being established in Nouakchott. He emphasized that the work would be continued in synergy on issues of governance and security resilience in the Sahel with other international partners, including the European Union, which also had its own Sahel strategy, and with the United Nations Development Programme. On efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism, he recognized that good initiatives were being undertaken by the countries concerned, but that resources were a challenge. He therefore called for renewed support from international partners.

84. On the impact of corruption on the development of countries in the region, he referred to the report of Transparency International, according to which the countries in West Africa were still ranked very low. He commended the efforts made by some countries, such as Nigeria, to combat corruption, stressing that the success of Nigeria would serve as an example for other countries and, given the importance of that country in the region, it would reverberate. At the regional level and through ECOWAS, there were some initiatives aimed at learning from one another's experiences, such as the example of the development of more transparent procurement processes.

4. Piracy

85. On piracy and maritime security, the Special Representative indicated that he and the Special Representative for Central Africa had attended a high-level meeting on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, held in Yaoundé in February. The meeting had brought together ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission and, among international partners, France, the European Union and the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea, to move forward with operationalizing the international coordination centre on the safety and security in the maritime area of Central and West Africa. At the continental level the African Union would organize a summit in Togo in October on maritime security to examine the adequate ways and means to curb criminal activities that constituted a serious breach of peace and security to navigation throughout the African maritime space, including in the Gulf of Guinea.

5. Operationalization of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security

86. Regarding the operationalization of resolution 1325 (2000) within the UNOWAS mandate, the Special Representative highlighted that women were continuously engaged in mediation and in peacebuilding efforts. He mentioned the annual open day that was focused on discussing the involvement of women on issues relating to development and peace in the region. In that regard, he stressed that UNOWA had worked with ECOWAS to train 32 women mediators across the region, and that discussions were continuing to engage with those women to support national initiatives and institutions in promoting peace, security and stability.

6. Regional role of Senegal

87. The diplomatic corps highlighted the strategic importance and positioning of Senegal in the region, which served as an example for its democratic institutions and its role in preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding in Africa. They pointed out that its specific religious system and culture of tolerance had made Senegal a stable country in a troubled region.

7. Political tensions in Guinea-Bissau

88. On the political crisis in Guinea-Bissau, the Special Representative mentioned the efforts made by the former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, the President of Guinea, Alpha Condé, and the President of Senegal in his capacity as Chair of ECOWAS. He stressed that the international community should remain engaged in Guinea-Bissau, given the regional implications of the political crisis.

D. Observations

89. The members of the Security Council commended the tireless and successful efforts at preventive diplomacy made by the Special Representative and his team and reiterated their support for UNOWAS. Notably, the representatives of Angola and France emphasized the importance of UNOWAS activities that represented a model for preventive diplomacy and reiterated that the presence of such an office was complementing the response of the Council to the threats posed by Boko Haram in the region.

90. The members of the Security Council acknowledged that they shared the same views and had the same messages on Mali and Guinea-Bissau, where they had spoken with a common voice. They were particularly pleased with the positive — albeit slower-than-anticipated — trend in the peace process in Mali that they had noticed. They stressed that, at the end of their mission, they were deeply concerned about the political stand-off in Guinea-Bissau and would remain seized of the question.

91. The members of the Security Council acknowledged that security threats in West Africa and the Sahel had to be dealt with from a perspective of regional conflict prevention. They noted that the multidimensional nature of the challenges faced by West Africa and the Sahel, especially transnational organized crime and terrorism, together with the root causes of those challenges, required the United Nations and the international community to adopt multidimensional and creative approaches, including for the strengthening of the rule of law and security institutions at the regional level. They stressed that economic development and social services should be made available to the population to contain the growing frustration that promoted terrorism and violent extremism. They also noted that efforts should be made to prevent Africa becoming similar to the Syrian Arab Republic or Iraq. They acknowledged that, despite the evident destabilizing effect from jihadist infiltrations coming not only from Libya, but also from Al-Shabaab from Somalia and the Sahel itself to Boko Haram, sufficient resources had not been mobilized to confront the level of threat.

Annex I

Composition of the Security Council mission to Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal

Ambassador Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins (Angola)

Mr. Zhao Yong (China)

Ambassador Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta (Egypt)

Ambassador Francois Delattre (France)

Ambassador Yoshifumi Okamura (Japan)

Ambassador Ramlan Bin Ibrahim (Malaysia)

Ambassador Phillip Taula (New Zealand)

Mr. Petr V. Iliichev (Russian Federation)

Ambassador Fodé Seck (Senegal)

Ambassador Román Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain)

Ambassador Volodymyr Yelchenko (Ukraine)

Ambassador Peter Wilson (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Ambassador David Pressman (United States of America)

Ambassador Luis Homero Bermúdez Alvarez (Uruguay)

Ambassador Henry Alfredo Suárez Moreno (Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of)

Annex II

Terms of reference of the Security Council mission to Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal, March 2016

Mission to Mali, 4 to 6 March 2016,

led by France and Senegal

References:

Security Council resolution 2227 (2015)

Security Council press statement of 12 January 2016 (SC/12198-APR/3300-PKO/555)

Effective implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali

1. To recall the primary responsibility of the Government of Mali, the Platform and Coordination armed groups for achieving lasting peace in Mali and to reaffirm its intention to facilitate, support and follow closely the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.
2. To welcome the first positive steps taken to implement the Agreement and to urge the Government of Mali, the Platform and Coordination armed groups to continue to engage constructively with sustained political will and in good faith to fully and effectively implement the Agreement without further delay.
3. To urge the Government of Mali, the Platform and Coordination armed groups to prioritize the implementation of key provisions of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali in order to bring concrete peace dividends to the populations of Mali and to urge them, in this regard, to take without delay the necessary measures to advance the deployment of joint security patrols in the North of Mali and the cantonment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed combatants, as well as the decentralization process, consistent with the provisions of the Agreement.
4. To reiterate the Security Council's full support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to support the Government of Mali, the Platform and Coordination armed groups in the implementation of the Agreement.
5. To reiterate the Security Council's request to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali, through his good offices mandate, to play a key role to support and oversee the implementation of the Agreement, notably by heading the secretariat of the Comité de suivi de l'Accord (CSA) and to assess the fulfilment by MINUSMA of its mandate to support the implementation of the Agreement, including the ceasefire arrangements and defence and security measures, and to exercise good offices and facilitation at the national and local levels.
6. To urge the Government of Mali, the Platform and Coordination armed groups to cooperate fully and to coordinate with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and MINUSMA, in particular on the implementation of the Agreement.

7. To reiterate its call on the members of the Comité de suivi de l'Accord and other relevant international partners to support the implementation of the Agreement and coordinate their efforts with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and MINUSMA, as well as to stress the need for clear, detailed and concrete oversight mechanisms to support the implementation of the Agreement.

8. To assess the capacities of Malian Defence and Security Forces and the contribution of international partners, including the European Union through its missions, the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) in Mali and the European Union Capacity Building Mission in Mali (EUCAP Sahel Mali), to provide training and advice to the Malian Defence and Security Forces.

9. To assess the contribution of Malian civil society, notably through women's organizations, in the Malian peace process and in the implementation of the Agreement, including through the actual representation and full and effective participation of women at all levels in the monitoring committees of the Agreement, as well as in the peace, reconciliation and electoral processes, in line with relevant Security Council resolutions and the minimum gender representation quota voted by Mali in 2015.

10. To assess the performance of MINUSMA to assist the Malian authorities to ensure that conflict-related violence, in particular sexual violence crimes, is taken into full account: (a) in the implementation of the peace agreement; (b) in the context of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform; (c) in any cease reverification mechanism; and (d) in any transitional justice arrangements.

11. To assess the performance of MINUSMA to provide specific protection for women and children, including through the monitoring and reporting of conflict-related sexual violence and grave violations against children by child protection advisers and women protection advisers, and to take into account gender considerations and child protection as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate.

Security situation

12. To receive a briefing on the security situation in Mali and in the Sahel region, to express the Security Council's concern about the security situation, including the expansion of terrorist and criminal activities into central and southern Mali, as well as its support to the French forces who support MINUSMA, and to stress that the full implementation of the Agreement can help to contribute to improving the security situation across Mali.

13. To assess the level of cooperation of Mali and countries in the region to tackle the terrorist threat in the Sahel region, in particular through the Group of Five for the Sahel, and to consider the prospects for further cooperation, including the African Union proposals for the establishment of a counter-terrorist force in Mali and in the region.

14. To assess the fulfilment by MINUSMA of its mandate to protect, without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the Malian authorities, civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.

15. To assess the fulfilment by MINUSMA of its mandate, in support of the Malian authorities, to stabilize the key population centres and other areas where

civilians are at risk, notably in the North of Mali, including through long-range patrols, and, in this context, to deter threats and take active steps to prevent the return of armed elements to those areas.

16. To stress the importance of ensuring adequate protection of MINUSMA personnel, in the light of the evolution of security threats MINUSMA faces, to effectively implement its mandate, to assess the level of equipment and training of MINUSMA personnel in this regard and to reiterate its call on the Secretary-General and all MINUSMA troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as bilateral donors, to continue their efforts to ensure that MINUSMA contingents have the necessary equipment and training to fulfil their mandate.

Peace dividends to the populations of Mali

17. To reiterate its call upon the Malian authorities to address immediate and long-term needs, encompassing security, governance reform, development and humanitarian issues, to resolve the crisis in Mali and to ensure that the Agreement translates into concrete benefits for the local populations, notably through the priority projects outlined in the Agreement.

18. To assess the impact of the Agreement on the living conditions of the populations of Mali, especially in the north, to assess the efforts of the Government of Mali to restore basic services to the populations in the north of Mali and to call for the immediate fulfilment of the commitments made during the International Conference for the Economic Recovery and Development of Mali, held on 22 October 2015 in Paris.

19. To assess the fulfilment by MINUSMA of its mandate, in support of the Malian authorities, to contribute to the creation of a secure environment for projects aimed at stabilizing the north of Mali, including quick-impact projects.

20. To assess the further need of institution-building and development projects with a view to consolidating the peace process.

21. To assess the fulfilment by MINUSMA of its mandate to support cultural preservation, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Visit to Guinea-Bissau, to be co-led by Senegal and Angola

1. The Security Council will carry out its mission to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, within the framework of Council resolution 2267 (2016), the press statement of 12 August 2015 (SC/12005-AFR/3195), the press statement of 14 August 2015 (SC/12007-AFR/3196) and the press statement of 21 September 2015 (SC/12054AFR/3212).

2. The Security Council will meet with the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, the Prime Minister and his government, the President of the Parliament and his Vice-President, leaders of the political parties with seats in the Parliament and leaders of the political parties without seats in the Parliament, as well as civil society organizations and the leadership of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), among others.

3. In line with the framework set out in paragraph 1 above, the Security Council will deliver the following messages:

(a) To express deep concern with the continuous rise of political tensions in Guinea-Bissau among the President, the Prime Minister, the Parliament and the heads of the political parties, which are blocking the country's progress;

(b) To make a strong appeal to the parties involved to respect the country's laws and Constitution while endeavouring to solve the current impasse;

(c) To reaffirm its strong commitment and respect for the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, unity and consolidation of peace in Guinea-Bissau;

(d) To call on leaders to seek dialogue and consensus in resolving the crisis in order to preserve the interests of the people of Guinea-Bissau;

(e) To call on the President to work with the Government to complete the appointments of ministers to head the only remaining ministries without leadership (Interior and Natural Resources);

(f) To stress that the judiciary should resolve the status of the 15 parliamentarians expelled from the ruling party and barred from their National Assembly seats;

(g) To invite the President to accept the Stability Pact facilitated by the United Nations as a tool for focusing dialogue and negotiation among political players as they build a framework for the proper functioning of government institutions;

(h) To commend the important efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and encourage the Community to continue extending its political support to the authorities and political leaders of Guinea-Bissau through the use of good offices and mediation (see Council resolution 2267 (2016), para. 8);

(i) To encourage ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) to take the necessary steps towards organizing a meeting of the International Contact Group on Guinea-Bissau, in consultation with the United Nations, the European Union and all stakeholders (see resolution 2267 (2016), para. 9) and, in that regard, to urge the Bissau-Guinean authorities to demonstrate the necessary commitment to re-establish momentum for progress in key areas (see resolution 2267 (2016), first part of paragraph 18);

(j) To reiterate its call for the non-interference of the army and security forces in the political situation;

(k) To commend the crucial role of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) in securing the state institutions and in supporting security sector reform, supports its continuation, in accordance with the expressed will of the authorities of Guinea-Bissau and urges bilateral, regional and international partners to consider providing financial assistance to support ECOWAS in sustaining the deployment of ECOMIB, as requested by the 48th ordinary session of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (see resolution 2267 (2016), para. 13);

(l) To deliver a clear message on the importance of maintaining peace and preventive diplomacy, and express the intention of the Security Council to follow the situation closely and respond appropriately in case the current situation becomes a threat to peace and security in Guinea-Bissau.

4. Council members will also perform the following tasks:

(a) To assess the consequences of the political tensions on the living conditions of the populations in Guinea-Bissau;

(b) To assess the progress achieved in the reforms sectors, such as in security sector reform, justice reforms, and so on;

(c) To assess the fulfilment by UNIOGBIS of its mandate, in support of the authorities of Guinea-Bissau, to contribute to the creation of a secure environment for the implementation of the priority projects aimed at stabilizing the country;

(d) To assess efforts made by the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to implement and review national legislation and mechanisms to more effectively combat transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking and money-laundering, which threaten security and stability in Guinea-Bissau and in the subregion (see resolution 2267 (2016), para. 15);

(e) To reiterate the Council's support for the key role and active engagement of Miguel Trovoada, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), including his good offices and close coordination with the international community;

(f) To reiterate the Council's support to the subregional, regional and international organizations that are actively engaged in the stabilization of Guinea-Bissau.

Visit to Senegal, to be led by Angola

I. Meeting with the Senegalese authorities

- Role as the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS):

References:

Security Council press statement of 15 January 2016 (SC/12207)

Presidential statement of 11 June 2015 (S/PRST/2015/12)

- To raise the political and security situation in West Africa and actions of goodwill and mediation undertaken by Senegal, including the African Union visit to Burundi and in view of the upcoming ECOWAS summit meeting to be held in mid-2016.
- To welcome the positive political developments in West Africa, in particular the holding of free and peaceful elections in Nigeria, Togo, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.

- To stress the importance of free, fair, peaceful, inclusive and credible presidential elections in the Niger, Benin, Cabo Verde, Ghana, the Gambia and Chad.
- To reiterate the Security Council’s strong condemnation of the recurrent terrorist threat in the region, in particular in Mali and the Sahel, as well as in the Lake Chad Basin region, notably by Boko Haram and to assess the efforts of ECOWAS and other regional organizations, including the Lake Chad Basin Commission, to combat the terrorist threats. To reiterate the need for the region to adopt a comprehensive approach in order to successfully tackle the threat presented by Boko Haram to the region.
- To express the support of the Council to encourage cooperation between ECOWAS, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the Lake Chad Basin Commission, and other relevant multilateral and regional organizations to assist the region to address its political and security challenges.
- To consider the presence of ECOWAS in Guinea-Bissau, particularly the future of ECOMIB.
- To discuss the preparation by ECOWAS of the meeting of the International Contact Group on Guinea-Bissau.

II. Meeting with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel

References: Presidential statement of 8 December 2015 (S/PRST/2015/24)

Letter dated 28 January 2016 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/89)

- To exchange views on the political and security situation in West Africa and in the Sahel region, including the preventative diplomacy engagement of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).
- To express its full support to the Special Representative and welcome the activities undertaken by UNOWAS in the areas of good offices, the enhancement of subregional capacities to address cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security, as well as the promotion of good governance, respect for the rule of law and human rights, and gender mainstreaming.
- To encourage the continued engagement of UNOWAS with regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Group of Five for the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Mano River Union, in order to promote peace and stability in West Africa and the Sahel region.
- **To reiterate its support to the Secretary-General to proceed with the full and immediate merger through a unified management and structure of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and the Office of the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Sahel.**

- To receive an update on the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and to encourage UNOWAS to make further progress towards the implementation of the strategy and to continue to work closely with the States of the region, including the Group of Five for the Sahel, to tackle the threats to peace, security and development in the Sahel, as well as their root causes.
 - To stress the efforts to strengthen subregional capacities to fight against cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security, promote good governance, the rule of law and human rights and take into account the gender issues.
-