



Security Council

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Letter dated 11 December 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the conclusions of the third ministerial meeting of the coordination platform on strategies for the Sahel (see annex), which was held in Bamako on 18 November 2014.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sékou **Kassé**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 11 December 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Third ministerial meeting of the coordination platform on strategies for the Sahel

Conclusions

[Bamako, 18 November 2014]

1. The third ministerial meeting of the coordination platform on strategies for the Sahel was held on 18 November 2014 at the Bamako International Conference Centre and was chaired by His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Diop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Integration and International Cooperation of the Republic of Mali, which currently holds the chairmanship of the Platform.
2. At the opening ceremony, a message from Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, was delivered by Ms. Hiroute Guebre Sellassie, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel. Statements were also made by Mr. Pierre Buyoya, High Representative of the African Union for Mali and the Sahel; Mr. Michel Reveyrand-de Menthon, European Union Special Representative for the Sahel; Mr. Najim Elhadj Mohamed, Permanent Secretary of the Group of Five for the Sahel; and His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Diop.
3. In addition to many representatives of Malian national institutions, the meeting was also attended by senior officials of the countries of the Sahelo-Saharan region and other States, as well as subregional, regional and international organizations, including financial institutions. Mr. David Gressly, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Acting Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA); Ambassador Ibrahim Bocar Ba, Commissioner for Macroeconomic Policy of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); and Mr. Aboudou Cheaka Touré, Special Representative of the President of the ECOWAS Commission in Mali, also participated in the meeting.
4. The participants marked the first anniversary of the launch of the Platform, which had taken place during the joint visit to the Sahel (Mali, the Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad), from 5 to 8 November 2013, of the United Nations Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Presidents of the African Development Bank and the World Bank, and the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development of the European Union, and commended those responsible for developing the initiative. They took note of the joint communiqué issued on 17 November 2014 by the representatives of the organizations that had taken part in the high-level visit, reaffirming the commitment of their respective institutions to the Sahel region.
5. The meeting provided an opportunity for the participants to review developments in the Sahel region since the second ministerial meeting of the Platform, held in Bamako on 16 May 2014, and to hold fruitful exchanges on the various strategies and initiatives for the Sahel. The participants welcomed the progress made by Mali in the context of the inter-Malian inclusive peace talks in

Algiers. In that regard, they commended all members of the mediation team, in particular Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania and the Niger, as well as the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations, and reiterated their support for them. They paid special tribute to Algeria, in its capacity as leader of the mediation team.

6. The participants strongly urged the Malian stakeholders, in particular the Government and the armed movements, to seize the opportunity offered by the peace process to find a negotiated and consensual solution to the current crisis, on the basis of respect for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Malian State, as well as its republican and secular nature. They underscored the need for the Malian parties to make every effort to maintain the climate of mutual trust necessary to bring all hostilities to a permanent end, as well as to continue and successfully conclude the negotiations under way.

7. The participants noted with dismay and strongly condemned the many terrorist attacks that had targeted MINUSMA troops and facilities in the north of Mali in recent weeks, and offered their deepest condolences to MINUSMA and to the families and Governments of the victims of those barbaric attacks, while welcoming their continued commitment to promoting peace and security in Mali. They renewed their support for MINUSMA, and noted the huge sacrifices made by its uniformed personnel in the fulfilment of its mandate. They called for greater international support for MINUSMA so that it could respond more effectively to the situation on the ground.

8. The participants welcomed the initiative taken by the Government of the Niger and its partners in convening a meeting of MINUSMA troop-contributing countries, on 5 November 2014, in Niamey, in order to identify ways and means of enabling MINUSMA to address the challenges it faced, and they urged all stakeholders to take the steps necessary to implement the recommendations made at that important meeting.

9. The participants expressed their deep concern at the persistent threat of terrorism and other forms of crime in the Sahelo-Saharan region, as seen in the recurring incidents in the north of Mali and in the Niger, as well as the attacks that the terrorist group Boko Haram continued to perpetrate in Nigeria and Cameroon. They also noted with concern the difficult political and security situation in Libya, underlining in particular the risks it posed to the stability of the entire region. They appealed to all Libyan stakeholders to focus on dialogue and the principles of tolerance in order to promote a political solution to the crisis, with respect for the country's unity and territorial integrity. They called on the countries of the region and the international community as a whole to take action to help Libya address the challenges that it faced. They expressed their support for the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya, Mr. Bernardino León, and those of neighbouring countries, in particular Algeria, Chad and Tunisia, to create conditions for dialogue among all Libyan parties, excluding recognized terrorist groups.

10. The participants strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and affirmed that Islam, as a religion of peace, moderation and tolerance, should in no way be associated with terrorist movements and their criminal acts, which posed a real threat to peace and security in the region and worldwide.

11. The participants took note of the resignation, on 31 October 2014, of Mr. Blaise Compaoré as Head of State of Burkina Faso. They expressed their solidarity with the people of Burkina Faso, recognizing their deep yearning for better systems of governance, based on democracy, the rule of law and respect for the Constitution. They commended the sense of responsibility demonstrated by the opposition, religious and traditional leaders, the army and members of civil society with regard to safeguarding the peace and stability of Burkina Faso. They expressed their agreement with the communiqués issued by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union following its 465th and 468th meetings on 3 and 18 November 2014, respectively, and with the conclusions of the Extraordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS held in Accra on 6 November 2014, and they called on the stakeholders of Burkina Faso, including the army, to join forces in order to bring the current crisis to a swift end, through an inclusive civilian-led transition process, with respect for the rule of law and the spirit of the Constitution. In that regard, they commended ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations for their unwavering and timely efforts, through tripartite mediation, to help the stakeholders in Burkina Faso to achieve a rapid solution to the crisis, and welcomed the consensual adoption of the transitional charter and the appointment of an interim president, Mr. Michel Kafando.

12. The participants expressed their grave concern at the spread of the epidemic caused by the Ebola virus, which threatened the whole of West Africa and the Sahel. They urged the States of the region and their partners to strengthen and coordinate their efforts to contain and eradicate this epidemic and manage its health, human, social and economic consequences.

13. The participants welcomed the international community's strong engagement and good intentions with respect to the countries and peoples of the Sahelo-Saharan region and reiterated their commitment to promoting cooperation by and coordination among all States of the region and achieving greater coherence among the various strategies and initiatives of regional and international organizations, including financial institutions, with a view to their effective and consistent implementation. In that regard, they were grateful to all the bilateral and multilateral partners that had already fulfilled their pledges to provide financial or material support for the countries and peoples of the Sahel and urged all others to meet their commitments as soon as possible.

14. The participants welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the road map developed by Mali in its capacity as Chair and commended the technical secretariat for its efforts in implementing its mandate and performing its activities as instructed by the Platform.

15. The participants particularly appreciated the secretariat's work in mapping strategies for the Sahel, with the technical support of three research centres, the African Governance Institute, the Institute for Security Studies and the European Centre for Development Policy Management, whose contribution they commended. They encouraged the secretariat to further develop its mapping work. The participants adopted the terms of reference of the Platform and those of the thematic groups, which had been prepared by the technical secretariat. They also endorsed the report on the activities of the technical secretariat, including the draft terms of reference for its physical office, and invited the various countries and institutions concerned to invest in the effective implementation of the thematic groups and the physical office before

the next meeting of the Platform. They expressed their deep gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Mali for the premises and equipment that it had undertaken to make available to the technical secretariat for its physical office.

16. The participants called on the technical secretariat to deepen its analysis of development issues and, in particular, issues relating to the most disadvantaged groups among the peoples of the Sahel.

17. The participants welcomed the significant progress made by the various partner organizations in the finalization and implementation of strategies, and encouraged them to continue those efforts.

18. The participants reiterated the need for the international partners of the Sahel to support the strategies, initiatives and programmes implemented by the States of the region themselves and underscored the importance of national ownership and the regional dimension in all initiatives for the Sahel. In that regard, they welcomed the participation of the Group of Five for the Sahel in the Platform, through the presence of its Permanent Secretary at the third meeting. They welcomed the Group's commitment to strengthening its links with the Platform and invited it to form part of the Platform and its technical secretariat.

19. The participants expressed their deep gratitude to the authorities and people of Mali for their warm welcome to all delegations and for the facilities made available, which had enabled the meeting to be held and ensured its success. They agreed to meet again in six months, under the chairmanship of the Republic of Mali, which would communicate the date of the meeting following consultations.
