

DIALOGUES

SECURITAIRES
DANS L'ESPACE
SAHELO - SAHARIEN

SECURITY CHALLENGES AND ISSUES IN THE SAHELO-SAHARAN REGION

THE MALI PERSPECTIVE

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FOREWORD

The recent Malian and Libyan crises have exacerbated the multidimensional insecurity (at personal, economic, political, social, environmental, healthcare, etc. levels) that affects the populations living the Sahelo-Saharan region, and have showcased not only the weakness of the States but also the necessity for regional cooperation, especially between the Maghreb and West Africa. Together, they may face up to similar challenges.

The project called "Dialogues about Security in the Sahelo-Saharan Region" stems from this observation. It was initiated by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Office in Mali, in partnership with its counterparts in Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia, in order to underscore the strong interdependences that exist between North and West Africa regarding security matters, and to promote national and sub-regional dialogues about the security challenges and issues that prevail within the States and across borders.

It aims at assessing the overall situation in the region, in light of the concept of human security. This is why country-based studies were conducted in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Chad and Tunisia. Each country-based study went through a validation process led by a committee of human security specialists from the country in question. Also, each country-based study was discussed by experts during a workshop that was organized for the purpose of not only identifying shared issues, but also agreeing on the top political actions that must be carried out in the Sahelo-Maghrebian region.

These country-based studies represent the first phase of an on-going multiyear project. They are also the intellectual basis on which some upcoming activities will be based, such as a regional conference that will focus on the priority issues that the experts have defined during their respective workshops.

The outcomes of the project will be used by all the key players involved in the various aspects of human security across the region. They will also be important sources of information and guidelines for the policy-makers and the members of the civil society, as well as for national and foreign researchers and university staff members.

Bamako, July 2016

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INTRODUCTION

The Sahelo-Saharan region is a major geopolitical and geostrategic concern in today's context of globalization. It represents the sum of extremely complex issues, and Mali lies right in the middle of such issues.

In fact, for the past thirty years or so, the country has been experiencing a noticeable rise in the number of security threats that have plagued the overall geopolitical and geostrategic parameters, and also impacted a good part of its geographic surrounding. These threats can be linked to various forms of urban and peri-urban criminal activities, conflicts between communities, and instability. They also include criminal activities across borders and organized crime, such as the trafficking of cigarettes, alcohol, fake drugs, weapons, human beings, rebellion, terrorism, etc. These threats, that are less and less predictable, have become sources of anxiety for the leaders and the People of Mali, of danger for the neighboring States, and of worries for the international community.

This study aims at analyzing the security challenges and issues that prevail in Mali. Here, the word "security" has a holistic meaning. It relates to human security, i.e., its meaning includes the economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political dimensions of security. The study is about conducting a precise, concise and concrete assessment of the situation, so its conclusions may be used as political and strategic guiding tools by national and international decision-makers. For this reason, the study is based essentially, but not exclusively, on qualitative research. It should facilitate the capitalizing of efforts with regard to using similar studies in order to provide a clear picture of the overall security situation in the Sahelo-Saharan region, as well as relevant solutions to the challenges that the Sahelo-Saharan peoples are confronted to.

In this regard, the study looks into the biggest challenges among the numerous risks, threats, vulnerabilities and fragilities that affect the country. It categorizes them into internal and external challenges, and it discusses, in a succinct manner, their causes and consequences. It tries also to identify the main State and non-State key players that are most involved in dealing with these challenges, before it examines the response of the Malian State to some challenges that have sub-regional, regional or international dimensions. Then, the study tries to determine what international cooperation may contribute, what strategic interests are at stake for Mali and some of its foreign partners, and whenever possible, it assesses the outcome of certain bilateral and multilateral strategies. Finally, after a global analysis of the situation, the study ends with some suggestions and recommendations, so as to contribute to the improvement of the security situation in Mali and in the Sahelo-Saharan region.

I. MAJOR SECURITY CHALLENGES IN MALI

The overall security situation, in its holistic sense, in Mali reveals some enormous shortcomings, abysmal irregularities, and considerable deficits that are highly detrimental to the standing of the nation. The country is, in fact, overexposed to a multitude of risks, threats, vulnerabilities and fragilities that impact considerably the current position, as well as the political, economic, social, cultural and confessional status of the country in the near future. These phenomena, that affect both the State institutions and the populations, constitute security challenges that must be dealt with. Some of them are exclusively internal in nature, while others are external in nature.

1.1 Internal challenges

The internal security threats can be associated to the following challenges in particular:

- Numerous criminal activities in urban and peri-urban sectors;
- Everlasting conflicts between communities and all the violence they generate¹;
- Religious conflicts (deviation, intolerance, conservatism, violent extremism);
- Inherent conflicts between customary/traditional and modern/State legal practices;
- Endemic unemployment, poverty, impoverishment, misery and sometimes the marginalization of some segments of the society;
- Social crisis (pressing demands from professional organizations);
- Illegal economic and financial activities (fake money, money laundering, illicit trafficking of artifacts and fake medicines, printing of fake documents, cyber-crime, etc.);
- Epidemics and pandemics, food and nutrition insecurity;
- Violations of human rights;
- Social injustice and a culture of undue leniency;
- Corruption, illegal economic and financial transactions;
- Plethora and proliferation of small arms and of small caliber weapons;
- Insecurity tied to the means of transportation (road, railroad and river boat);
- Natural disasters, drought, desertification and other effects of global warming;
- Illegal trafficking of drugs, weapons and human beings;
- Illegal migration;
- Rebellions, tribal and clan-based warfare in the northern part of the country, etc.

Though they are internal in nature, some of these challenges may easily expand beyond the borders of Mali and impact the surrounding area. This is due to the fact that it is a geographic and social continuum, to the porosity of the borders, and to the existing policy of free movement of persons and goods. The same thing can be said about conflicts between communities, rebellions, different types of trafficking in drugs, weapons and human beings.

1.2 External challenges

The external security threats can be associated to the following challenges, essentially:

¹ KORNIO Ousmane, *Gestion des conflits communautaires au Mali*, Bamako, Editions Friedrich Ebert, 2004.

- Transnational organized crime across borders: armed groups that came from elsewhere, and that are linked to the expansion of Salafist terrorism (foreign branches of AQMI, of Al Mourabitoune led by Mokhtar Belmokhtar), to the foreign component of illegal migration, to the foreign networks of drug, weapon and human being traffickers;
- Targeting of natural resources by external forces/companies, etc.

A fine analysis of these challenges reveals that some of them are vulnerabilities, and others are fragilities.

In the context of this study, the concept of vulnerability is tied to the weak points within the State system, to areas in which the State has failed and can hardly defend itself, where insecurity is caused altogether by internal and external threats of geographic, sociological, environmental, socioeconomic and political nature. This paradigm, which aims at the «Achilles' heel» of the Malian State, is of the interdisciplinary, polymorphous and polysemous kind. It refers to the likelihood of being subjected to a random risk, difficulty, deterioration, irregularity, dismantling, destabilization, destruction, partition or disappearance even. This concept of vulnerability also includes the potential, the possibility and even the capability to face up to the multiple challenges that have been identified. As such, vulnerability comes close to meaning resilience, but it does not merge with it.

This being said, Mali suffers from many vulnerabilities:

- **Vulnerability due to the immense size of the national territory** (1,241, 328 km²), to the distance it spans over (7,240 km) and to the porosity of the borders it shares with seven other countries. The surface area of the country and the limited logistical means available make it impossible to have an effective control over the territory and the borders. This makes it easy for many to engage in illicit and criminal activities;
- **Vulnerability due to the lack of qualified human resources and of adequate equipment for the security forces.** For example, the recommended ratio at world level is 1 security officer per 300 inhabitants, but in Mali, this ratio is 1 security officer per 3,000 inhabitants. The limited human resources available are heavily concentrated in the capital-city and other big towns. This leaves entire portions of the national territory without security infrastructure, and they become niches for all types of trafficking and for organized crime. The equipment and other logistical means do not always meet the needs and the international standards;
- **Vulnerability due to inadequate resources.** The forces available and sometimes the law are not always adequate, with regard to the new types of criminal activities: cybercrime, corruption, illegal economic and financial activities, money laundering, illegal funding of political parties, various types of trafficking, etc. Thus, the State and the citizens suffer from the consequences of such criminal activities;
- **Vulnerability due to the lack of an institutional framework** that facilitates cooperation and harmonization when it comes to the actions of the security and armed forces² ;
- **Vulnerability due to the lack a formalized framework** that coordinates the work of the key players involved in security matters: security and defense forces, public authorities, State administration, local authorities, private security companies, civil society, political parties, urban and rural communities, technical and financial partners, etc.;
- **Vulnerability due to the everlasting problem of conflicts between communities**, which damages social cohesion and weakens, or even destabilizes, the State system;
- **Vulnerability due to political instability** (coups d'état, pressure from the opposition political parties) and social instability (pressure from the unions, student organizations) that, like tectonic plates do, affects negatively the long term stability of political regimes, weakens the ability of the State to deal with adverse conditions, and so accentuates its destabilization;
- **Vulnerability due to the indifference of a large portion of the population, with regard to the huge security issues.** The authorities are sorry to notice that a large portion of the population does not get involved enough in the fight against insecurity and crime. The populations complain about the fact that security agencies do not consult them, except when

² Cf. MOULAYE Zeïni, NIAKATE Mahamadou, Gouvernance partagée de la sécurité: expérience malienne, Abuja, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, décembre 2011, 25 pages.

these agencies are in need of investigation leads, or only when a problem arises. When it comes to managing security issues, exclusion leads to the emergence of more threats.

Other challenges are fragilities, i.e., a state of physical and moral weakness that does not offer any warranty in terms of duration, reassurance, and so leads to a situation that is essentially precarious. These fragilities are also influenced by political, economic, social, socio-cultural, cultural factors, by the lack of a stable security environment that would allow one to enjoy fully all the fundamental human rights, by the weak ability of the State to assume fully all its responsibilities. Such cases are all contributing factors to the risks associated with internal and external threats, and to the pressures from external forces that covet our natural resources.

From this perspective, we will talk of just three well-known fragilities³:

The fragility of the State that manifests itself via:

- The declining of the authority of the State, and sometimes the total absence of the State, which gives the impression to citizens that the central authorities have abandoned them, and which leaves them as easy preys to the solicitudes of the criminal gangs;
- The lack of responses to social demands and the inability to provide basic services to communities across the entire country, which discredits and delegitimizes the State in the eyes of the population;
- The quasi-failure of the military to deal with the attacks led by terrorist groups, and the inability to provide basic security in parts of the northern region of the country, due to the presence of occupying narco-terrorists, irredentist war lords, and brigands;
- The conflict dynamics, especially in the northern region, that weaken the authority of the State, disrupt social cohesion, slow down the implementation process of the Peace Agreement signed on May 15th and on June 20th, 2015, and that aims at reconciliation, at restoring social cohesion and at reaffirming national unity.

The fragility of the ecological environment that shows through:

- Desertification, cyclical droughts and famines that often lead to social crisis, caused revolts in the past, heightened conflicts and helped the resurgence of rebellion in the northern region of the country;
- The impact of climate change on the populations in rural Mali, on social cohesion, and on economic stability.

The fragility of the system of governance that shows through:

- The lack of a comprehensive vision regarding the development of the country, effective planning, rigorous follow-up and perspectives that appeal to the populations, especially to the youth;
- The deficit in formulating a clear military doctrine, a formal policy in terms of internal security and of reforming the security sector. This has contributed greatly to the crumbling of the authority of the State and to the emerging of negative forces that destabilized the State institutions in 2012, disrupted social cohesion, and undermined national unity;
- The limited control exercised over religious doctrines. In this respect, it must be understood that the main argument of the Salafist jihadist terrorists being a confessional doctrine, the true answer to terrorism should be found at the doctrinal level then. Thus, one needs to invest in education, reinforce the intellectual abilities of the populations, provide appropriate tools to the youth. Furthermore, the Sunni scholars and Sufi Muslims must fight against the ideas spread by terrorists through exposing the contradictions that such ideas do represent at the doctrinal level⁴. Here is the key role of the Ulemas. With the assistance of community leaders, sensitization and awareness actions should be carried out, so people would reject the

³Regarding these three fragilities, cf. « Paix et sécurité en Afrique de l'Ouest: la CEDEAO à l'épreuve des attentes régionales » of Professor Massaer Diallo presented during the regional Conference about violent extremism and threats to security in central Sahel and West Africa, held in Niamey, Niger, on 22-24 April 2013.

⁴ Cf. AMGHAR Samir, *Le salafisme d'aujourd'hui, mouvements sectaires en Occident*, Paris, Editions Michalon, 2011, 284 pages.

notion of using violence as a means to conquer or to stay in power, to bring about political change or to get a new social position⁵, etc. When communities will understand the issues at stake and will be empowered, they will fight against insecurity and organized crime within the security framework that a shared system of governance does provide. This will be the most decisive combat, and a triumph that will ensure the best and lasting security conditions for all to enjoy.

As one may notice, the security challenges are numerous and diverse in Mali. Though they may be nuanced and their impacts may be kept in perspective, they continue to be incapacitating factors when it comes to the development of the country. In fact, insecurity is a dissuading factor for investors. It runs counter to development, which is first and foremost about investment.

Surely, the overall situation of Mali today is better than the situation in 2012-2013, but vulnerabilities, fragilities and deficits in the governance system do persist. They sometimes have devastating effects on the political, economic, social, cultural and confessional contexts and on the internal and external credibility of the country.

1.3 Causes and consequences of insecurity and of criminal activities

1.3.1. Causes

Opinion polls that were conducted in 2015 by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), during the fifth edition of the "Mali-mètre" project, showed that the majority of people who participated to the polling would have liked the fight against the unemployment of young people (56%), and against corruption and injustice (52.2%) to be the top priorities for the Government. These issues are, without any doubt, the security concerns of the moment. It is true that, in Mali, injustice is highly visible, corruption is endemic and unemployment gets thousands of young people to take part in revolts only so they feel validated, or in delinquency acts, violence, and sometimes illegal migration and organized crime.

Apart from the individual cases, the Malian State also suffers from an asphyxiating debt. It faces the diktat of globalization, the pressures and ambitions to dominate from coveting forces based outside the country, the ferocious competition between the powerful countries about accessing the country's natural resources, the over-exploitation of its limited natural resources by voracious multinational corporations. One must also mention the lack of economic opportunities, with regard to adding value to the resources of the country, and to the egoistic attitude of financially rich countries and well-endowed institutions that have reduced drastically the public funds they allocate to assistance and development programs.

However, it must also be said honestly that Mali has suffered for a long time, and continues to suffer, from a bad system of governance in which counterproductive policies sometimes predominate, and from a corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy, with leaders who care little about the national interest and good governance, a plethora of careerists, and a proliferation of opportunists who are solely interested in making money quickly, who gravitate around the center of the power, and sometimes take it hostage. The country continues to suffer also from a spectacular collapse of the education and training systems, a structural depletion of the State, an on-going impoverishment of the populations⁶, etc.

These factors represent challenges to be met. They have enormous effects on the political, economic, social, cultural and ecological contexts within the country.

1.3.2. Consequences

Insecurity and crime are scourges that slow down the overall development of the country and block regional integration. They have an impact, due to their transversal nature, on the standing of the entire nation.

The consequences at the political and economic levels:

The impact of insecurity and crime on the political context is undeniable. It shows as forms of corruption and large scale use of 'dirty money' in order to secure state contracts, to buy votes during elections, to recruit thugs, militias or even armed groups and private armies. Naturally, this contributes to the surging of violence in the political arena. Some unscrupulous politicians even fall in with all kinds of traffickers, who then rely on such politicians to further their dirty business interests.

⁵ COLLECTIF, *Instabilité institutionnelle et sécurité humaine*, Dakar, Editions Gorée Institute, 2012, 362 pages.

⁶ Société civile et gouvernance de la sécurité, Bamako, Coopération technique belge, 2007, page 14.

These politicians, who are always in need of money, prestige and top-raking positions in the State system, often become the puppets of the mafia networks that fund their campaigns and secure their places within the institutions of the Republic.

None of the West African countries is free from the impacts of organized crime, because the mafia networks transcend borders and operate in flexible and subtle manners. Here is a recent example: On February 1st, 2016, the authorities in Mauritania seized two tons of cocaine that were hidden in a touristic camp located 200 km north-west of Nouakchott by the Atlantic Ocean, and from where the illicit drug was likely to be shipped to Europe by sea. Among the arrested drug traffickers, there were Mauritians, Algerians, Senegalese, Western Saharans and ... Malians⁷. The traffickers often hide behind fake names and commercial titles that one would deem above suspicion at first. Crime money that is generated through diverse illicit means, including ransoms collected from the kidnapping of hostages, is generally recycled into the economic system (buildings in the cities, livestock in the rural areas).

The criminals sometimes affect a portion of this crime money to what is now called « moral laundering» (sponsoring of sport or humanitarian activities, building mosques, churches or schools). The large scale of organized crime may be explained by a culture of impunity, a weak riposte from the State that could be likened to a lack of political will⁸.

The financial might/influence of narco-traffickers and terrorists is such that they are capable of destabilizing a Government, remove a regime from power, place their puppets within State institutions, create a conflict, fund a rebellion, dismantle given economic sectors, or destroy social structures and fundamental values in a country.

Obviously, one cannot build a country with 'dirty money'. Criminal activities weaken both the economy and the institutions of the country. This situation is worrisome due to the fact that, in the northern region of Mali in particular, a process of hybridization has often created very strong ties between the key players involved in organized crime and terrorist networks with the traffickers in illicit drugs, arms, and clandestine migration.

The consequences at the social and cultural levels:

Some young people participate in the trafficking and the consumption of illegal drugs, a phenomenon that is dismantling the structure of Malian society. Already the victims of structural poverty in their social milieu, thousands of illiterate, irresponsible, and unemployed young people live in the streets of our towns and villages, roam the sandy footpaths across the desert and fall easily prey to the mafia networks. For the past ten years, dozens if not hundreds of young Malians lost their lives to illegal migration, as victims of the trafficking in human beings. Also, the violent eruption on the religious scene of Salafism, in 2012, represented a real shock or even a trauma for many Malians.

The political and religious leaders must pay close attention to the evolution of the faith movements in the country, to their impacts and to their contributions, with regard to the political changes that took place in the last twenty years⁹. The battle cry has not resounded yet, but it is certain that, from a strict doctrinal point of view, the type of Salafism¹⁰ that was advocated by the jihadists who invaded northern Mali in 2012 runs counter to the type of Sufism that is most practiced in the country. If the religious leaders do not initiate a doctrinal debate at this particular moment, so the political leaders may delineate/understand its contours clearly, there is a risk that the cultural context, singularly the confessional arena, catches on fire one day and becomes a battlefield for opposing Sufi and Salafist Muslims, Sunni Islam and Shia Islam, etc. Also, the aggressive proselytizing of all types that Evangelical churches with ties to the United States have been leading for the past twenty years could irritate Catholics and Muslims alike, and add to the prevailing level of violence.

The consequences at the governance level:

In Mali, the impact of insecurity and crime on governance was strongly felt in the 2000's. Indeed, the year 2003, which coincides strangely with the ending of the negotiations that led to the liberation of 33 German and Austrian hostages mostly, became a post-sign of a decline in the quality of governance in the country. These hostages were kidnapped in Algeria, but were set free in northern Mali. Considered a safe haven then, kidnapers of hostages developed in Mali a so-called « industrie

⁷ Information provided by VOA (Voice of America).

⁸ « La drogue au coeur du pouvoir ATT: la véritable raison de sa chute. Comment le Qatar et l'Arabie Saoudite sont-ils devenus les parrains de la rébellion au Mali ? », L'Inter de Bamako, 6 mai 2013.

⁹ MOULAYE Zeini, La problématique de la criminalité transfrontalière et le contrôle démocratique du secteur de la sécurité, Bamako, Editions Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, février 2014, p. 11.

¹⁰ AMGHAR Samir, Le salafisme d'aujourd'hui, Paris, Éditions Michalon, 2011, 284 pages.

du rapt »¹¹. The hostage takers and their accomplices received millions of euros and dollars in order to set the hostages free¹², and it seems the regime in place at the time benefited from this situation through kick-backs paid to intermediaries and to some political decision-makers, undue influence and corruption. The personal involvement of the Head of State and of some national and local leaders in negotiating the liberation of the hostages leads one to think that the quality of governance was negatively affected afterwards. During the same period, one could observe a high degree of leniency when it came to facing up to traffickers of all sorts, and even terrorists who blithely crossed the border with Algeria in order to settle down in northern Mali. Twaregs who came from Libya with quantities of arms and ammunitions, in the aftermath of the killing of Colonel Kadhafi, were warmly welcomed by the central authorities before they would merge with the groups of rebels and jihadists, and turn their weapons against the People and the Republic of Mali.

1.4 Key players most involved in the fight against insecurity and crime

1.4.1. Key players at State level:

The institutions that are most involved in handling the security sector are essentially the President of the Republic, the Government, the National Assembly and the Haut Conseil des Collectivités Territoriales, or High Council of Territorial Authorities. The most involved bodies are the security and armed forces (Direction Générale de la Police, Direction Générale de la Gendarmerie, Direction Nationale de la Protection Civile, État-major de la Garde Nationale), the local authorities (governors, préfets, mayors). Other bodies, that are not necessarily tied to the security services, do intervene in the field. This is the case, in particular, of the Commission Nationale de Lutte contre la Prolifération des Armes Légères, or National Commission against the Proliferation of Small and small caliber Weapons, and of community-based organizations that deal with peace, security and human rights issues. The roles and responsibilities of these institutions, executive bodies and others are defined in a number of documents like laws, decrees, ministerial orders or administrative decisions. Given the changes that took place in recent years, non-governmental key players have also appeared on the security scene.

1.4.2. Non-governmental key players

- **Private security companies:** These private companies proliferated, starting from March 1991 essentially. That year, a popular uprising led to the dismantling of some security services because they were seen as the tools used by the military regime to suppress the popular will. Completely overwhelmed and without appropriate means, leadership and political support, these security agents abandoned their jobs/positions. This situation led some State institutions, the diplomatic missions and even some regular citizens to rely on the services of private security companies in terms of surveillance, night-watch, transport of funds, and protection of people. Today, there are numerous companies. They are regulated by a presidential decree¹³ and several ministerial decisions¹⁴. These texts organize their activities and try to harmonize them with the missions that the Constitution prescribes to the national security services.

- **Community-based organizations:** Today, there are many community-based organizations, relatively speaking, that deal with security, peace, and human rights issues. However, for a long time, the collaboration efforts between security bodies and civil society organizations were marred with suspicion and mutual distrust, or hostility even. In fact, the security forces have always considered that security matters should be their exclusive domain, and civilians should not be involved in it.

Ten years ago or so, there was no direct collaboration, each side being suspicious of the other. However, since the beginning of the democratization process and of the training sessions about human rights in the context of reforming the security sector, the relations between civilians and the military have improved. Also, the painful events of 2012 and 2013, the invasion of northern Mali by rebellious and obscurantist forces, the terrorist acts that occurred in the central and southern parts of

¹¹ DANIEL Serge

¹² « La drogue au cœur du pouvoir ATT : la véritable raison de sa chute. Comment le Qatar et l'Arabie Saoudite sont-ils devenus les parrains de la rébellion au Mali ? », L'Inter de Bamako, 6 mai 2013.

¹³ Décret N° 96-064/P-RM du 29 février 1996 portant réglementation des activités des entreprises privées de surveillance, de gardiennage, de transport de fonds et de protection de personnes.

¹⁴ Arrêté N° 96-00620/MATS/SG of 19 April 1996 ; Arrêté N° 96-00621-MATS/SG of 19 April 1996 ; Arrêté N° 96-0565-MATS/SG of 15 April 1996.

the country demonstrated that the civil society also has a role to play in managing security issues¹⁵, particularly when it comes to informing, sensitizing and educating local communities. There is no doubt that in implementing the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation, its institutional and security dimensions will create new relations between civilians and the military that will break the wall of distrust and create a synergy of actions for a safer and more peaceful Mali.

• **Taking gender into account:** It is well known that one of the main demands formulated by the civil society, and women in particular, is the chance to exercise fully their citizenship rights. From this point of view, the active and effective participation of women to the governance of the security sector could be considered as the pinnacle of the democratization process in Mali. If insecurity seems like a brake/hold on the development of the country, gender equity does represent an essential indicator of peace and security, a contrario. This was underscored in Resolution 1325 of the Security Council of the United Nations. Experience shows that the contributions made by women benefit the entire population, and improve the peace and security situations. Thus, the State authorities, security and armed forces, civil society, political groups, local authorities, and communities must all take gender into account, with regard to the governance of peace and security. This was recommended in the conclusions of the États Généraux, or National Convention on Security, too.

To achieve this goal, the recommended strategy regarding gender is about giving a bigger role to women and about reinforcing their individual and collective abilities, when it comes to handling security matters.

1.4.3. Key players most involved in insecurity and crime

Among the non-State key players, one cannot ignore the people who caused insecurity and who organized criminal activities. They are many. We will refer to the most harmful to society, and the best organized criminal networks.

Out of these groups, four are relatively tied to each other. They are:

Groups tied to organized crime:

- **Al Qaïda au Maghreb Islamique (AQMI)**, or Al Qaida in Islamic Maghreb. The first terrorist group to settle in northern Mali, it grew from about 20 members in the early 2000's to more than 300 members in 2012. Much weakened after the forceful interventions of the French troops in the context of the Serval and Barkhane missions, its membership is reduced today to a few dozens of Mauritians and Malians principally. AQMI has lost almost all its leaders in Mali, especially Abou Zeïd. One of its first members is Mokhtar Belmokhtar. He has created in 2013 a splinter movement called Al-Mourabitoune, and has resettled in Libya, it seems.
- **Al-Mourabitoune.** It was founded by Mokhtar Belmokhtar when he fell in disgrace in AQMI, and when the supreme chief of the terrorist movement, Abdelmalek Droukdel, favored Abou Zeïd in directing the affairs of the organization in the Sahel region. In the case of Mali, Al-Mourabitoune claimed that it has carried out the following terrorist acts: a suicide attack near Gao that caused the death of a French soldier, on July 14th, 2014, a date that commemorates the French Independence Day; the first terrorist attack in Bamako, on March 7th, 2015, that targeted Westerners at the Bar-restaurant « La Terrasse », during which five people lost their lives (3 Malians, 1 French and 1 Belgian); the attack on the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, on November 20th, 2015, during which 22 people died, including two terrorists; and more recently the attack of March 21st, 2016 on Hotel Nord-Sud, where the European Union Training Mission resides.
- **Ançar Eddine.** A terrorist group created by Iyad Ag Ghali¹⁶ in December 2011, it belongs to the Salafist movement and is affiliated to AQMI. For now, it is used only to fulfill the personal ambitions of its founder¹⁷. Its program and objectives are not very clear, but in July 2012, it has inflicted a blow to the Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad (MNL), or National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, a politico-military organization of

¹⁵ MOULAYE Zeïni (directeur), Société civile et gouvernance de la sécurité, Bamako, Coopération technique belge, 2007, 103 pages.

¹⁶ Iyad Ag Ghaly is a member of the prestigious tribe of the Ifoghas who reign over all the other Twareg in the area surrounding Kidal, especially in the Adrar mountains. Their current Amenokal (spiritual and temporal Chief) is Mohamed Intalla Ag Attaher Ag Illy. Iyad was trained in Libya, and belonged to the famous Green Legion of Mouammar Kadhafi. He is known as a brave warrior and a fine strategist. After he failed in his attempt to take over the leadership of Mouvement National de Libération de l'Azawad (MNL), he created, by the end of the year 2011, his own movement (Ançar Eddine) and became an ally of AQMI.

¹⁷ AG EGGLESS Mohamed, KONE Djibril, Le patriote et le Djihadiste, Bamako, Editions La Sahélienne, 2012, 30 pages.

Tamashek secessionists who launched violent attacks against the Government of Mali on January 17th, 2012. With the assistance of AQMI and MUJAO members, Iyad Ag Ghaly has attempted, in January 2013, to spread his influence over the south of the country, but he was stopped in his progression in Konna by French forces that have come to assist the Malian defense troops. On the ground, it has two allies that deepen his terrorist actions: the Front de Libération du Macina (FLM), or Masina Liberation Front, and the Mouvement pour l'Unité et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (MUJAO), or Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa.

- **Mouvement pour l'Unité et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (MUJAO)**. Its members come mostly from Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast). The MUJAO was meant to be the West African segment of AQMI. However, it became just a subsidiary branch of Ançar-Eddine and AQMI, their armed and zealous executioner of the most violent type of Sharia¹⁸ during the occupation of the northern region of Mali, and particularly when the terrorist groups ruled the towns of Gao and Tombouctou (Tinbuktu)¹⁹. It grouped mostly traffickers of all types who, in a very opportunistic and circumstantial manner, affiliated themselves to AQMI, in order to preserve their « illicit affairs ». Its creation seemed to be an answer to two questions that preoccupied AQMI then: First, how to set a clear demarcation between the original AQMI and the new affiliates, and second, how to use the new affiliates as a springboard to widen the influence of the terrorist movement in Mali and across West Africa.

Rebel movements

- **Coordination des Mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA)**, or Coordination of Azawad Movements. It is a politico-military alliance that was created on May 9th, 2014 in Algiers. It groups the Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad (MNLA) or National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, the Haut Conseil pour l'Unité de l'Azawad (HCUA) or High Council for the Unity of Azawad, a branch of the Mouvement Arabe de l'Azawad (MAA) or Arab Movement of Azawad, the Coalition du Peuple pour l'Azawad (CPA) or People's Coalition for Azawad, and a branch of the Coordination des Mouvements et Front Patriotique de Résistance (CM-FPR2).

- **MNLA** was created on October 16th, 2011 in Zakak, in the administrative region of Kidal, from the merging of the Mouvement National de l'Azawad (MNA) and of the Mouvement Touareg du Nord Mali (MTNM). These two movements held meetings from the 7th to the 15th of October 2011 in order to create a politico-military Twareg organization. This coming together was a consequence of the Libyan crisis.

Indeed, after the killing of Colonel Kadhafi, on October 20th, 2011, the situation turns quickly for the worst. The Twaregs who had been serving in the Libyan army, for many decades in some cases, and those who were called to the rescue by the Libyan regime after the 2011 NATO-led aggression had started, took huge quantities of arms and ammunitions in the now open depots of Colonel Kadhafi, then run with their families back to the ancestral land of Mali. Warmly welcomed by the regime of General Amadou Toumani Touré, who thought he could use them to fight terrorism, they rallied other Twaregs from the region, especially the members of the Mouvement Touareg du Nord Mali (MTNM), in order to constitute the MNLA. The goal of this movement is to secure the autonomy, or even the independence, of Azawad, an imaginary space that the movement makes correspond with the three administrative regions of the Malian North (Tombouctou, Gao and Kidal), and to which it tends to add the administrative Cercle (county) of Douentza, in the region of Mopti.

Its motus operendi is armed conflict, media propaganda, mobilizing all the Twaregs in the Sahel as well as Berbers from North Africa. It has established ties with the HCUA and Ançar-Eddine. It has the support of former military men who served in the now disbanded Libyan army, of deserting Twaregs who were integrated previously into the armed forces of Mali, of some intellectuals among the Twareg diaspora in Europe, mostly in France. Its main leaders are: Bilal Ag Achérif, Mahamadou

¹⁸ Several summary trials and executions were conducted by this violent group that amputated the hands and feet of some young people accused of stealing, and whipped other persons accused of committing adultery, etc. Organizations that promote human rights, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have published damning reports on this subject.

¹⁹ AG MOHAMED Houday, Tombouctou 2012 : la ville sainte dans les ténèbres du jihadisme, Bamako, Editions La Ruche à Livres, 2012, 197 pages.

Djéri Maiga, Mohamed Ag Najim, Moussa Ag Acharatoumane, Nina Wallet Intalou, Moussa Ag Assarid, Hamma Ag Sidi, Mossa Ag Attaher. As time went on, the personal ambitions of these leaders led to clashes, and the MNLA went through a first scission that led to the creation of the Coalition pour le Peuple de l'Azawad (CPA) under the leadership of Ibrahim Ag Mohamed Assaleh and Mohamed Ousmane Ag Mohamedoune. Then, there was a second scission that occurred under the leadership of an ex-Colonel of the Malian army by the name of Hassane Ag Medhi, also known as « Jimmy-le-Rebelle », who created the Front Populaire de l'Azawad (FPA). These two movements have very much weakened the MNLA due the defection of hundreds of combatants. But the ultimate blow to the MNLA came from the newly created Haut Conseil pour l'Unité de l'Azawad (HCUA).

- **HCUA** was created on May 19th, 2013 by the reigning family mostly of the powerful Ifhogas tribe, i.e., the current Amenokal (traditional chief of the Twaregs of Kidal), Mohamed Ag Intalla, who serves as President, and his younger brother, Al Ghabass Ag Intallah, who serves as Secretary General. Called initially the Mouvement Islamique de l'Azawad (MIA) or Islamic Movement of Azawad, it became the Haut Conseil de l'Azawad or High Council of Azawad, then the Haut Conseil pour l'Unité de l'Azawad (HCUA) or High Council for the Unity of Azawad.

A political but non-separatist organization that seems to support the cause of moderate Islam, it was created out of the will of some Twaregs to solve the crisis through pacific means. Indeed, on May 2nd, 2013, some representatives of the Twareg communities, under the leadership of Mohamed Ag Intalla, rejected armed conflict as an option and decided to engage in a dialogue in order to come up with a negotiated political solution to the crisis that is affecting the country. They created the HCUA. It operates within the region of Kidal essentially. Its main leaders are: Amenokal Mohamed Ag Intalla, traditional Chief of Ifoghas Twaregs, and his younger brother, Alghabass Ag Intalla, who dismantled his own organization called the Mouvement Islamique de l'Azawad (MIA) in order to join the HCUA. The reigning family of the region of Kidal took the crème/cream of MNLA with her then, and included these people in the negotiation process that started in June 2013 in Ouagadougou. In July 2013, Alghabass Ag Intalla, the Secretary General of the HCUA, led a delegation of about thirty representatives of MNLA, MAA and HCUA to Algiers to take part in the negotiations that ended with the signing of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, one year later.

- **Coalition du Peuple pour l'Azawad (CPA)** or People's Coalition for Azawad. It is an alliance between dissident members of MNLA and Mouvement Arabe de l'Azawad (MAA) that was created on March 18th, 2014 in Hassi Labyad, a place that is located 350 km North-west of Tinbuktu, at the initiative of Ibrahim Ag Mohamed Assaleh, a former deputy/representative at the National Assembly of Mali and a former eminent leader of MNLA, who no longer agreed with the other leaders of this movement. They held divergent viewpoints with regard to the negotiations that the Government of Mali was proposing in order to achieve peace and reconciliation. After it was created, the CPA joined the Plateforme and participated eagerly to a campaign in favor of implementing the Ouagadougou Agreement and of pursuing the peace consolidation process. Its main leaders are Ibrahim Ag Mohamed Assaleh, Mohamed Ousmane Ag Mohamedoun and Souleymane Ag Akli.

In 2015, just before the signing of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the CPA got split into two factions: the first one was led by Ibrahim Ag Mohamed Assaleh, who later joined the CMA, and the second one was led by Mohamed Ousmane Ag Mohamedoun who had ties to the Plateforme, but did not become a member officially. This half-held position got Mohamed Ousmane Ag Mohamedoun to sign, on May 15th, 2015, the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (a signing that was contested immediately by the CMA). Following several goodwill missions, face-to-face meetings, mediation and reconciliation efforts, Ibrahim Ag Mohamed Assaleh and Mohamed Ousmane Ag Mohamedoun signed, on December 21st, 2015, in Bamako, a document that attested to the ending of all disagreements and to the re-establishing of the CPA, which would not be affiliated to the CMA or to the Plateforme. It seemed they wanted to participate to the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation on the basis of the principle of inclusion.

- **The splinter MAA.** It is a branch of the original MAA which had decided, for a variety of reasons, to adopt the thesis of the so-called « autonomists » or even « independentists » within the membership of CMA. It is led by Sidi Brahim Ould Sidati, the former mayor of Ber. He was delegated by the CMA, though he has only a limited influence within the organization, to sign the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation, on June 20th, 2015.

The self-defense groups

• **The Plateforme.** It is a conglomerate of politico-military self-defense groups that proclaimed their republican spirit and their being loyal to Mali. It counts some of the groups that were set up during the rebellion of the 1990's. Their objective, as in the cases of the separatist rebels and of the islamists, is to participate in the peace process while preserving the interests of the populations they defend. They want to benefit from the dividends of such operations as humanitarian assistance and recruitments by the army, the security services and the State administration via the Disarmament, Demobilization and socioeconomic/professional Reinsertion program (DDR).

The outcome of an initiative launched in June 2013, while the Ouagadougou Agreement was still on the way, the Plateforme was created formally in June 2014, in light of the then upcoming all-inclusive negotiations to be conducted in Algiers by the various Malian stakeholders. The aim was then, for several self-defense groups from a number of towns in northern Mali, to come together and harmonize their positions in order to better defend their interests. It includes four armed groups essentially: the Mouvement Arabe de l'Azawad (MAA originel) or original Arab Movement of Azawad, the Coordination des Mouvements et Forces Patriotiques de Résistance (CM-FPR originel) or original Coordination of the Patriotic Movements and Forces of Resistance, the Groupe d'Autodéfense Touareg Imghad et Alliés (GATIA) or Self-defense Group of Imghad Twaregs and Allies, and the Coalition du Peuple de l'Azawad (CPA dissidente) or splinter Coalition of the Azawad People.

- **Mouvement Arabe de l'Azawad (MAA originel)** or Arab Movement of Azawad. It is a politico-military movement that was created on April 1st, 2012 by Ahmed Ould Sidi Mohamed, in Tinbuktu, in the wake of the rebellion that the MNLA had started. It is in favor of national unity, proclaims its republican nature and its being in favor of the types of autonomy and decentralization that the Government is proposing. But this ideological position is not shared unanimously. Some members have radical views and are in favor of a greater autonomy for the region of northern Mali. In 2013, the movement went through a first scission during which the branch led by Sidi Brahim Ould Sidatti joined the MNLA and HCUA rebels.

In 2014, another splinter group appeared. It was called Mouvement Populaire pour le Salut de l'Azawad (MPSA) or Popular Movement for the Salvation of Azawad. This armed group, led by Ahmed Al-Ansari supposedly, defined itself as a national movement that acknowledges the flag and the sovereignty of Mali over the North of the country, but it demands also « une autodétermination de l'Azawad²⁰ » (self-determination). In 2015, this group joined the Coordination des Mouvements pour l'Inclusivité des Signataires de l'Accord du 15 Mai 2015 (COMPIS-15) or Coordination of the Movements that are Signatories of the Agreement of May 15th, 2015. These movements felt underrepresented in the Comité de Suivi de l'Accord (CSA) or Committee in charge of the Follow-up of the Agreement. They are, next to the MPSA, the splinter CPA led by Mohamed Ousmane Ag Mahamedoun, the Front Populaire de l'Azawad (FPA) or Popular Front of Azawad led by Colonel Hassane Mehdi and the Ganda Izo led by Mohamed Attayoub Sidibé. It should be noticed that, on January 25th, 2016, Mohamed Ousmane Ag Mahamedoun announced his reconciliation with his former rival, Ibrahim Ag Mohamed Assaleh, his withdrawal from the COMPIS-15 and his rejoining the CMA.

* **Coordination des Mouvements et Forces Patriotiques de Résistance (CM-FPR)** or Coordination of the Patriotic Movements and Forces of Resistance. It is the grouping of several self-defense groups (Ganda Koy, Ganda Izo, Ganda Lassarizo, Bouctou...) that was created on June 18th, 2013

²⁰ GUINDO Abdoulaye, « Groupes d'autodéfense du Nord: qui sont-ils et que veulent-ils ? », Procès-verbal N°328 du 25 avril 2016, p. 5.

within the context of negotiating the Ouagadougou Agreement. It grew bigger and stronger under the leadership of its President, Maître Harouna Toureh, a lawyer and the spokesperson for the Plateforme, as the all-inclusive dialogue between Malians went on in Algiers and elsewhere, and led to the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation. A small splinter group called « CMFPR₂ » joined the CMA in 2013. The CM-FPR₁ and the original MAA constitute the majority and the leading forces within the Plateforme. Their leadership position got consolidated through the support provided by a new group that had demonstrated successfully its capabilities on the ground, the Groupe d'Autodéfense Touareg Imghad et Alliés (GATIA).

* **The Groupe d'Auto-défense Touareg Imghad et Alliés (GATIA)** or Self-defense Group of Imghad Twaregs and Allies. It is a self-defense politico-military movement that was created on August 14th, 2014. Counting a majority of Imghad (in singular form, Amaghid) Twaregs as its members, it grew stronger due to a subtle alliance on the ground with other Twareg, Arab, Songhay, Fulani groups from the northern region. From its inception, it became clear that its goals are to defend the interests of its member communities, but most importantly to keep the northern region an integral part of the Republic of Mali. Adamantly opposed to any form of independence, federalism or autonomy, it works at ensuring the failure of any attempt to partition the country, which means that it is preserving the national unity of Mali. This position made it a very popular organization in the north, the center and the south of the country. An ally of the Plateforme, it quickly became its armed branch also, without declaring this officially. Since 2015, it is the main military force in the northern region of Mali. Quietly and sometimes in a surprising manner, it took back from the MNLA the towns of Tessit, Tallataye, Menaka and Anefis, before it imposed itself, to everyone's surprise, to the CMA in their fief of Kidal. Its main leaders are Fahad Ag Almahmoud and Haballa Ag Amzata. Many internal and external sources suspect General Elhadj Gamou, a loyal high-ranking officer who serves in the Malian army, to be its founder, or at least its strategist.

« [Officially, the Government of Mali denies its being involved in the creation of GATIA. But, in January 2015, the MINUSMA observed that many militiamen of the GATIA, who were wounded during the fighting in Tabankort and were treated in Gao, were, in reality, soldiers in the Malian army. The GATIA, that is considered the strongest military component of the Plateforme, has often created difficulties for the CMA before they work out a deal at the beginning of February 2016. Since then, the political standing of the GATIA has become unclear, given the fact that nobody can now tell whether it is defending its own interests or those of the Malian State. GATIA has accused the Malian State of betraying its cause and of embracing instead the CMA rebels²¹. »

According to some analysts, these self-defense groups « [intend to resist to the supremacy of the CMA rebels and to the domination of these rebels over the northern region of Mali... to weigh on the implementation of the Peace Agreements and to benefit, in such a context, from the same favors that the rebels would receive, particularly when it comes to the socioeconomic "reinsertion" aspect. They also want, in the meantime, to be well represented in the local administrative councils and transition bodies²²] ».

This being said, there are crucial geopolitical and geostrategic issues for Mali to handle, with regard to crime and insecurity.

The issues of crime and insecurity

In the current context, there are at least seven types of issues pertaining to security challenges (vulnerabilities, fragilities and governance deficits) in Mali:

- the issue of social peace and human rights;

²¹ GUINDO Abdoulaye, « Groupes d'autodéfense du Nord : qui sont-ils et que veulent-ils? », Procès-verbal N°328 du 25 avril 2016, p. 5.

²² Ibidem, p. 5.

- the issue of democracy;
- the issue of political stability;
- the issue of sustainable development;
- the issue of accessing natural resources;
- the issue of the internal sovereignty of the state;
- the issue of international peace and security.

II. THE STATE RESPONSE TO MAJOR SECURITY CHALLENGES

During the past twenty years, the Government of Mali and the non-governmental organizations have undertaken numerous, and sometimes pertinent, initiatives in order to create a climate of peace and security that would enable the development of the country.

2.1 Moratorium on Small Caliber Weapons

Already in 1992-2002, under the regime of President Alpha Oumar Konaré, the authorities were concerned with the proliferation and the plethora of small arms and small caliber weapons, within the context of the rebellion launched in July 1990 in the northern region by Arab and Twareg movements that had come mostly from Libya. President Konaré had expressed such a concern to the United Nations Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and had requested his assistance in order to determine the scope of the phenomenon and the best options to eradicate it.

An ensuing mission led by the former Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), William Eteki Mboumoua, reached two conclusions. First, the proliferation of illicit weapons is a reality in Mali and in all the surrounding countries, and second, the solution lies within a sub-regional cooperation framework, which involves the international community also. From then on, President Konaré engaged in a series of exchanges and discussions about an integrated and gradual approach to security and development issues. This led, first, to organizing a Conference on the Prevention of Conflicts, Disarmament and Development in West Africa (25-29 November 1996 in Bamako), and second, to initiating a Declaration for a Moratorium on the Fabrication, Importation and Exportation of Small Weapons in West Africa, signed on October 31st, 1998, in Abuja, Nigeria, by the 16 West African countries. A self-regulating measure, the Moratorium is, according to President Konaré, « [an act of diplomatic intelligence that makes self-censuring, moderation, the simple and temporary abstention on the part of the States of the sub-region to fabricate, receive and export arms, the preliminary but necessary step in reinforcing the means for effective security, and in taking positive steps for micro-disarmament during ulterior phases] ».

Thus, the Moratorium should be understood as an act of preventive diplomacy, a strategy to prevent conflicts. It was meant to be the expression of a political will of the West African leaders, regarding the creation of a climate of trust between the States of the sub-region, and of an environment that enables development. In order to enforce the effective implementation of the Moratorium, the ECOWAS Heads of States and Governments adopted on December 10th, 1999, in Lomé, Togo, a relatively stringent Code of Conduct. In 2009, the Moratorium was turned into a Convention and one of the tools available for preventing conflicts in the ECOWAS zone. To make it operational, each country had to set up a National Commission in charge of Fighting against the Proliferation of Small Caliber Weapons, and to proceed with micro-disarmament practices linked to its development efforts. Most of the ECOWAS States did not abide by the Convention. The final outcome is mixed. The Malian experience has been relatively successful in the region of Tinbuktu²³, but not so in the rest of the country.

In 2002-2012, under the regime of General Amadou Toumani Touré, the Government initiated several programs in order to fight against insecurity and organized crime. Two such programs caught our attention.

²³ POULTON Robin-Edward, AG YOUSSOUF Ibrahim, *La paix de Tombouctou: gestion démocratique, développement et construction africaine de la paix*, Genève, Institut des Nations Unies pour la Recherche sur le Désarmement (UNIDIR), 1999, 424 pages.

2.2 Programme de Gouvernance Partagée de la Sécurité et de la Paix (PGPSP), or Program about Shared Governance of Security and Peace.

The aim of this program was to contribute to the creation of a climate of security, peace and sustainable human development in Mali. The specific objectives were the following ones:

- "[Assist the Government in elaborating the national security and safety policies;"
- "Assist in the implementation of a shared governance of security and peace at national and local levels;
- "Assist with the consolidation of security and peace in the northern region of Mali]."

This program was an effort to implement the recommendations that came out of the États Généraux de la Sécurité et de la Paix au Mali, or General Convention on Security and Peace in Mali, that got organized in November 2005 by the Ministère de la Sécurité Intérieure et de la Protection Civile, or Ministry of Internal Security and Public Safety. It was meant to be a tool in implementing the national policies pertaining to security and safety, and that were adopted on October, 20th, 2010 by the Government. They mentioned nine strategies, regarding the fight against insecurity and crime:

- "Preventing situations that represent security risks;
- "Consolidating the capabilities of the forces;
- "Consolidating the capabilities of the State in preventing and managing disasters;
- "Fighting against the risks associated with road and fluvial transport;
- "Creating proximity police forces;
- "Implementing an inclusive governance of security;
- "Fighting against terrorism;
- "Consolidating bilateral and multilateral cooperation;
- "Implementing a communication strategy that enables attitude and behavior changes."

2.3 Programme Spécial pour la Paix, la Sécurité et le Développement au Nord-Mali (PSPSDN) or Special Program for Peace, Security and Development in North Mali.

The overall goal of this program was to reduce significantly the causes of insecurity and terrorism in the North of Mali through a combination of security, governance, local development and communication actions. Specifically, it aimed at five objectives:

- "To reinforce the national security system in place in North Mali;
- "To improve governance through the delivery of better services by state and local authorities;
- "To promote economic and social development activities;
- "To inform, sensitize and develop people's abilities to grasp national security threats;
- "To create a management and coordination structure that would handle the program activities.

This program was meant to be a tool in implementing the national strategy to fight against insecurity and terrorism. Such a strategy was based on eight fundamental points:

- "To ensure the presence and the operational functioning of the general administration branches at all levels;
- "To lead, protect and assist the populations in high-risk areas;
- "To provide access to high-risk areas, ensure the free movement of people and goods, and intensify control efforts along the roads;

"To understand fully the phenomenon in order to prevent it, to dissuade and to intervene effectively;

"To cooperate internationally in order to better intervene locally;

"To fight against the proliferation of small weapons;

"To fight against illicit drug trafficking and organized crime;

"To coordinate, follow up and evaluate strategies of combating insecurity and terrorism."

In principle, the implementation of these two national defense and security programs should have provided minimum security conditions, and prevented the collapse that occurred in 2012. But in reality, they were initiated when it was too late. Also, they were not inclusive enough, and they were not coherent. It could be noticed that, on one hand, there was almost a total lack of coordination between the armed forces and the security forces, and on the other hand, between those forces and the other key players in the security sector, particularly the community-based organizations. Consequently, the two programs were inefficient. They need to be updated and included into the defense and security mechanisms that are envisioned by the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation, which resulted from the Algiers process.

2.4 Community-based initiatives

From their end, the civil society organizations, local authorities and communities have created numerous structures that deal with peace, security, human rights, and local development issues. They have initiated many actions that were sometimes effective in preventing, managing and ending conflicts and in enabling local development. A judicious usage of such local initiatives could help frame a new defense and security architecture in Mali.

III. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE STATE

The main strength of the State is its being the State, i.e., the only legitimate repository of the public authority, with the exclusive right to use violence legitimately, according to the Constitution.

One of the structural weaknesses of the State, with regard to security, comes partly from the fact, since Independence, that security has never been « repensée », or analyzed thoroughly from the inside, in an inclusive manner. It has always been considered a unique prerogative, or an aspect of State sovereignty, that belongs exclusively to the security services. Also, the security sector has, for a long time, suffered from a lack of vision, strategy, communication method and, generally speaking, good governance. It needs to be reformed. The Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation that resulted from the Algiers process²⁴ has now imposed such a reform as a political necessity.

In light of the multidimensional crisis that has affected the country, and from which Mali is now emerging painfully, it would be useful to build a new and shared security infrastructure out of an inclusive process. It would be based on consulting and dialoguing amid and with security and defense forces, as well as other key players in the security sector like the public authorities, the general administration, the political leadership, the civil society, the armed groups that signed the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation, the private sector, the local authorities, the nomadic and urban communities, the development partners, etc.

This new security infrastructure should be rooted in an enlightened leadership, a new governance of the security sector, an innovative approach to managing security questions, a new vision, a new internal security policy, a new national defense strategy and a relevant communication strategy. It should allow the Malian authorities to:

"Mitigate or even neutralize the structural causes of the prevailing insecurity;

"Influence the individual and collective mindsets and behaviors in order to eliminate any irresistible propensity to use, or even overuse, violence;

"Strengthen the capabilities of institutional and non-institutional key players, so they may contribute to maintaining a lasting and favorable security environment;

"Provide the opportunity to strategic key players to emerge in order to impulse a vigorous alternative to the current way of managing security issues;

²⁴ « Accord pour la paix et la réconciliation au Mali issu du processus d'Alger », Bamako, Editions Ministère de la Réconciliation Nationale-US-AID, août 2015, 264 pages.

"Take into account the multiple dimensions of human security as well as the standards of good governance in the security sector;

"Make security a central and priority component of the emergence strategy of the country.

For this, one needs to reform the security sector on the basis of new paradigms, vision, strategy, management and communication approaches, and to develop a new and innovative tool for national security, backed by a regional strategy for collective security. The new security infrastructure should take into account some fundamental parameters, as follows:

- The first is the necessity to build a security infrastructure based on a participative and inclusive reform process that keeps the Person/Human Being at the heart of security matters, i.e., that focuses on human security;
- The second is to create the required security governance that respects human dignity and the universal values which represent the foundation of democracy;
- The third is the necessity to harmonize security and development priorities, so development becomes a fundamental dimension of security, and the costs associated with security are a component of development. All key players involved in the security sector should bear such costs through a judicious sharing of their roles and responsibilities;
- The fourth is the necessity to take into account the gender and youth dimensions;
- The fifth is the necessity to take into account the global dimension of security issues, and to include national security and defense strategies into sub-regional, regional and international frameworks;
- The sixth is to work towards collective security, given the fact that no single country can face up to all of its security concerns, particularly when it comes to organized transnational crime.

The reform of the security sector is a process that requires of one to adopt the following fundamental principles²⁵ :

- Decision-makers must give priority to security issues, i.e., one may talk of political will;
- Security must be included in the overall democratic process and development agenda;
- Security forces must adhere to universal values that represent the foundation of democracy;
- Civilian authorities and security forces must accept the legitimate hierarchy, and the subordination of security forces to the democratically elected and legitimate civilian authorities;
- Resources allocated to the security sector must be managed according to the standards that apply to public expenses and to good governance, such as transparency, responsibility, accountability, control and obligation to report/justify;
- Security forces must be given the opportunity to go through the required professional training and to adjust to democratic rules;
- Resources must be allocated rationally to the institutions and technical branches of the security sector;
- Competent and professional security forces must be trained and held accountable (especially through parliamentary overseeing and control by citizens);
- Civil society organizations and communities must participate in the management of security matters, and contribute constructively to debates about security policies;
- The roles and responsibilities of the civilian key players and of the security forces must be defined clearly, regarding the governance of the security sector.

Finally, with regard to the expected outcomes, this new Malian security infrastructure should induce²⁶:

- The creation of a strategic framework that is likely to facilitate the inclusion of the security sector in the democratic process and in the country's development agenda;
- The qualitative transformation of the security and defense forces through such actions as massive recruitment, good training, maximizing ethics and deontology, professionalization, and specialization;
- The creation of new executive bodies that would improve the management and performance levels of the institutions in charge of security and defense;
- The setting up of an efficient system of democratic overseeing that involves the effective and active participation of all key players in the security sector, and the control exercised by the parliament, communities, and citizens;
- The setting up of institutional and non-institutional security mechanisms, especially a National Security Council and its branches which should extend to the levels of communes, neighborhoods and nomadic camps, so there would be an efficient security web all over the country;
- The revitalization of some internal mechanisms of social regulation and of conflict prevention, management, and resolution.

Then, we could expect, on one hand, security and defense forces that are rehabilitated, credible and efficient and, on the other hand, a general security context that enables the political, economic, social and cultural development of Mali.

²⁵ MOULAYE Zeïni, *Gouvernance démocratique de la sécurité au Mali*, Bamako, Friedrich Ebert, décembre 2005, p. 155.

²⁶ *L'architecture sécuritaire dans le Sahara central: quels rôles pour les acteurs sociopolitiques?*, Bamako, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, juin 2014, 51 pages.

IV. BILATERAL, SUB-REGIONAL AND REGIONAL COOPERATION REGARDING SECURITY ISSUES

One must underline the fact that since the beginning of the Malian crisis in 2012, even before it started in some cases, several countries, organizations and international institutions had demonstrated their willingness to assist with solving the crisis. Given the repercussions of the Libyan crisis across the Sahelo-Saharan region, some international organizations came up with strategies to end the crisis in a manner that would be favorable to the Sahelian countries. These strategies were focused on five countries, in particular: Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad. These countries created, in the end, a new intergovernmental organization called « G5 Sahel ». Out of the said strategies, we will mention those of the European Union, United Nations, and African Union, which seem to be the most elaborate, in our judgment.

There is the Strategy for Development and Security in G5 Sahel, known as « la stratégie des stratégies Sahel », or the strategy of Sahel strategies. The G5 Sahel member States are trying to get all their technical and financial partners to refer to it now.

4.1. Bilateral Partnership

Mali has a full array of bilateral partners. With regard to its neighbors, particularly Algeria, Mauritania, Senegal and Niger, it has implemented a beneficial and mutually advantageous policy of maintaining friendly relations. In this context, multiple agreements were signed and several mechanisms were put in place, particularly joint committees charged with managing border areas, fighting against transnational crime, and using joint security and defense forces. In the cases of Niger, Mauritania, and Burkina Faso most recently, these mechanisms gave satisfactory results. In the case of Algeria, the Malian security and armed forces get specialized training opportunities and receive equipment from time to time. The Comité des Mécanismes d'Opérations Conjointes (CEMOC), or Committee of Joint Operations Mechanisms, that was set up by Algeria, Mali and Mauritania, and charged with fighting terrorism, became a means to reinforce and to diversify bilateral cooperation. The G5 Sahel helped to expand such gains and to undertake initiatives against crime in a distant country like Chad.

4.2. Multilateral Partnership

The European Union Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel

The European Union's Strategy of Security and Development in the Sahel was adopted in March 2011. Based on a shared understanding of the situation in the Sahel and a shared vision by European Union member States, it combines security-related activities with development activities in three areas: security, resilience and development. It uses several cooperation instruments to secure an adequate amount of resources in order to carry out its mission.

- It aims at three objectives:

- "Consolidate political stability, security, good governance, social cohesion, and promote education and economic activities, in order to create the conditions for sustainable development and prosperity in the Sahel region;

- "Limit terrorist attacks and kidnapping cases in the Sahelian countries, in order to weaken the capabilities of AQMI and other criminal networks;

- "Improve the security level in the conflict zones across the Sahel.

- It focuses its interventions on three priorities:

- "Preventing and fighting against radicalization;

- "Creating more opportunities for young people;

- "Controlling migration and the movements of populations, managing border areas, fighting against illicit trafficking and organized crime.

In its action-plan, adopted on April 20th, 2015, the European Union intends to carry out the following activities in the region:

- Development, good governance and internal conflict resolution:

- "Political and diplomatic activities;

- "Security and Rule of Law;

- "Prevention and the fight against radicalization and violent extremism.

- Consolidation of the integrated global approach:

- "Collective action through joint programs;

- "Positive and tangible results;
- "Development of systemic information sharing and reporting;
- "Dealing with the structural causes of instability and under-development;
- "Management of security issues across borders;
- "Fight against illicit trafficking and transnational organized crime;
- "Prevention and fight against radicalization and violent extremism.

The United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel

Elaborated in June 2013 at the request of the Security Council, it stands on the following four pillars: security, governance, resilience and development. It attempts to follow the priorities set by the Governments and the Peoples of the Sahelian region. It emphasizes the « soft » aspects of development, especially education, training, capacity building, justice, democracy, human rights, gender and youth. Given the multitude of initiatives undertaken on behalf of the Sahel, a ministerial Plateforme was set up in November 2013 in Bamako, in order to coordinate the different Sahel strategies and to create a synergy of actions during their implementation. Specifically, the Plateforme aims at: (i) keeping the attention of the international community focused on the Sahelian issues; (ii) Ensuring the implementation of long term solutions to the challenges that exist in the Sahel; (iii) Ensuring the follow-up of progress made and of accomplishments, particularly with coordinating the assistance provided by the international community.

The Plateforme operates through a technical Secretariat that is co-chaired by the United Nations and the African Union. Its main office is located in Bamako, Mali, and it holds presidential and semester-based meetings. Mali was appointed to its head during the first turning presidential term, from 2013 to 2015. This past November, it was replaced by Chad. In March 2015, the Plateforme put in place a framework for dialogues between the Sahelian countries and their partners regarding four areas of concern: security, governance, resilience and development. The groups involved in such dialogues worked on ways to improve the coordination mechanisms between various strategies for the Sahel.

The African Union Strategy for the Sahel (MISAHEL)

The African Union Strategy for the Sahel was adopted by the Peace and Security Council on August 11th, 2014, in Addis-Abeba. It is based on three points: governance, security and development. These are areas of concern where the African Union feels « [it has undeniable comparative advantages due to its continental mandate, experience in dealing with crisis, and deep understanding of the issues] ». This strategy, which facilitates the implementation of certain regional tools, aims at consolidating the initial mission of the African Union and of its overall strategy called « Agenda 2063 ». Its final goal is to help the Sahelian States solve the structural problems they are currently facing.

The priorities set in the African Union Strategy for the Sahel are to be implemented by the Mission de l'Union Africaine pour le Mali et le Sahel (MISAHEL) or the African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel, and they are as follows:

Governance:

- "Consolidation of the rule of law and democratic institutions;
- "Administrative decentralization and the sharing of successful experiences;
- "Fight against corruption and promotion of international managerial norms;
- "Promotion of human rights and humanitarian activities;
- "Assistance with dialogue and reconciliation processes;
- "Assistance with electoral processes in the region;
- "Promotion of peace and social cohesion, in partnership with religious and traditional leaders;
- "Conflict management, and the inclusion of nomadic communities.

Security:

- "Promote regional cooperation with regard to security;
- "Participate to the enriching of the Nouakchott Process;
- "Participate to the DDR program, regarding the armed groups in northern Mali;
- "Participate to the RSS programs in Mali and in the Sahel;
- "Cooperate with all partners involved in the security sector.

Development:

- "Regional collaboration, with regard to infrastructure building and development;
- "Socioeconomic activities for young people and women;
- "Develop the agro-pastoral sector and reinforce the resilience capabilities of the populations.

The involvement of the AU in the Sahel region goes back to the 2011 Libyan crisis. Its repercussions pushed the continental organization to assert its presence in the Sahel region.

From December 7th to 23rd, 2011, the AU and the UN led a joint evaluation mission in the Sahel, followed by a meeting of experts in Addis-Abeba, which was held on March 14th and 15th, 2012. On March 20th, 2012, a ministerial meeting was organized in Bamako, and it formulated some recommendations that aimed at addressing the numerous challenges then identified. These recommendations have largely inspired the terms of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, as well as the G5 Sahel Strategy for Development and Security.

The G5 Sahel Strategy for Development and Security (SDS)

The G5 Sahel is an intergovernmental organization that was created on February 16th, 2014. Its founding text, or Convention, was signed on December 19th, 2014, in Nouakchott, by the Heads of State of the five countries that launched the initiative, i.e., Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad.

The goal of the G5 Sahel is to fight effectively against poverty and insecurity in all their aspects, in order to create the conditions for development and security in the area shared by member States and to establish a framework for strategic actions that improve the living standards of the populations.

The vision of the Group includes security, economic and social development, in a context of democracy, good governance, mutually beneficial regional and international cooperation. The G5 Sahel wants to be an appropriate response to the structural and circumstantial challenges that hinder sustainable development in the region.

The priority sectors mentioned in its strategy are essentially security (fight against terrorism and organized crime), infrastructures (transport, water, energy, telecommunication), governance (elections, justice, rule of law, decentralization, deradicalization) and resilience (food security, pastoralism/livestock herding).

The approach behind the implementation of the Strategy for Development and Security (SDS) combines the construction of basic infrastructures and the consolidation of the institutional capabilities of the States, of security and armed forces, and of other non-institutional key players, such as members of the civil society and of the local communities. These actions will take place in the context of political and social dialogues that aim at promoting the concept of human security, especially when it comes to its components about democracy and good governance (participation, transparency, responsibility, accountability). The final objective, over time, is a radical change in the mentalities and behaviors of citizens, so as to induce a qualitative transformation of the security and development contexts in the five countries in question.

The Strategy for Development and Security (SDS) refers to four areas:

- Security:

- "Setting up a Collège Sahélien de Sécurité (CSS), or Sahelian Security College;
- "Create a Centre sahélien d'analyse des menaces et d'alerte précoce (CSAMAP), or Sahelian center for the analysis of threats and for early prevention;
- "Operate effectively the Plateforme de coopération en matière de sécurité (PCMS) or Mechanism for cooperation in the security sector;
- "Establish a mobile technical system of borders surveillance/security;
- "Setting up mobile special police units;
- "Create a military school (War School) for the region;
- "Setting up a joint force charged with fighting crime;
- "Operate effectively the Charte de partenariat militaire de coopération transfrontalière (CPMCT), or Charter for military partnership and cross-border cooperation.

- Governance:

- "Assist with the electoral processes;
- "Assist with the promotion of justice and rule of law;
- "Assist with decentralization, deconcentration and the promotion of community development (local and regional);
- "Fight against radicalization and violent extremism (constitute a database), and promote intra and intercultural dialogue;
- "Promote community security and social cohesion;
- "Consolidate the capabilities of non-State key players.

• Resilience:

- "Provide assistance to pastoralists and increase their resilience capabilities;
- "Provide assistance to rural women in order to reinforce their economic resilience;
- "Provide assistance to mobile populations in order to reinforce their resilience capabilities;
- "Fixing and securing rural roads, particularly when they cross state borders.

• Infrastructures:

- "International road and railway networks linking Mauritania and Mali;
- "International road and railway networks linking Niger and Mali;
- "International road and railway networks linking Burkina Faso and Mali;
- "International road and railway networks linking Burkina Faso and Niger;
- "International road and railway networks linking Niger and Chad;
- "Airports in Mali, Niger and Chad.

To these projects, one must add others that pertain to agriculture, food industry, renewable energy, electrification of rural areas across all the five countries and through the use of solar energy.

It should be noticed that some of these strategies have just come to their terms, as in the cases of ECOWAS and the G5 Sahel strategies. Others are just starting, as in the cases of the EU, AU, and UN strategies. The latter cases do not yet allow one to conduct a pertinent evaluation of their impacts. Nevertheless, they bring hope to the Sahelian populations despite their complex nature and the multiple and diverse interests they generate. The near future will tell of their relevance or not.

Foreign missions in Mali

Since the beginning of the 2012 multidimensional crisis, foreign troops have been operating on the national territory. They are Barkhane French forces, and other international forces grouped under the United Nations umbrella as Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation au Mali (MINUSMA), or United Nations Multidimensional Mission for Stabilization in Mali. The Barkhane operation has been effective in fighting terrorism and in neutralizing a great number of jihadists, most of whom were handed over to Malian authorities. But, the MINUSMA is regularly criticized for its inefficiency in the northern region. In both cases, even though they were called to the rescue by Malian authorities, their presence on Malian soil does represent a problem with regard to national sovereignty.

V. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the multiple facets of insecurity and organized crime, the Malian populations must be well informed, sensitized, aware of, and trained in order to better protect themselves. Young people, in particular, need to be pulled out situations of unemployment and precariousness. In order to achieve this goal, one needs to get the civil society involved²⁷, especially the local communities. To date, there is no strategy to fight against insecurity and organized crime that mobilizes effectively and that defines clearly the responsibilities to be assigned to the youth, women, representatives²⁸, local elected officials, community leaders, all of whom could play some decisive roles. Such a mobilization is necessary because ignorance, endemic unemployment, poverty, misery and frustrations do turn the populations into easy prey for the narco-traffickers and terrorists.

In a concrete manner, a post-conflict Mali requires the implementation of the following plans:

On the part of the Government:

- "Provide defense forces with aircrafts and drones in order to combat effectively terrorists and jihadists;

²⁷ MOULAYE Zeïni (directeur), Société civile et gouvernance de la sécurité, Bamako, Coopération technique belge, 2007, 103 pages.

²⁸ MOULAYE Zeïni, KEITA Amadou, L'Assemblée nationale sous la troisième République, seconde édition, Bamako, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2008, page 116 et suivantes. See also: Contrôle parlementaire du secteur de la sécurité, principes, mécanismes et pratiques, Genève, DCAF-Union interparlementaire, 2003, 195 pages.

"Come up with better strategies to secure the Tegargar mountains (a portion of northern Mali that has become the top refuge for terrorists) through the presence on the ground of special security units that would occupy all the niches now used by organized crime;

"Bring back local administrative authorities (sous-préfets, gendarmes, mayors, etc.) and build/renovate the basic social service infrastructures (schools, health centers, water, electricity) in the rural areas;

"Recommend to the international community to provide « service après-vente », or follow-up/customer service, when it comes to controlling arm sales and the movements of people, and to dealing with trafficking across borders;

"Restore the authority of the State and the prestige of public service through a system of good governance in the security sector, an operational intelligence service, an adequate air force, a flexible and mobile defense force;

"Get the populations involved in dealing with security issues through civic engagement;

"Develop a relevant vision of security and an effective military doctrine;

"Create a permanent framework of dialogue and cooperation between all key players involved in the security sector (Government, citizens, public and private sectors, civil society, political entities, local authorities, urban and nomadic communities, opinion leaders, technical and financial partners, etc.);

"Control borders and manage border areas effectively.

"Restore the relevance of intelligence services, via their gathering operational information with the assistance of local communities;

"Consolidate the capabilities of defense and security forces, and turn them into professional groups that specialize in fighting specific types of threats;

"Create a draft system, or a national service system for young people, that would generate a large pool of reservists;

"Set up some special units to fight against terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration and all forms of transnational and organized crime across borders;

"Create dialogue/cooperation mechanisms between security forces and other key players involved in the security sector (youth, women, urban and nomadic communities, civil society organizations, elected officials at local and national levels, private sector, etc.);

On the part of the Civil Society:

"Create centers dedicated to preventing and fighting against violent extremism;

"Set up regional or even local monitoring centers that would collaborate with all key players involved in the security sector, in order to fight against transnational organized crime;

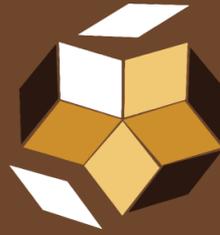
"Set up monitoring civic groups linked to civil society organizations across the national territory, in order to create a security and safety environment that enables development.

In Mali, the international community is doing a gigantic effort, in terms of fighting against insecurity and terrorism. However, such a fighting cannot be their responsibility only. One must count first and foremost on Malian potentials, capabilities and forces, then seek the assistance of the neighboring countries, of the sub-region, of the African continent, and of the international community.

Thus, the Sahelian States must improve their own capabilities to meet the expectations of their populations in terms of security. They must also increase their response level in terms of democracy and good governance, particularly when it comes to participation, responsibility sharing, and democratic control in the security sector. These are the necessary conditions to be met, so they may build a future based on social cohesion, political stability, justice, cooperation, mutual respect and solidarity.

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DIALOGUES

SECURITAIRES
DANS L'ESPACE
SAHELO - SAHARIEN

Biography of the author

Dr Zeini MOULAYE has a doctorate degree in Political Science, and is a specialist in International Relations and in Communication. A former Minister in the Mali Government, he has been appointed recently as the Ambassador of the Republic of Mali to Saudi Arabia. He is the author of several works dealing with security issues.

Summary

The country-based studies highlight the nature of the State and the key question of governance in the Sahelo-Saharan region. The types of relations that the State maintains with the populations become a crucial issue when one considers the identity/ethnic dimensions of the demands that minority groups often express at the risk of destabilizing the entire region. The issues of violent extremism and of crime organized across borders are also discussed.

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