



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Luxembourg, 15 October 2012
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NOTE

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Delegations

Subject: Council conclusions on the situation in Mali

At its meeting on 15 October 2012, the Council adopted the conclusions set out in the Annex to this note.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS
on the situation in Mali

1. The European Union (EU) remains concerned about the serious political and security crisis affecting Mali, in particular the situation in the north of the country, marked by the emergence and consolidation of a haven for terrorists, the oppression of local populations, human rights violations, particularly against women, the destruction of cultural heritage and the development of organised crime. This situation poses an immediate threat to the Sahel region and those living there, who are already suffering from an acute food crisis, as well as to West and North Africa and to Europe.
2. The EU welcomes the adoption by the United Nations Security Council of Resolution 2071 and the increasing international attention being focused on the Sahel and Mali, as also evidenced by the high-level meeting held in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly on 26 September 2012 and the development of a UN integrated strategy for the Sahel. It also welcomes the appointment of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy and declares its intention to work closely with Romano Prodi. The EU calls for the mechanism for coordination with Mali's key partners to be extended in order to increase the effectiveness of support for the transition process on the political, security and economic fronts. To this end, the EU welcomes and stresses the importance of the meeting of the Support and Follow-up Group on Mali scheduled to be held in Bamako on 19 October 2012, at the initiative of the African Union (AU) and in consultation with the United Nations (UN) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

3. The EU is determined to support Mali in restoring the rule of law and re-establishing a fully sovereign democratic government with authority throughout Malian territory, for the benefit of the whole population. The EU welcomes the formation by the President of the Republic of Mali of a new Government of National Unity, as well as the efforts to mobilise the international community, notably the AU and ECOWAS, made by these new authorities in their contacts with all partners, in particular the EU.

4. In accordance with the principles approved by ECOWAS and the Support and Follow-up Group co-chaired by the UN and AU, and by United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2056 and 2071, the EU calls on the Government of National Unity to draw up a consensual road map as soon as possible, in consultation with all the political and civil society groups, to fully restore constitutional order and national unity. In particular this road map should allow the organisation of a democratic and credible electoral process, the prompt start of an inclusive national dialogue, including representatives of the northern populations, to prepare the re-establishment of the authority of the State in the north as peacefully as possible, and the reorganisation of the army under civilian control.

5. The EU reaffirms its commitment to contribute to the efforts being made by Mali to resolve this crisis, in cooperation with its regional and international partners, and accordingly to fully mobilise all its instruments within the framework of the EU strategy for security and development in the Sahel. Further to this:
 - As soon as a credible road map has been adopted, the EU will gradually resume its development cooperation in the light of tangible progress. In the interim period, the EU will continue its operations to assist local populations and the democratic transition.

- The EU is prepared to support an inclusive national dialogue within Mali, aimed at the restoration of the rule of law in northern Mali, and to contribute to the stabilisation and reconstruction measures that such a dialogue would help give direction to.

- The EU and its Member States pledge to pursue their humanitarian efforts and will continue to monitor closely developments in the humanitarian situation in Mali and in neighbouring countries. The European Commission is prepared to significantly increase the amount of its aid in order to better meet the people's needs. The EU recalls the obligation to ensure that all humanitarian actors have free and unhindered access to vulnerable groups in the northern areas of the country.

- The Council invites the High Representative (HR) and the European Commission to examine other measures or additional actions which could help reduce the effects of the Mali crisis and its impact on neighbouring countries, and increase the resilience of vulnerable groups.

- The EU recalls the possibility of adopting, in close conjunction with ECOWAS, the AU and the UN, targeted sanctions against those involved in the armed groups in northern Mali and those hindering the return to constitutional order.

- In response to the request received from Mali and ECOWAS, the EU is convinced of the need for a rapid response to the security challenges and terrorist threat, within a framework to be defined by the United Nations Security Council. In this regard, the Council welcomes the HR's preliminary work on ways in which to provide possible support for rebuilding the Malian army's capacities, in line with the political objectives and action plan established by the international community and in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2071.

- The Council invites the HR and the European Commission to examine support for the involvement of regional partners, in particular the AU and ECOWAS, for example by providing rapid support in the field of planning. Subject to ECOWAS submitting a finalised concept, the Council invites the HR and the European Commission to examine the possibility of additional support, including financial support, such as mobilising the Peace Facility for Africa.

- The Council also requests that work on planning a possible CSDP military operation be pursued and extended as a matter of urgency, in particular by developing a crisis management concept relating to the reorganisation and training of the Malian defence forces, taking account of the conditions necessary for the success of any such mission, which include the full support of the Malian authorities and the definition of an exit strategy. This planning should take place in close collaboration with the organisations, in particular the UN, AU and ECOWAS, States and actors concerned, in order to ensure that their respective actions complement each other. The Council invites the HR to develop the crisis management concept ahead of its meeting on 19 November, and to present her recommendations at that meeting.

- As part of a global approach, the Council calls for use to be made of potential synergies with other EU actions in the region, in particular the EUCAP SAHEL Niger mission and its regional focus.
