



Security Council

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Situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution [2423 \(2018\)](#), the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) until 30 June 2019 and requested me to report on a quarterly basis on its implementation, focusing on progress in taking forward the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali (see [S/2015/364](#) and [S/2015/364/Add.1](#)) and the efforts of MINUSMA to support it. The present report contains updates with regard to major developments in Mali since the issuance of my previous report ([S/2018/541](#)).

II. Major political developments

2. The presidential elections, which culminated with the re-election of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, dominated the reporting period. Signatory parties made some progress in the implementation of the Agreement, including the nomination of interim authorities at the district level, the creation of municipalities for the Ménaka and Taoudenni regions, and the adoption of the national security sector reform strategy.

A. Implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali

3. On 25 June 2018, the Agreement Monitoring Committee held its twenty-sixth session to assess, inter alia, the progress made in the implementation of the road map adopted on 22 March. Participants expressed concern over the lack of progress in establishing interim authorities at the district level and in operationalizing the mixed units of the Operational Coordination Mechanism in Kidal and Timbuktu ahead of the 29 July presidential elections, and called upon the parties to create conditions conducive to a credible electoral process.

4. On 5 July, the Mission concluded a three-day event focusing on the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security, during which women from all regions of the country met with senior government and United Nations officials. Participants identified, inter alia, ensuring the security of populations, including women and children, and facilitating women's participation in peacebuilding processes as priorities. Also in July, 45 women from



the signatory parties and civil society participated in a workshop organized by the High Representative of the President for the peace process, MINUSMA and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), during which a women-led and independent consultative forum was created to monitor the implementation of the Agreement.

Political and institutional measures

5. As requested by the Security Council in its resolution [2423 \(2018\)](#), the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, visited Mali from 31 August to 5 September and discussed with the Mission's senior leadership the draft outline of the pact for peace, which had been drafted after consultations with the Government and signatory movements. The pact for peace builds on the road map adopted on 22 March and the benchmarks for monitoring the implementation of the Agreement. It is aimed at renewing the commitment of the signatory parties to accelerate the implementation of the Agreement, as well as complementing the ongoing peace efforts and embracing longer-term objectives.

6. On 27 June, following consultations with the local communities, the Government adopted legislation creating 63 territorial collectivities in the Ménaka and Taoudenni regions, which should strengthen decentralized governance and facilitate the provision of basic administrative services at the local level.

7. On 26 July and 8 August, following extensive negotiations between the signatory parties and supported by the Mission's good offices, the Government appointed officials to serve as members of the interim administrations of 21 of the 24 districts in the northern regions.

8. On 20 June, the Council of Ministers appointed 72 administrators, including 5 women. As at 31 August, 31 per cent of civil administrators were present at their duty stations in the northern regions and in the Mopti region. A temporary increase in the proportion of civil administrators redeployed in the northern and central regions to 42 per cent was noted during the electoral period. Five out of six governors and 16 out of 32 prefects were present at their respective duty stations. In preparation for the elections, the Government deployed five prefects to Kidal, one of whom remained deployed after the elections. Since the previous reporting period, there had been a slight increase in the percentage of appointed judicial and prison officials deployed in northern and central Mali. As at 5 September, 67.5 per cent of judicial officials and 78 per cent of penitentiary officials in the north, and 94.5 per cent and 95.5 per cent, respectively, in the Mopti region, were present at their appointed posts, although insecurity caused absenteeism and the continued relocation of some staff.

9. With funding from the Government, regional interim administrations implemented a number of projects to strengthen basic services, social cohesion and economic recovery in all five northern regions. The projects included the rehabilitation of a water supply system and the construction of two markets in the Kidal region, as well as the construction of six dairy farms and a gum arabic production factory in Taoudenni. In June, the interim administration of Timbuktu launched a \$250,000 project to rehabilitate Lake Horo to improve food security in the region and prevent conflicts between farmers and herders by demarcating pastoral space.

10. On 31 May, the Council of Ministers adopted a law on national understanding that allows for the reintegration of those who were responsible for crimes committed in the context of events related to the crisis that began in 2012, but have expressed genuine repentance. The law does not apply to those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity, rape and any other crimes deemed imprescriptible. It offers compensation for and public assistance to victims.

11. On 28 August, the Council of Ministers adopted a decree convening the electoral college and announcing that parliamentary elections would be held on 28 October and 18 November. On 14 September, the Government of Mali announced that the elections would be postponed until 25 November and 16 December, respectively.

Defence and security measures

12. On 6 July, the National Council for Security Sector Reform adopted the national security sector reform strategy, which sets forth a national vision based on the principles of inclusiveness and representativeness of the security sector in accordance with the Agreement. The Mission continued to work with the signatory parties on the development of the security sector reform action plan, the national vision for the reconstitution and redeployment of the Malian defence and security forces, and a conceptual framework for the territorial police. MINUSMA supported building the community policing skills of the national police in the Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu regions.

13. The good offices of MINUSMA continued to support the implementation of priority defence and security measures as set out in the road map adopted on 22 March. In Kidal and Timbuktu, the first companies of the mixed units of the Operational Coordination Mechanism are being established and are currently at half their expected numbers. The mixed units in Gao, which continued to face challenges, including a lack of heavy weapons, were not able to provide security during the electoral period. As at 1 September, 346 elements from signatory parties were registered in the newly constituted mixed units in Kidal and Timbuktu.

14. In January 2018, the signatory parties agreed on integration criteria and quotas for internal security and civil services; however, they had yet to agree on integration quotas for the reconstituted armed forces and other uniformed services. The inability of the signatory parties to reach such an agreement continued to delay the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

15. In late May, the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, supported by MINUSMA, completed the campaign for the pre-registration of combatants. The Commission also initiated the registration of non-signatory armed groups in the Mopti region. Security enhancements for seven of the eight cantonment sites were completed on 15 August. Cantonment sites have stood ready to receive combatants since 2016.

16. On 26 July, the Mission completed the rehabilitation of the inspectorate of defence and security services buildings in Bamako, as well as in Kati and Sénou, Koulikoro region, to help to promote the democratic oversight of Malian forces. In addition, MINUSMA provided office equipment and training in archiving for five inspectors of the armed forces and internal security institutions and trained 100 members of civil society on security sector reform.

17. MINUSMA did not observe ceasefire violations or instances of heavy-weapons movements by the signatory armed groups during the reporting period.

B. Presidential elections

18. The period leading up to the presidential elections of 29 July was marked by some political tensions and incidents. On 2 June, several political opposition leaders staged a demonstration in Bamako, despite a ban by the authorities, to demand transparent presidential elections and equal access to public media. During the dispersal of the demonstration by the national police, 16 demonstrators and one police officer were injured. This was a regrettable development that I immediately

condemned, calling for calm and calling upon the Government to ensure the protection of fundamental human rights. In an effort to reduce political tensions and promote a constructive dialogue, my Special Representative, in collaboration with the Head of the African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel and the Permanent Representative of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Mali, held meetings with the political opposition parties and senior government officials. Following the meetings, and with the authorization of the Government, the political opposition parties planned another march, which was held peacefully on 8 June.

19. The Constitutional Court validated 24 candidatures for the presidential elections. The campaign, which ran from 7 to 27 July, was generally peaceful despite some security incidents. Four of the 24 candidates, including President Keita, campaigned in the city of Kidal. In the last week of the electoral campaign, several candidates cited anomalies in the electoral process, including the existence of a parallel voter registry with fictitious voters, “ghost” polling stations and pre-cast ballots in favour of the incumbent. Following calls for dialogue by my Special Representative and the international community, the Prime Minister of Mali, Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga, met on 28 July with candidates to reduce tensions, and, consequently, annulled the instructions on proxy voting. He agreed to the presence of 10 observers from national non-governmental organizations, along with international observation missions in the compilation centres. The Prime Minister called on all candidates to appoint two members of their teams to confirm the integrity of the national voter register.

20. On 29 July, the first round of the presidential elections was held in a generally peaceful atmosphere, although 3.8 per cent of polling stations (871 out of 23,041), including in Mopti (444 stations) did not open because of lack of security or inaccessibility. On 31 July, several candidates signed a declaration denouncing irregularities in the electoral process and stating their intention to reject fraudulent electoral results. On 2 August, the Government published the preliminary results of the first round of voting, revealing that President Keita and Soumaila Cissé, received the majority of votes cast, with a turnout of 43.06 per cent. Ten presidential candidates filed 23 petitions with the Constitutional Court to contest the results and to request the removal of six judges of the Court for perceived bias. On 6 August, 18 candidates accused the Government of electoral fraud, and on the following day they organized a meeting at which they demanded a recount of the votes and the publication of results by polling stations. On 8 August, the Constitutional Court rejected all petitions and proclaimed the final results, in which President Keita received 41.70 per cent of the votes cast, followed by Soumaila Cissé, with 17.78 per cent. The Court confirmed that the final voter turnout had been 42.7 per cent.

21. As no candidate had received an absolute majority, a run-off election was held on 12 August. In an improvement compared with the first round, 2.1 per cent of polling stations did not open (493 out of 23,041) although some security incidents were reported (see below). The improvement was due in part to a reorganization of the deployment of approximately 6,000 Malian defence and security forces, with the support of MINUSMA. On 16 August, the Government published the preliminary results, announcing President Keita’s victory. The following day, Mr. Cissé publicly rejected the provisional results. After appeals for calm and respect for the rule of law by the international community, Mr. Cissé agreed to rely solely on the available political and legal mechanisms to challenge the election results. On 20 August, the Constitutional Court confirmed that President Keita had obtained 67.16 per cent of the votes cast, against 32.84 per cent for Mr. Cissé, with a voter turnout of 34.42 per cent. The Court also rejected 16 legal complaints.

22. Although they noted some irregularities, national and international observers, including the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union and the International

Organization of la Francophonie, found that the elections had been held under satisfactory conditions and requested that the Government implement corrective measures to improve the transparency and credibility of the elections.

23. MINUSMA supported the electoral process by providing logistical support and technical assistance to the electoral bodies and other stakeholders. Support included the transportation of 182 tons of electoral materials to Mopti and the five northern regions and hiring 64 national electoral assistants. The Mission provided election-related transportation for 1,840 persons, including interested presidential candidates, to Mopti and the five northern regions. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through its \$5 million basket fund, funded electoral activities such as the training of polling agents, outreach and sensitization. The United Nations supported efforts to increase women's participation in the electoral process, including through public education campaigns conducted in the media, as well as in town halls, and through technical assistance to women's groups in drafting an advocacy document, which was submitted to presidential candidates.

24. The Government stepped up the security for the electoral process by deploying some 25,000 Malian defence and security forces. Following extensive negotiations, signatory armed groups and splinter groups also deployed their combatants around polling stations in the main centres of the five northern regions. MINUSMA assisted Malian defence and security forces in providing technical advice and security, including increased patrols in the cities of Aguelhok, Kidal, Ménaka and Tessalit, and positioned 820 peacekeepers on reserve at strategic locations for a period of five weeks. Sixteen training sessions on electoral security were conducted by MINUSMA for 465 Malian defence and security elements, including 44 women, in Bamako and in central and northern Mali.

25. President Keita was sworn into office on 4 September. He reappointed Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga as Prime Minister. On 9 September, a new Cabinet was formed, comprising 32 ministers, including 11 women, respecting the 30 per cent quota for women in appointed positions.

C. Extension of State authority and support for Malian defence and security institutions

26. In line with its mandate to support the restoration and extension of State authority to the northern and central regions of the country, MINUSMA, with funding from the trust fund for peace and security in Mali, completed the construction of a base for Malian defence and security forces in the Mopti region on 23 August. The next day, the Mission's camp in Gossi, Timbuktu region, was handed over to the Malian armed forces to support their efforts in the region. The Mission also conducted an assessment mission to Boni, Mopti region, and Tessit, Gao region, to evaluate the work required to reinforce the protection of the Malian armed forces' camps in those localities. Within the framework of the memorandum of understanding between MINUSMA and the Government related to the mutual support between MINUSMA and the Malian armed forces, the Mission also provided four casualty and medical evacuations, shared information and conducted patrols with Malian defence forces.

27. The European Union Training Mission in Mali and Operation Barkhane continued to support and train Malian armed forces. Operation Barkhane launched a new partnership programme, which would allow selected platoon commanders of the Malian armed forces to be embedded in an Operation Barkhane unit.

28. MINUSMA, jointly with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other international partners, continued to provide technical assistance to the Malian

specialized judicial unit tasked with anti-terrorism and transnational organized crime. Specifically, in addition to mentoring and the building capacity of the unit's specialized investigations brigade, the Mission, at the request of national authorities, provided technical assistance at 22 crime scenes in the collection and examination of evidence at the Mission's level 2 anti-terrorism forensic laboratory and in mobile data analysis. During the reporting period, six terrorism-related cases were brought to trial by the specialized judicial unit, all of which resulted in convictions with lengthy sentences.

29. The Mission supported the Government in the development of interministerial security plans for the main prison in Bamako and a prison emergency simulation exercise aimed at improving coordination among security and defence services in response to internal disturbances and external attacks. From 31 May to 18 August, the Mission, in collaboration with international partners, trained 497 members of the Malian security forces, including 40 women, from Bamako, Gao and Timbuktu on various policing modules and on human rights.

30. On 10 July, the national policy on preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism in Mali and its action plan for 2018–2020 were launched, with the support of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. The national policy encompasses five pillars: prevention, protection, prosecution, response and social cohesion. During nine training sessions held between 31 May and 17 September, a total of 179 Malian security forces, including 23 women, were trained in various areas to build and develop their capacity in preventing violent extremism.

D. Regional developments

31. On 29 June, a complex attack using a suicide vehicle carrying improvised explosive devices targeted the headquarters of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel in Sévaré, Mopti region. It killed 2 Malian soldiers and injured 11 elements of the Joint Force, including 5 from Chad, 4 from the Niger and 2 from Mali. This was the first complex attack in the Mopti region. At the time of reporting, all seven battalions of the Joint Force were deployed. In total, the Joint Force had conducted six inter-army operations since its establishment. On 12 July, General Hanena Ould Sidi, Deputy Army Chief of Mauritania, was appointed force commander of the Joint Force, replacing General Didier Dacko; and on 7 August the police adviser to the Joint Force, Abdellahi Sidi Aly, was appointed.

32. MINUSMA continued to support the Joint Force in line with Security Council resolution [2391 \(2017\)](#). On 6 July, MINUSMA reviewed its support plan with respect to the Joint Force, focusing on the engineering component. Following the attack of 29 June, the Mission expressed its readiness to provide assistance in the construction of a new Headquarters; that offer is being considered by the Joint Force. The tripartite mechanism, comprising the Joint Force, the United Nations and the European Union, identified the effective operationalization of the police component as a priority to contribute to greater accountability, the rule of law and the prevention of and response to human rights violations. During his visit to Mali, the Under-Secretary-General, together with my Special Representative, the Permanent Secretary of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the incoming and outgoing Joint Force commanders, assessed the challenges and the urgent needs faced by the Joint Force. They identified a series of initiatives aimed at ensuring effective, sustainable and predictable financing of the Joint Force.

III. Major security developments

33. During the reporting period, the security situation remained of serious concern. The Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims attacked MINUSMA, Malian defence and security forces and international forces across central and northern Mali, particularly in the Gao and Mopti regions. There were also increases in intimidation, kidnappings and targeted assassinations of both civilians and signatory armed group members, and in alleged cases of sexual and gender-based violence, especially in the centre of the country.

A. Asymmetrical and other attacks

34. The Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara enhanced their coordination in the tri-border area between Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, resulting in attacks against Malian defence and security forces and international forces. Also targeted were civilians accused of collaborating with the Malian State and groups such as the Groupe d'autodéfense des Touaregs Imghad et leurs alliés and the Mouvement pour le salut de l'Azawad.

35. On the eve of the presidential elections, elements of the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims threatened the holding of the elections and burned and looted polling stations. On 23 July, the airport facilities of Sévaré came under indirect fire attack by two rockets, followed by small arms fire; there were no casualties. On 29 July, terrorist groups destroyed or ransacked at least 50 polling stations in the Mopti, Ségou and Timbuktu regions. Also during the first round, a rocket landed near a polling station in Aguelhok, Kidal region, resulting in the temporary suspension of voting.

36. On the day of the run-off election, in the Timbuktu region, unidentified armed assailants shot dead the head of the polling station in Arkodia and robbed electoral officers. In the Mopti and Ségou regions, three polling stations were attacked by unidentified armed elements. A total of three civilians and six members of the Malian armed forces were killed in attacks during the electoral process in Mopti, Ségou and Timbuktu.

37. On 4 September, the MINUSMA camp in Ménaka came under indirect attack from unidentified assailants, resulting in the injury of one international civilian staff member. This was the first attack that had been carried out against that camp.

38. During the reporting period, 42 incidents involving the use of an improvised explosive device were recorded, with 38 per cent occurring in the central regions. Since January 2018, the number of improvised explosive device incidents has significantly increased, with 133 incidents occurring, compared with 78 during the same period in 2017. However, there has been a 5 per cent decrease in the number of casualties compared with the same period in 2017.

39. During the reporting period, armed groups conducted 58 attacks, comprising: 21 against Malian defence and security forces; 16 against MINUSMA and 1 against a United Nations agency; 17 against signatory armed groups; 1 against Operation Barkhane; 1 against the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel; and 1 against a joint convoy of the Joint Force, Malian defence and security forces, the Groupe d'autodéfense des Touaregs Imghad et Alliés and the Mouvement pour le salut de l'Azawad. The highest number of attacks were carried out in Mopti (16) and Gao (15), followed by Kidal (10), Timbuktu (10), Ménaka (5) and Ségou (2).

40. Malian defence and security forces were heavily targeted, and the number of victims increased: 19 soldiers were killed and 24 injured, compared with 6 killed and

21 injured during the previous reporting period. Attacks against the Malian defence and security forces (21) were concentrated mostly in Mopti (13), followed by Gao (4), Ségou (2) and Timbuktu (2). Moreover, a series of clashes between signatory armed groups and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara in the Ménaka region left 40 members of the signatory armed groups killed and 4 injured, compared with 26 members killed and 17 injured in attacks during the previous period.

B. Protection of civilians

41. In the centre of Mali, the security environment continued to deteriorate significantly, mainly as a result of targeted attacks and intercommunity clashes between armed self-defence or violent extremist groups. The reporting period recorded the highest number of civilian casualties since the deployment of MINUSMA, with 287 civilians killed, including 14 women and 10 children, and with 38 injured and 67 abducted. Several communes in Djenné and Koro districts, Mopti region, have been caught in a spiral of violence and retaliation, leading to killings and the displacement of more than 5,000 civilians.

42. The main perpetrators of recent violence are self-proclaimed self-defence groups, namely, Dan Nan Ambassagou and Dogon Ambassagou. Both are affiliated with *dozos* (traditional hunters) claiming to protect the Dogon community, and the Alliance pour le salut du Sahel, which claims to protect the Fulani community. Some of the deadliest incidents occurred on 23 June, when self-defence groups clashed in the Djenné district, killing 24 civilians, including 5 children, and on 1 July in the village of Bombou, Koro district, when 16 individuals were killed, including 5 women and a young boy, and resulted in large-scale population displacement. On 8 July, 14 corpses reportedly belonging to members of the Fulani community were found in a well in Tagari village, Koro district. On the same day, members of the Alliance pour le salut du Sahel reportedly attacked members of the Dogon community in Dioungani, Koro district, killing four civilians. On 25 July, up to 17 civilians of the Fulani community were killed in the village of Somena, Djenné district.

43. During the reporting period, 10 recorded incidents, including 3 in the Kidal region, 5 in the Mopti region, 1 in the Timbuktu region and 1 in the Ségou region, involving improvised explosive devices killed a total of 21 civilians and injured 21 others. All of the incidents involved improvised explosive devices that detonated when hit by a privately owned vehicle.

44. In an effort to stabilize the Mopti region, Malian defence and security forces were deployed in Kouakourou and Koro towns, which resulted in a decrease in the number of violent incidents in those localities. The Mission continued to use its good offices and advocate with the Government to find durable solutions to the deterioration of the situation. Meanwhile, the limited presence of State authority and public administrators in rural areas of central Mali has created a security vacuum in which violent extremist groups have increased their influence.

45. On 6 and 7 June, MINUSMA provided logistical support for a government initiative aimed at addressing local conflicts through the operationalization of a regional reconciliation support team in Mopti. From 11 and 24 June, MINUSMA conducted Operation Furaji II on the Douentza-Hombori axis, Mopti region, which led to a reduction in the number of attacks against civilians. On 9 July, MINUSMA launched an integrated justice and reconciliation project in three villages in Koro district, Mopti region. The project was aimed at preventing further conflicts between the Dogon and Fulani communities.

46. On 28 August, following a three-month mediation process led by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 34 Dogon and Fulani village chiefs signed an intercommunal

peace agreement to end violence in the Koro district in the Mopti region. The agreement includes commitments to ensuring peaceful access to natural resources and prioritizing the use of traditional mediation mechanisms to prevent and manage disputes. The agreement was rejected by the Dan Nan Ambassagou group, which claimed that it had not been involved in the process.

C. Mine action, weapons and small arms

47. On 7 September, for the first time a group of Malian instructors trained by MINUSMA delivered an explosive ordnance disposal training course to 30 members of the Malian armed forces. Malian defence forces, with the technical assistance of MINUSMA and the European Union Training Mission in Mali, adopted their first standard operating procedures on improvised explosive device disposal.

48. The Mission trained 65 Malian defence and security forces in explosive threat mitigation, including members of one Malian armed forces unit and two gendarmerie mobile teams specializing in improvised explosive device disposal.

49. Efforts to enhance the weapons and ammunition management capacity of the Malian defence and security forces continued with the training of 14 personnel in safe and secure storage practices in Timbuktu. Since 2014, MINUSMA has trained more than 300 personnel, ranging from depot managers and storekeepers to weapons and ammunition management national trainers, to tackle the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

IV. Human rights situation

50. The human rights situation remained of serious concern. During the reporting period, MINUSMA documented 129 cases of human rights violations and abuses, involving at least 518 victims, including 68 women and 32 children, compared with 344 cases and 475 victims during the previous reporting period. There were 54 cases of extrajudicial execution or other arbitrary killings, 15 cases of abduction or enforced disappearance, 18 cases of torture or ill-treatment and 8 cases of unlawful detention. Of the total number of documented cases, members of the Malian defence and security forces were involved in 18 human rights violations, including 4 cases of extrajudicial execution. The Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims and other similar groups were responsible for 47 cases of human rights abuses, while community self-defence groups were responsible for 49 cases, and signatory groups and other non-signatory or splinter groups for 15 cases. A total of 64 per cent of human rights violations and abuses occurred in the Mopti and Ségou regions, 13 per cent in the Timbuktu region, 7 per cent in Bamako, 6 per cent in the Gao region, 5 per cent in the Kidal region and 4 per cent in the Ménaka region.

51. MINUSMA investigated serious allegations of violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law by elements of the Malian armed forces, in the context of counter-terrorism operations in central Mali, including the alleged summary execution of 25 civilians from Nantaka village, Mopti region, on 13 June. On 19 June, the Ministry of Defence issued a press release confirming the existence of a mass grave near Nantaka and the involvement of members of the Malian armed forces in the killing. On 7 July, the Ministry announced the opening of a criminal investigation into the killing of 12 civilians by members of the Malian armed forces operating under the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel on 19 May in Boulikessi village, Mopti region. On 5 September, the Mopti prosecutor requested the Mission's assistance in the Boulikessi investigation, as no progress had been made to date.

52. During the reporting period, violent extremist groups were responsible for the arbitrary killing of at least 32 civilians in the Gao, Ménaka and Timbuktu regions. Islamic State in the Greater Sahara continued to target civilians in the Niger border area of the Gao and Ménaka regions and allegedly killed at least 22 civilians in that area. The Groupe d'autodéfense des Touaregs Imghad et leurs alliés and the Mouvement pour le salut de l'Azawad were involved in the arbitrary killing of at least five civilians, in the Gao, Ménaka and Timbuktu regions.

53. MINUSMA monitored the human rights situation in the context of the presidential elections and activated its human rights call centre to facilitate the reporting of violations. Violent extremist groups accounted for all the election-related human rights abuses documented by MINUSMA, including intimidation and direct attacks against polling stations and against individuals perceived to be supportive of the elections. Of the 55 security incidents documented, at least 8 may constitute serious human rights abuses, including the killing of at least three electoral agents and the abduction of a polling station president in the Mopti region, and four physical attacks against electoral workers in the Mopti and Timbuktu regions. MINUSMA conducted 33 sensitization and training sessions on human rights and elections, benefiting 914 participants, including 220 women.

54. The Mission delivered training courses on human rights for 250 members of the Malian defence and security forces, 526 members of the civil society and 61 elements of the Operational Coordination Mechanism. From 21 to 24 June, the Mission and local partners carried out a sensitization campaign on the prevention of HIV and on conflict-related sexual violence for 404 women and girls, including internally displaced persons in Gao, 263 of whom were tested for HIV and referred to health facilities.

55. The country task force on monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict verified 58 grave violations against children. A total of 17 children were killed and 14 were maimed in the Kidal, Mopti, Timbuktu regions; 12 children were separated from armed groups in the Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu regions and are following a reintegration programme in Bamako and Gao; seven cases of attacks and threats against schools and hospitals; and nine cases of denial of humanitarian access. MINUSMA provided technical and financial support to the United Youth Network for Children's Rights, composed of more than 60 youth and child associations, to implement an online social media platform to discuss and disseminate Security Council resolution [1612 \(2005\)](#) on children in armed conflict.

56. During the reporting period, MINUSMA documented nine cases of conflict-related sexual violence involving at least nine victims, including three minors. These cases included four rapes and five gang rapes perpetrated by at least 14 unidentified armed elements in the Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu regions. From January to June 2018, 1,115 cases of gender-based violence were recorded, including 758 cases of sexual violence. Sixty-eight per cent of the victims were under 18 years of age. The survivors received 150 reproductive health kits, including post-rape kits.

57. During the reporting period, more than 1,087 individuals appeared before the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission. The Commission reported that as at 31 August, it had received a total of 9,360 depositions since 3 January 2017. UN-Women continued to provide technical support to the Commission in integrating gender into its work.

V. Humanitarian situation

58. The humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate, mainly as a result of insecurity in the northern and central regions and the impacts of a poor rainy season in 2017. Severe floods hit several regions, affecting some 25,000 people. In addition, intercommunal clashes led to a surge in internal displacement, nearly doubling the number of internally displaced persons between January and July. Overall, 5.2 million people now require lifesaving and protection assistance, up from 3.8 million people in 2017. Consequently, the 2018 humanitarian response plan was revised in July to reflect the increase in needs, with the number of people targeted by the response plan increasing from 1.56 million to 2.9 million. The funding requirements increased from \$263 million to \$330 million, of which only 32 per cent (\$106 million) had been received as at 6 September.

59. On 12 June, the World Food Programme activated an internal level 3 emergency for the lean season in the Sahel that would be in place until 29 November. As a result, from July to September the World Food Programme and its partners scaled up distributions by 100,000 beneficiaries to provide emergency food assistance to 604,000 persons, including 308,000 women, reaching 65 per cent of those in critical need. The World Food Programme also provided emergency nutritional assistance to 228,000 persons through blanket supplementary feeding.

60. In early August, the humanitarian country team and the Government, with logistical support from MINUSMA, provided medical, nutritional and food assistance to several villages in the Mondoro commune, Mopti region, following reports of 224 cases of malnutrition, including 29 deaths owing to a lack of medical care. On 11 August, Malian authorities, humanitarian actors and MINUSMA provided emergency assistance, including water, food and non-food items, to more than 360 vulnerable households in Aguelhok, Kidal region, after damage resulting from severe flooding.

61. From 31 May to 6 September, 55 security incidents, involving mostly compound break-ins and vehicle thefts, affected humanitarian actors, compared with 50 cases during the previous reporting period. On 18 June, six international non-governmental organizations suspended their activities in the Ménaka region owing to insecurity; five of them resumed their activities on 30 June. On 11 and 26 July, United Nations armoured vehicles were fired upon by small arms fire in Timbuktu; there were no injuries as a result.

62. As at 31 July, the Government, with the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, had registered 75,351 internally displaced persons, 526,505 returning internally displaced persons, 67,420 Malian returnees from asylum countries and 601 asylum seekers. Mali hosts 24,368 refugees from various countries and more than 139,573 Malian refugees remain in neighbouring countries.

63. At the end of the school year, 735 schools remained closed in the Mopti (464), Timbuktu (88), Gao (67), Ménaka (60), Kidal (42) and Ségou (14) regions, owing to insecurity, including threats and attacks from violent extremist groups. In June, the national humanitarian education cluster, in collaboration with regional education authorities, indicated that 1,108 schools had been closed at least once (over a period of 20 school days) during the 2017/18 school year, affecting 332,400 children. To mitigate the impact of the forced closure of these schools and ensure access to inclusive and quality education in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its targets, humanitarian actors provided support to the Government and communities through alternative forms of education in affected regions.

VI. Economic development

64. Real gross domestic product growth is expected to remain robust at approximately 5 per cent in 2018, according to the International Monetary Fund. On 6 and 7 June, a joint national budget review conducted by the Government and technical and financial partners resulted in the recommendations that the tax base be broadened and that the transfer of budgetary resources to local authorities be accelerated.

65. On 16 July, the Malian Government presented its voluntary national report on the Sustainable Development Goals at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in New York. It highlighted the progress made in societal transformation and resilience and concerns over increased dependency on international development assistance. The same day, the Government launched the formulation of a new strategic framework for economic recovery and sustainable development, based on the Sustainable Development Goals and the prospective vision for Mali 2040.

66. MINUSMA and UNDP supported the implementation of various aspects of the national policy on preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism in Mali and its action plan, including through the establishment of the offices of the national directorate and a national observatory on preventing and countering violent extremism in Bamako, as well as a pilot project on preventing violent extremism in Mopti, targeting 200 young and teachers.

67. In July, UNDP launched preparatory activities for the organization of a subregional conference on the economic impact of violent extremism in the countries of the Sahel region. The Peacebuilding Fund supported workshops for youth organizations in Bamako, Timbuktu, Mopti and Ségou on radicalism, violent extremism and the prevention role played by communities. Jointly organized by a non-governmental organization, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes and the National Youth Council, these discussions were focused on the national policy on preventing violent extremism and the causes of and strategies for eliminating violent extremism in Mali, and were broadcast on local radio stations.

VII. United Nations strategic frameworks and integration plans

68. Pursuant to resolution [2423 \(2018\)](#), MINUSMA is reprioritizing its efforts and resources to focus on political tasks and has initiated an internal examination of its key strategic documentation and plans, including the Mission concept. It has developed criteria to inform the revision of its footprint in northern and central Mali, with a view to optimizing and rebalancing its presence, while strengthening its coordination and planning mechanisms both within the Mission and with the United Nations country team.

69. On 3 September, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and my Special Representative led a retreat with the United Nations country team and MINUSMA in Bamako. At the retreat concrete measures were identified to strengthen integration, including through the presence of the country team in the central and northern regions of the country, and to help to restore stability in the centre, by adopting a more multifaceted approach. Participants agreed on the importance of increasing Malian ownership of the peace process and inclusiveness in its implementation, notably through the proposed pact for peace. They also defined the strategic directions of the future integrated strategic framework, which is being drafted.

VIII. Capacities of the Mission

A. Military

70. As at 15 September, 12,231 military personnel had been deployed, out of the authorized strength of 13,289 personnel, including 39 military observers, 437 staff officers and 11,755 contingent personnel. Women accounted for 2.64 per cent of military personnel.

71. The implementation of the recommendations resulting from the technical review conducted in July 2017 continued, including the deployment of staff officers to the forward command post in Mopti and the establishment of an information operations cell and the deployment of officers specialized in force protection in Bamako. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations approved an increase in the statement of unit requirements of infantry battalions from two to three mechanized companies, including one that must include mine-protected armoured vehicles. Discussions with relevant troop-contributing countries to adjust the existing memorandums of understanding and deployments are ongoing.

72. The lack of medium utility helicopters in the Mopti and the Timbuktu regions, and the lack of contingent-owned armoured personnel carriers, including mine-protected vehicles, remained the most critical equipment shortfalls. This gap has limited the operational reach of MINUSMA in certain tasks such as patrolling and providing escorts, particularly in rural areas, thereby hindering mandate implementation.

73. The deployment of motorized elements of the quick-reaction force in Mopti was completed in July. A medium utility helicopter unit provided by Canada was deployed to Gao in July, while airfield support units provided by El Salvador and Jordan were deployed to Timbuktu and Gao in June and July, respectively.

B. Police

74. On 6 September, 1,728 police personnel, or 90 per cent of the authorized strength, were deployed, with 311 individual police officers, of whom 18.65 per cent were women, and 1,417 formed police unit personnel, of whom 4.73 per cent were women.

75. MINUSMA police continued to require the deployment of an additional formed police unit, five armoured personnel carriers for deployed formed police units, and six armoured vehicles for individual police officers. The Mission also requires the support of Member States to generate 25 individual police officers with specialized expertise, including in the fields of forensics, investigations, community-oriented policing, security sector reform, counter-terrorism, serious organized crime and drug trafficking.

C. Civilian personnel

76. As at 19 September, MINUSMA had deployed 1,584 civilian personnel, representing 83 per cent of the total of 1,901 authorized positions (814 international, 898 national and 189 United Nations Volunteer). Women constituted 23 per cent of civilian personnel overall, including 26 per cent of international positions, 19 per cent of national positions and 31 per cent of United Nations Volunteer positions.

D. Camp construction and securing supply routes

77. In line with the Mission's plan to optimize its supply chain routes, the transfer of 14 international civilian staff posts from Bamako to Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu, and the subsequent reassignment of incumbents were completed during the reporting period. Since the Cotonou-Niamey-Gao supply route opened, in April 2017, more than 1,400 containers have been moved to Gao along this route without military escort.

78. The rehabilitation of the Gao airstrip was completed on 31 August, which allowed night operations to resume in mid-September.

E. Environment

79. As part of the implementation of its interim risk mitigation plan, and in order to minimize pollution risks, the Mission established a testing protocol and conducted training sessions on 30 June at all 14 MINUSMA sites, mainly where wastewater treatment plants were not yet operational. In June, the Mission completed a smart-metering pilot project in Bamako and an energy management assessment in Gao to prepare the Mission's energy management plan.

IX. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

80. MINUSMA continued to implement its action plan to reduce peacekeeper fatalities and injuries. It reinforced the surveillance and protection systems of the camp in Gao through the establishment of a long-range electro-optical system to detect movements in the periphery of the camp, in June. Public announcement systems were installed at the Mission's regional headquarters and the super-camps in Gao and Timbuktu to improve the communication of alerts in the event of an attack. The Mission also strengthened the camp's perimeter force protection and defensive features, as well as operation coordination centres, and improved air support coordination in Timbuktu. MINUSMA established dedicated Mission intelligence structures and developed training modules on intelligence reporting processes.

81. Although eight peacekeepers and one civilian staff member sustained injuries as a result of the security incidents referred to in paragraph 39 above, no MINUSMA personnel, including its contractors, suffered fatalities during hostile acts that occurred during the reporting period. The Operation Barkhane forces sustained no fatalities or injuries. While the number of hostile acts against MINUSMA has remained generally consistent, the past six months have shown a positive trend, with a 30 per cent drop in fatalities and 40 per cent drop in injuries compared with the second half of 2017.

82. Training on the search for and detection of improvised explosive devices provided to MINUSMA troops since 2015 has had positive results, as the rate at which MINUSMA troops providing escorts for United Nations logistics convoys detect and neutralize improvised explosive devices has increased to 46 per cent in 2018, compared with 31 per cent in 2017 and 27 per cent in 2016.

83. The Mission's support for the operationalization of the specialized judicial unit on terrorism and transnational organized crime facilitated the monitoring of cases related to attacks against peacekeepers and improved the cooperation of the Mission with the unit regarding such investigations. As a result, in June, the special prosecutor of the unit submitted two requests for assistance in relation to the deaths of peacekeepers.

X. Conduct and discipline

84. No allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were recorded during the reporting period. The Mission continued to implement the three-pronged strategy for combating sexual exploitation and abuse and provided training to a total of 1,727 personnel, comprising 1,452 uniformed personnel and 275 civilians, under the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual exploitation and abuse.

XI. Observations

85. I wish to commend the Malian people for the peaceful and successful holding of the presidential elections. Presidential candidates and their political affiliations demonstrated considerable political maturity throughout the electoral process. The Government made commendable efforts to organize the elections within the constitutional deadlines, despite several anomalies and some security incidents in northern and central Mali. I wish to recognize, in particular, important measures taken by the Prime Minister, Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga, to promote a constructive dialogue and address mistrust in the electoral process, as well as the efforts of Malian defence and security forces, with the contribution of signatory and other armed groups, to secure the electoral process.

86. I am gratified by the efforts made by the United Nations throughout the electoral process. I commend the proactive good offices and political support provided by my Special Representative, including coordinating the actions of the international community and observation missions of the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie.

87. I wish to congratulate President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita on re-election. The onus is now on him and his Government to redouble the efforts to implement the remaining key provisions of the Agreement and move forward on institutional reforms. In this regard, I appreciate the fact that he made the implementation of the Agreement one of his priorities during the inauguration ceremony held on 4 September. The people and the Government of Mali together must seize the opportunity to shape the foundations for lasting peace and stability, building on the Agreement. In that context, the pact for peace, as requested in resolution [2423 \(2018\)](#), offers an opportunity to reinvigorate the peace process. While it is clear that the pact should not duplicate structures or replace the Agreement, I sincerely believe that it represents a chance to reinvigorate the implementation of the Agreement. The pact should include political reforms such as decentralization, security sector reform and the rule of law, as well as socioeconomic development, based on greater inclusiveness and agreed benchmarks and with the coherent support of international and regional partners. I encourage Malian stakeholders and partners, under the leadership of the Government and with the support of my Special Representative, to take part in its materialization.

88. I welcome recent progress in the implementation of the Agreement, including the appointment of interim authorities in 21 districts of the five northern regions, the progressive operationalization of the mixed units of the Operational Coordination Mechanism in the regions of Kidal and Timbuktu, and the adoption of the national security sector reform strategy. While some women were appointed as members of interim authorities, I urge parties to consider a more meaningful participation of women in the peace process, which is essential for its success. The upcoming elections will offer an opportunity to realize the 30 per cent quota for women in elected positions, in accordance with Malian law.

89. In addition, I urge the parties to finalize a national vision for the reconstitution and redeployment of the Malian defence and security forces and of the territorial police, who are at the core of durable stability and the protection of populations. I encourage the parties to sustain the positive momentum and renewed trust in the peace process that I witnessed during my visit to Mali in May. Malian parties must live up to their obligations and commitments, including by respecting the timelines provided in the road map of 22 March, with respect to which I will report on progress in its implementation as requested in resolution [2423 \(2018\)](#).

90. Continuing security incidents that have occurred in central Mali, including during the presidential elections, underline the depth of the crisis in the region. Intercommunal conflict, exacerbated by violent extremist groups, is fraying an already fragile social fabric and is deeply concerning. Too high a human toll has accrued as a result of the ongoing spiral of violence. I wish to express my heartfelt condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives as a result of the deepening insecurity. The Government's efforts on the integrated security plan for the central regions is important and must be intensified and ensure simultaneous progress, not only on security, but also on governance, development and reconciliation. I call upon the Government to undertake the disarmament of armed groups, promote reconciliation and find durable solutions aimed at protecting civilians.

91. The human rights situation is alarming. It is absolutely imperative that the Government prevent human rights violations and abuses, including those committed by Malian armed forces when conducting counter-terrorism operations. Full and timely investigations into all allegations are essential, as are measures to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to account. The United Nations stands ready to assist the Government in this regard, as requested. I also wish to reiterate the responsibility of the Malian authorities to take all necessary actions to swiftly investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of crimes and grave human rights abuses against civilians, as well as those responsible for attacks against humanitarian workers, MINUSMA and international forces and Malian defence and security forces.

92. I condemn once more the 29 June terrorist attack against the headquarters of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel in Sévaré. I have continuously supported the efforts of the countries of the Group of Five for the Sahel in operationalizing the Joint Force, and this attack will not diminish my determination to curb the expansion of violent extremism. I welcome the efforts made towards the operationalization of the Joint Force, including of the police component, which will ensure continuity between the operations of the Joint Force and judicial systems in accordance with the rule of law and human rights. I note the appointment and assumption of duty of a new Force Commander of the Joint Force from Mauritania. Although the Joint Force is making progress, predictable and sustainable resources, including from Member States, will facilitate its full operationalization.

93. Investing in sustainable development and stability in Mali would yield tangible dividends with respect to building inclusive and peaceful societies and preventing the spread of conflict, extremism and threats to international peace and security to the Sahel and the broader West African region. Continued attacks have negative consequences for development opportunities, particularly in the border areas of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger. There is a need for countries in the Sahel region to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations to further advance the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel through the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel. It is critical to focus on the prevention of violent extremism and conflict, including through education and economic opportunities, especially for youth. I am concerned about the continued closure of schools in central regions of Mali, which will have a lasting impact on generations of youth.

94. The humanitarian situation in Mali has also significantly deteriorated over the past year as a result of increasing clashes and a poor rainy season in 2017. The level of needs is higher than at any point since the beginning of the crisis in 2012, with more than one out of four Malians requiring humanitarian assistance. While needs continue to increase, humanitarian funding has decreased, preventing a timely, at-scale and appropriate response. Our collective efforts, including through the urgent funding of the 2018 humanitarian response plan for Mali, are even more important today. I have also called for renewed commitment to reviving the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel to obtain a positive and durable impact across the Sahel.

95. While the number of attacks continues unabated, I am encouraged by the reduction in the number of fatalities and casualties among MINUSMA personnel. It demonstrates that our efforts, and in particular of the Mission, are bearing fruit. Meanwhile, the requirement for mobility and better-protected forces remains and affects negatively the implementation of the Mission's mandate. As requested by the Security Council in its resolution [2423 \(2018\)](#), MINUSMA has taken a number of measures to reprioritize its efforts and resources to implement its core political and security tasks. Efforts are also being made to strengthen the presence and activities of the United Nations country team in the central and northern regions of Mali to tackle the multidimensionality of instability.

96. I wish to express my deep appreciation to my Special Representative for Mali, Mahamat Saleh Annadif, for his excellent leadership; to all United Nations civilian and uniformed personnel for their continued hard work in a challenging environment and under stressful conditions; and to troop- and police-contributing countries, Algeria, as a lead mediator, the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union and other regional organizations, multilateral and bilateral partners, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, non-governmental organizations and all other partners for their invaluable support for peace in Mali.

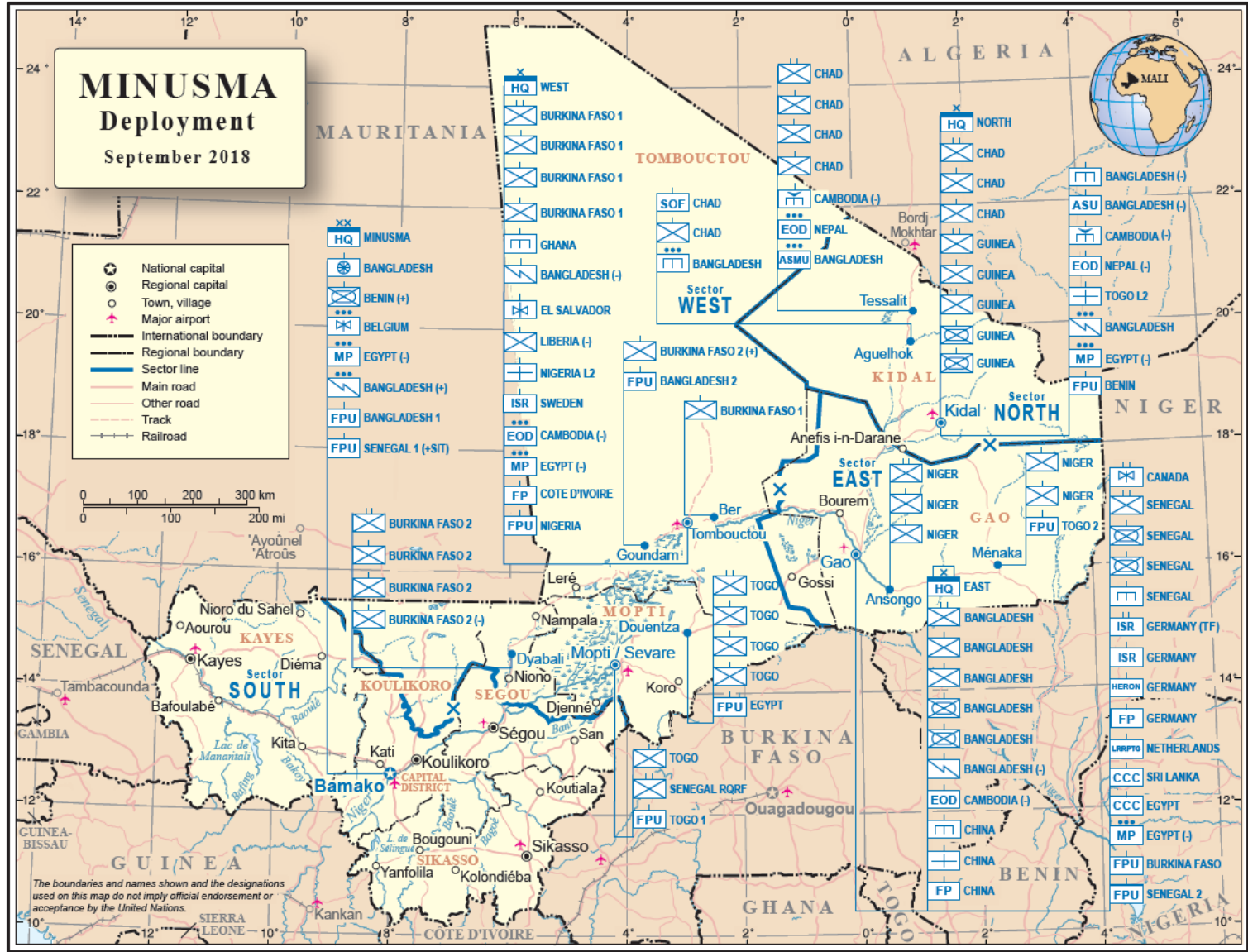
Annex I

**Military and police strength of the United Nations
Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
as at 14 September 2018**

Country	Military			Police									
	Experts on mission, staff officers and in units			Individual police officers			In formed police units			Total police			
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Armenia	1		1										
Austria	2	1	3										
Bangladesh	1 409	9	1 418				278		278	278			278
Belgium	121	12	133										
Benin	254	3	257	22	2	24	139	1	140	161	3	154	
Bhutan	4		4										
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2		2										
Burkina Faso	1 636	68	1 704	22	5	27	133	5	138	155	10	165	
Burundi	1	1	2										
Cambodia	278	25	303										
Cameroon	2		2	16	4	20				16	4	20	
Canada	126	12	138										
Chad	1 413	37	1 450	17	4	21				17	4	21	
China	387	16	403										
Côte d'Ivoire	159	4	163	19	5	24				19	5	24	
Czechia	5		5										
Denmark	1		1										
Egypt	335		335	6		6	134		134	140		140	
El Salvador	141	15	156										
Estonia	3		3										
Ethiopia	1		1										
Finland	3	1	4	5	1	6				5	1	6	
France	22		22	11	2	13				11	2	13	
Gambia	4		4										
Germany	411	9	420	7	1	8				7	1	8	
Ghana	165		165										
Guatemala	2		2										
Guinea	858	10	868	11	10	21				11	10	21	
Hungary				1		1				1		1	
Indonesia	10		10										
Italy	1	1	2	4		4				4		4	
Jordan	64		64	7		7				7		7	
Kenya	10	1	11										
Latvia	8	1	9										
Liberia	80	6	86										

Country	Military			Police								
	Experts on mission, staff officers and in units			Individual police officers			In formed police units			Total police		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Lithuania	36	3	39									
Madagascar				1		1				1		1
Mauritania	8		8									
Mexico	2		2									
Nepal	151	3	154									
Netherlands	338	8	346	3	4	7				3	4	7
New Zealand		1	1									
Niger	854	9	863	16	01	17				16	01	17
Nigeria	72	15	87	2	5	7	125	14	139	127	19	146
Norway	13	2	15									
Pakistan	3		3									
Portugal	3		3	1		1				1		1
Romania	2	1	3	2		2				2		2
Senegal	1 078	14	1 092	28	1	29	282	28	310	310	29	339
Sierra Leone	11	2	13									
Spain	1		1	2		2				2		2
Sri Lanka	207		207									
Sweden	227	25	252	5	2	7				5	2	7
Switzerland	5	1	6	4		4				4		4
Togo	898	38	936	13		13	259	19	278	272	19	291
Tunisia	2	2	4	20	2	22				20	2	22
Turkey				2		2				2		2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2		2									
United States of America	18	7	25									
Total	11 850	363	12 213	247	49	296	1 350	67	1 417	1 597	116	1 713

Map



Map No. 4506 Rev. 25.1 UNITED NATIONS
September 2018 (Colour)

Department of Field Support
Geospatial Information Section (formerly Cartographic Section)