
General Secretariat

**Address by Colonel Abdoulaye MAIGA, Acting Prime Minister, Head of
Government of Mali, at the General Debate of the 77th Ordinary
Session of the United Nations General Assembly
New York, 24 September 2022**

**Mr. President of the General Assembly
Heads of State and Government,
Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to extend to you all warm greetings from the Malian people, rich with their cultural, religious and ethnic diversity. I wish to also extend those from His Excellency Colonel Assimi GOITA, President of the Transition, Head of State.

Mr. President, your brilliant election to the presidency of this 77th session of the General Assembly and the closure of the 76th session of the General Assembly, brilliantly handled by your predecessor, H.E. Mr. Abdullah SHAHID, from the Republic of Maldives, give me the happy opportunity to extend to both of Your Excellencies the warmest congratulations of Mali as a whole.

Then, let me reiterate to our Secretary General, Mr. António GUTERRES, our highest appreciation of the commendable efforts he is making to achieve the noble objectives of our common Organization. We are convinced that you are a friend of Mali and the Sahel.

Since friendship is based on sincerity, allow me to totally disagree with your recent media release, in which you took a position and spoke on the case of the 46 Ivorian mercenaries, a case we deem a bilateral and judicial matter between two brotherly countries. It is obvious that the judicial characterization of the offences related to this case does not befall on the Secretary General of the United Nations. In Mali, our administration does not operate on orality, nor on press statements. We, therefore, scrupulously adhere to the MINUSMA Note Verbale reference: MINUSMA/PROT/NV/226/2022 dated July 22nd, 2022, which clearly states that there are no links whatsoever between the 46 mercenaries and the United Nations. The recent synchronization of actions and the harmonization of language to change Mali's status from being a victim to turning guilty in this case of mercenaries shall have no effect.

Your Excellency, Mr. Secretary General,

Your position on the issue of mercenaries has been mimicked by some West African leaders, so our message to them will be sent through your good self.

To the current Chairman of ECOWAS, Mr. Umaro Sissoco Embaló, who said: "We just saw the day before yesterday, the statement by the Secretary General of the United Nations who said that they are not mercenaries. If I were the Malians, I would have released these 49 soldiers."

I would very respectfully like to point out to him that there is a principle of subsidiarity, rather unclear, between ECOWAS and the United Nations and not a principle of mimicry. It is also important to point out that

the Secretary-General of the United Nations is not a Head of State and the current ECOWAS Chairman is not a civil servant. Therefore, it would be appropriate for him not to trivialize ECOWAS. Finally, it is useful to remind the current ECOWAS Chairman that in Mali, the authorities do not interfere in judicial matters and we do respect the independence of the judiciary. Therefore, it is not our role to question or release, this the role of the judiciary. Also, Mr. Umaro Sissoco Embaló should realize that he is a mere custodian of a heavy heritage and multiple sacrifices that established the reputation of this Organization. The dynamics which has made the strength and grandeur of ECOWAS should not be broken. Furthermore, we have taken note of the threat of sanctions against Mali, and far from being impressed by sanctions, I would like to point out to the current ECOWAS Chairman that at the end of his term in office, the West African peoples will judge him on the efforts he would have made to improve their living conditions, and not on the media shows to serve foreign agendas.

With regard to Mr. Bazoum, he should have taken note that the Transitional Government has never reacted to his insulting remarks. For two cumulative reasons. The first reason is out of respect for the heritage bestowed by our ancestors, which consists in not retaliating to insults with insults. The second reason is related to Mr. Bazoum's identity, a foreigner who claims to be from Niger. We know that the people of Niger, who are brothers of the people of Mali, are endowed with very rich societal, cultural and religious values. Mr. Bazoum is not a Nigerien, his behavior totally convinces and comforts us in our belief.

Your Excellency, Mr. Secretary General, Mali will draw all the legal consequences of your actions.

Before God and in full conscience, we ask those who refute our version to indicate whether they will accept that soldiers under concealed identities, as their passports state that they are painters, bricklayers, etc., with weapons, disembark at their airport, without any forehand notification to the country of destination, and with the fateful intention of destabilizing that country. If they do not accept this as a State, if that is not possible in Lisbon or elsewhere, Mali will neither accept it as a State, nor will that be possible in Bamako or in any other Malian locality.

Mr. President,

The theme of this 77th ordinary session of the General Assembly, "A New Era: Solutions for Change to Meet Interdependent Challenges", will give hope for better days for Mali, provided that an uncompromising assessment of the old era is made, lessons are learned and objective recommendations are made. Once this stage has been reached, I have no doubt that, through our collective action, we will succeed in pacifying the many areas of tension in the world, but also in promoting harmonious development and effectively fighting pandemics, environment degradation and global warming, inequalities, and policies of domination and predation of resources.

Since August 2020, Mali has been in a transition process ending on March 26th, 2024, with the transfer of power to elected authorities. From now to that date and in accordance with the recommendations of the National

Conference on Refoundation, the Transitional authorities have committed, in two timetables agreed with ECOWAS (the Economic Community of West African States), to carrying out political and institutional reforms, before organizing elections, the ultimate objective of which is to refound the Malian State, so that it meets the deep and legitimate aspirations of our people for peace, security, good governance, development and lasting institutional stability in Mali.

In this regard, I am happy to point out that some major progresses have already been made, particularly the enactment of the electoral law which includes, among other things, the creation of the Independent Authority for Electoral Management (AIGE), the installation of which is at an advanced stage, as well as the setting up of a Commission made up of Eminent Personalities from all walks of the Malian society, in charge of drafting the new Constitution.

Mr. President,

On another level, few people know that Mali is the only country in the world in which four types of insecurity are superimposed and occur simultaneously: terrorism, inter community conflicts manipulated by terrorists and their foreign State sponsors, transnational organized crime, and the violent actions by isolated individuals.

In parallel with this process of returning to constitutional order, Mali continues to wage a merciless struggle against insecurity actors, in particular

extremist groups, who are responsible for all kinds of mischief against our peaceful populations.

As regards Mali, I am happy and proud to report that terrorist groups have been seriously weakened and fear has even shifted to their side. However, these criminal groups still retain a certain capacity to cause harm, in their desperate attempts to undermine our territorial integrity and terrorize our populations.

Mali's valiant Defense and Security Forces remain determined to face all threats, wherever they may come from. Under the leadership of His Excellency Colonel Assimi GOITA, President of the Transition, Head of State, the Government of Mali continue to intensify their efforts to recruit, train, equip and strengthen the operational capabilities of the Malian Defense and Security Forces. I must say here that the offensive actions carried out so far have enabled our forces to win decisive victories against the obscurantist forces. They have also enabled the State to regain its foothold and reassert its authority over a large part of the national territory, as well as to encourage the return of several thousand of our fellow citizens to their places of origin.

However, we know that a purely military or security solution has its limits. That is why, in support of military action, the Government of Mali adopted a comprehensive and integrated strategy, including political, social and development measures, as well as the provision of basic social services to our people, who have been severely affected by the multi-faceted crisis going on since January 2012, with the objective of restoring the authority of the State throughout the national territory.

In this context, on August 24th, the Government of Mali approved the National Stabilization Strategy for the Central Regions and its 2022-2024 Action Plan. This strategy reflects the will of the Transitional authorities to have a holistic approach to the stabilization of the central regions. It aims at making the Center a stable and prosperous region where communities are reconciled and living in harmony with their neighbors.

At the same time, the diligent and smart implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, resulting from the Algiers process, remains a strategic priority for the Transitional authorities, as a peaceful instrument for lasting resolution of the crisis that Mali has been experiencing in its northern part.

I must say that I am particularly pleased with the conclusions of the second decision-making meeting of the parties to the Agreement, held in Bamako from August 1 to 5, 2022. This important meeting, which brought together the signatory parties and the International Mediation, enabled certain obstacles to be removed in order to revive the Agreement implementation process.

Surfing on this positive and progressive momentum of the peace process, the 6th high-level meeting of the Agreement Monitoring Committee (CSA) was held in Bamako just a few weeks ago, on September 02, 2022. This session of the CSA is a strong signal of the parties' willingness to engage in a new dynamic in order to complete the implementation of the

Agreement. I reaffirm here our commitment to this process, the success of which remains one of the sine qua non conditions for lasting stability in Mali.

This is the opportunity for me to commend once again the active role of Algeria and the support of the international mediation team.

I am mindful of the situation of Malian refugees in neighboring countries, which I commend for their hospitality towards our people. Nor do I forget that of our internally displaced compatriots. I want to reassure them that the Government of Mali remain very responsive to their precarious situation and that all our efforts are aimed at creating the conditions conducive to their return in safety and dignity, for their effective participation in the life of the nation. .

Mr. President,

In their difficult quest for peace, stability and sustainable development, the people of Mali remain grateful for the efforts and sacrifices made by MINUSMA, from its inception in July 2013 to the present day, aimed at helping Mali restore its authority over its entire territory.

This is why I would like to pay tribute, on behalf of the Malian people and Government, to the memory of all the victims, Malians and foreigners, civilian and military alike, who fell on the field of honor in Mali.

Having said that, we must recognize that nearly 10 years after its establishment, the objectives for which MINUSMA was deployed in Mali

have not been achieved. And this, despite numerous Security Council resolutions.

This is why the Government of Mali reiterate their request, expressed many times, for a paradigm shift, for MINUSMA to adapt it to the environment in which it is deployed and for better coordination of this mission with the Malian authorities.

In this regard, it is extremely important for MINUSMA to remain a support force in Mali in its quest for stability. The Government of Mali denounces the negative external influences and the attempts to instrumentalize certain entities legally present in Mali, to serve hidden agendas, including through the exploitation of human rights issues for destabilization purposes.

Mr. President,

The world will remember that after being abandoned mid-flight, on June 10, 2021, by France, which unilaterally decided to withdraw the Barkhane force from Mali, my country was then stabbed in the back by the French authorities. Precision is all the more useful as we refuse any confusion with the French people whom we respect.

The French authorities, deeply anti-French for having denied universal moral values and betrayed the heavy humanist heritage of the Enlightenment philosophers, have transformed themselves into a junta at the service of obscurantism.

Obscurantism of the French junta which, out of nostalgia for neocolonial, condescending, paternalistic and vengeful practice, sponsored and premeditated unprecedented, illegal, illegitimate and inhumane sanctions of ECOWAS and WAEMU against Mali. After more than 10 years of insecurity causing thousands of deaths and refugees and internally displaced persons, isn't it a sacrilege to put the Malian population already victimized by insecurity in a landlocked country under an embargo for 7 months, by closing borders and seizing Mali's financial assets?

Thanks to their resilience and to the solidarity from friendly countries and African peoples, the Malian people held out and thwarted the predictions of their opponents.

Obscurantism of the French junta, which was guilty of exploiting ethnic disputes, so easily forgetting their own responsibility in the genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda, also guilty of desperately trying to divide the Malian people belonging to one same family.

Finally, obscurantism of the French junta, which violated Malian airspace by flying aerial vectors such as drones, military helicopters and fighter planes, more than fifty times, by providing information, arms and ammunition to terrorist groups.

In order to ease their conscience, the French junta accuse Mali of not having been grateful, gargling about the regrettable deaths of 59 French soldiers in Mali, during various counter-terrorism operations. To this sad

accusation, we recall that in the majority of interventions by Malian officials and ceremonies, we systematically pay tribute to all the victims of insecurity in Mali without distinction of nationality, therefore, including the 59 French people who died. Also, we urge them not to stop on such a good path and to go back in time, going through their intervention in Libya decried by all of Africa, without forgetting the forced participation of thousands of Africans in World Wars I and II, not forgetting the slave trade which explains the so low level of economic development in many countries. How many Africans have died for France and the free world in which we live?

Mr. President,

Considering the seriousness of the acts committed by the French junta, Mali in its letter dated August 15, 2022, requested the convening of an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council. The purpose of this meeting is to enable Mali to show the evidence in its possession, testifying to the fact that the French army has repeatedly attacked my country, repeatedly and frequently violated Malian airspace, without authorization from the Malian authorities and sometimes by falsifying flight documents.

More seriously, Mr. President, Mali will be able to prove that the French junta provided information and weaponry to terrorist groups.

The Government of Mali wonders about the reasons which prompt this permanent Member State of the Security Council, and current Chair of this body, to obstruct the debate, for the manifestation of the truth. The world must be informed on the serious facts which took place in Mali and which

are the root causes of the worsening insecurity and destabilization in Mali and the Sahel.

By referring the issue to the Security Council, the Government of Mali intend to make this important body, primarily responsible for maintaining peace and international security, face up to its responsibilities and denounce the actions of the French junta against my country. These acts of hostility are incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and France's status as a permanent member.

The credibility of our common mechanism, the effectiveness of the fight against terrorism are at stake, but above all, the integrity of the United Nations is at stake, as the latter is based, among other things, on the respect for international commitments, international legality and the Charter of the United Nations. Mr. President, it seems appropriate for Mali to ask for your personal involvement with the United Nations Security Council, so that our request may succeed, so that duplicity and the proxy war imposed on my country may cease.

Mr. President,

In fighting terrorism and violent extremism, the Government of Mali are strongly concerned by the issue of human rights. I would like to emphasize that human rights are, above all, values embodied by every Malian. In addition, the Government of Mali remain determined to respect them and to enforce them, in accordance with their zero tolerance policy against impunity. And this, out of loyalty to our ancestral values inscribed

in the Kouroukanfouga Charter proclaimed in 1236 by the Emperor of Mali Soundiata KEITA. Mali, as the cradle of great civilizations, heir to great empires, a melting pot, a land of hospitality and tolerance, strives to promote and uphold human rights a national priority. This is why I strongly reaffirm that the military operations of the Defense and Security Forces of Mali are conducted with strict respect for human rights and international humanitarian law.

However, as I have just pointed out, the Government of Mali vehemently opposes the instrumentalization of the issue of human rights for political purposes, positioning, or even blackmail or intimidation. Similarly, we regret the selectivity observed between the rights of populations whose entire villages are massacred and torn down to the ground, which hardly arouse any particular indignation, and the communication manipulation that passes off terrorists neutralized on the battlefield as innocent civilians.

Mr. President,

To conclude, I would like to say that the Malian people have decided to take their destiny in their own hands. They fully support the Government in the re-foundation of Mali and the return to a peaceful and secure constitutional order in March 2024, following free, credible and transparent elections.

The materialization of such huge projects requires the Government to continue and intensify their efforts to continuously improve the security situation in the country and the protection of people and their property.

In this regard, I am pleased to note the holding in Lomé, on September 6, of the 3rd meeting of the Transition Monitoring and Support Group. The conclusions of this important meeting, in particular the recognition of the progress made by the Transition and the calls for mobilization of all Mali's partners to consolidate their political, economic, technical and financial support to the Republic of Mali, as well as to support the efforts of Mali's transitional authorities to achieve a harmonious restoration of constitutional order.

I would like to recall that the Transition in Mali is the result of several years of dysfunction in our young democracy, which has achieved some positive results. Unfortunately, when taking stock of the situation, we realize that liabilities are more important than assets, thereby giving rise to the Transition. I take this opportunity to warmly thank our respected elder, HE President Alassane Dramane Ouattara for the wise and enlightened advice he gave us in his memorable address to this 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly. I would like to reassure him that the Malian Transitional Authorities have no other objective than to make political and institutional reforms, before organizing elections, while persistently fighting terrorism. Such reforms shall improve governance and all necessary measures will be taken to ensure that Malian democracy is the most envied in the world.

In this process, we will pay particular attention to the issue of the third term in office which will not be possible. For a less informed public, the

third term consists, for a President of the Republic, in carrying out a four-step maneuver, in order to keep the power for himself and his clan:

- **Step 1:** Almost at the end of his second term, and therefore in principle not eligible for reelection, for the outgoing President of the Republic this means triggering a constitutional revision in a non-consensual way;
- **Step 2:** during this constitutional revision, the outgoing President will amend some of the constitutional provisions;
- **Step 3:** once the new constitution is adopted, against the backdrop of a political crisis, of course, the outgoing President becomes a candidate, in violation of the two-term limit. His candidacy is then justified by the adoption of the new constitution and the excuse is perfect: the two-term limit was relevant under the old constitution. Therefore, he is a candidate under the new constitution adopted.
- **Step 4:** an electoral farce is organized. Obviously, he wins the elections and there follows a ruthless hunt for political opponents, some of whom are arrested, others exiled and others assassinated. Allegiances are obtained through the power of money, patronage and intimidation.

In a more simplified language and with reference to a soccer metaphor, the 3rd term is a magic, it is the art of dribbling oneself while keeping the ball.

Your Excellency Mr. President Ouattara, your advice reminds us of the sad story of the camel that mocks the dromadary hump.

Despite tangible efforts by the Malian Transition to implement the timetables for political and institutional reforms and the elections, which have been praised by the international community, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Junta, from whom Mali has not asked anything, felt that there had been no progress, forgetting that no one can love Mali more than Malians themselves. Her unique position and her adversity hardly surprise us. Victor Hugo in **Claude Gueux** classified the human race into 2 categories, indicating: "that there are men who are iron and men who are magnet" the Minister in question, is unfortunately neither iron nor magnet, she is hideously sui generis.

Faced with uncertainty and foreign situations, the Malian people adopt a cautious attitude, this is what writer and wiseman Amadou Hampâté Ba emphasizes, advising in **L'Etrange destin de Wangrin** that: "If observing is a quality, knowing how to keep quiet protects from calamity". Mrs. Minister of the French junta, Mali advises you to be content with observing its situation.

This is an opportunity for me to commend the exemplary and fruitful cooperation relations between Mali and Russia, while reaffirming that Mali remains open to all partners who wish to help meet the many challenges that beset it, in strict respect for our sovereignty, our unity and for the dignity of the Malian people.

Mali recalls that in accordance with the Vision of Colonel Assimi GOÏTA, President of the Transition, Head of State, three principles shall guide public action:

1. Respect for Mali's sovereignty;
2. Respect for the strategic and partners choices made by Mali;
3. Taking into account the vital interests of the Malian people in the decisions taken.

Under such principles, Mali remains willing to pursue and strengthen its good neighborly relations with all the countries surrounding her. Similarly, Mali, faithful to her pan-African commitment, will continue to work within sub-regional and regional organizations for African integration.

In addition, achieving the objectives of the Transition requires support from all of Mali's partners, including the United Nations. I therefore appeal to the friends of Mali to remain mobilized alongside the Government to help them meet these important challenges together.

For the vast majority of the world's States, convinced of mutual respect and win-win partnership, I assure them that Mali's doors are widely open to them and Malians will welcome them with open arms.

For the minority who would be tempted not to comply with these principles, we promise that they will face millions of "Assimi GOÏTA", concerned with defending their honor, their dignity and their vital interests. I will conclude by two pieces of advice to those nostalgic for domination: have a sense of empathy by "Treating others as you would like to be treated" or "Not doing to others what you do not want others to do to you". The second advice, have a rethink, review your models, review your software to integrate the change of mindset and the evolution of the world in your

understanding and analysis, get out of the colonial past and hear the anger, the frustration, the rejection that comes from the African cities and rural areas, from the African populations, and understand that this movement is unstoppable. Thanks to the principle of fractal multiplication, your intimidations and your subversive actions have only increased the number of Africans concerned with preserving their dignity, if they were only a hundred at independence, today, we are millions and tomorrow, as long as unequal paradigms remain, we will be billions. Mali and its people will not be spectators in the face of assaults and adversity: for every word used inaccurately we will react by reciprocity, for every bullet fired at us, we will respond with reciprocity.

Only then will a new era be a reality, with solutions that bring change to meet interdependent challenges, with interdependent States and by valuing people, without distinction of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, nationality or social origin, property, birth or other statuses, as stipulated in Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

May God bless Mali and protect Malians from obscurantist and destructive forces of the world!

May God bless Africa and protect Africans from obscurantist and destructive forces of the world!

May God bless the world and protect all mankind from obscurantist and destructive forces of the world!

Thank you for your kind attention