



Briefing on MINUSMA (Mali), 16 June 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President, and I also thank SRSG Wane for his briefing.

Malta expresses its deepest condolences to the families of the peacekeepers that were killed in the attack on MINUSMA on 9 June. We pay tribute to the thousands of peacekeepers that bravely carry out their duties despite continuous threats to their safety and wellbeing and wish the injured a full and speedy recovery.

Malta supports a future for MINUSMA which continues to work with the people of Mali. The Strategic Review shared earlier this year provides us with solid outlooks to this effect.

We look forward to the outcome of the Constitutional Referendum which is a step in the right direction. We thank ECOWAS and the African Union for their efforts in supporting an inclusive process which places the will of the Malians at the core. As we acknowledge these efforts, we remain firm in our belief that a secured return to democratic and constitutional order, including the Presidential elections, is key.



We also urge the Malian Authorities and all parties to create a conducive environment for women's rights and their protection. They must strive to ensure their full, equal, safe, and meaningful participation in the political transition, electoral, and peace processes. In this context, we welcome efforts to counter hate speech and violence against women peacebuilders and human rights defenders.

President

Malta welcomes the meeting between the Minister for Reconciliation, Peace and National Cohesion of Mali with representatives of the CMA and Platform in Kidal. We also thank Algeria for its efforts in leading the International Mediation.

We continue to call for neutral engagement with tangible outcomes in full respect to the Peace Agreement, the issues of self-determination, deeper decentralisation, and local governance. Furthermore, the socio-economic development for the Northern region of Mali remains crucial. Dissipating any existing frictions between signatory parties is a necessity.



Malta recognises the urgent need to address the ongoing security, humanitarian and human rights situation in Mali, which are both a cause and a product of years of conflict in the region. The people of Mali are facing increasing humanitarian needs and displacement compounded by the effects of climate shocks, deep poverty, and acute malnutrition with 8.8 million people requiring humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian operations continue to face multiple access-related challenges due to insecurity and instances of criminality. We call on all parties to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to live up to their obligations under international law. Although relatively less severe when compared to the east, we are very alarmed that extremist attacks are now also reported in the west and south of Mali.

Malta calls for an immediate end to ongoing human rights violations and abuses. We are alarmed by the hundreds of incidents of conflict related sexual and gender-based violence recorded against women and girls in April. Perpetrators must be held accountable, cases must be investigated, and victims must be given effective and prompt protection.



We are also alarmed by the other grave violations against children, which remain high, including recruitment and use, killing and maiming, and attacks on schools. Child protection capacities in MINUSMA need to be strengthened. Additionally, we remain deeply concerned with the bleak conclusions that emerged from the Moura report.

MINUSMA's capacity to deter violent extremism by being present on the ground should not be underestimated. We continue to call for greater cooperation from the Authorities to guarantee the required freedom of movement for the Mission. We also commend the work of the Elsie Initiative that continues to assist an enabling and inclusive environment for women peacekeepers in MINUSMA.

Malta will continue to support the Mission's crucial presence in the region and the work of the Special Representative as they support Mali in their course towards peace and stability.

I thank you.