5 August 2013

REPORT ON THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION TO MALI OF 28 JULY 2013
(first round)
26-30 JULY 2013

Joyce LABOSO (Kenya), Co-President, co-chair of the delegation
Patrice TIROLIEN (S&D, FR), Vice-President, co-chair of the delegation

and

Abdourahamane CHEGOU (Niger), Vice-President,
Bruno LENGKON (Vanuatu), Vice-President,
Nicole KIIL-NIELSEN (Greens/EFA, FR), Member of the European Parliament,
Niccolò RINALDI (ALDE, IT), Member of the European Parliament.
1. **Introduction**

Over the last few months, the consequences of the war in Libya for Mali and Sahel-Saharan Africa have captured the attention of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (ACP-EU JPA), which has devoted a number of resolutions and declarations to the issue. In addition, the Bureau of the JPA sent a fact-finding mission to Mali in March 2013. It was therefore perfectly natural for the JPA to decide to take part in the joint election observation effort, not only by the EU and the European Parliament but also by a host of national and international observers and NGOs.

Accordingly, on 16 June 2013, the ACP-EU JPA Bureau decided to accept the invitation of the Malian authorities to send an observation mission for the presidential election of 28 July. The mission observed the first round of voting, a second round having been scheduled for 11 August 2013 if a single candidate did not obtain an absolute majority in the first round.

2. **Background to the election**

The nascent democracy in Mali was weakened by a situation of conflict between the state and a part of the population of the three northern provinces. This conflict was then exploited by extremist groups linked to Al Qaeda and opportunistic criminals so that it escalated into an open conflict that eventually led to the coup of 22 March 2012. Under pressure from the international community, the coup stalled and a roadmap for transition was approved by the National Assembly. A new attempt at destabilisation in January 2013 was thwarted by the intervention of the French military Operation Serval, supported by several partners in the region. Amongst other things, the roadmap stipulated that presidential and parliamentary elections had to be held throughout the national territory and take place in a calm atmosphere guaranteed by a certain level of security.

Meanwhile, the establishment of the UN mission MINUSMA on 1 July 2013, taking over from MISMA, and the Ouagadougou agreements of 18 June 2013 laid the necessary groundwork for a **presidential election to be held on 28 July 2013**. It is too soon to plan the **parliamentary elections** – which were supposed to be held in April 2012 – as the Ouagadougou agreements first need to be implemented in order to create the necessary trust to enable a large part of the population to return to the three northern provinces. Indeed, under these agreements, a negotiated solution needs to be found to the dispute in the north within 60 days following the election of the President of the Republic, in order to pave the way for parliamentary elections before the end of the year.

The first round of the presidential election saw 27 competing candidates, only one of whom a woman. A 28th candidate withdrew after a few days, expressing the view that under current conditions, inclusive elections throughout the land could not be guaranteed.
3. **Preperation of the mission**

As in the past, the ACP-EU JPA election observation mission (6 Members) joined forces with the EU election observation mission, which managed to gather around 100 observers. The mission received strong support from the latter, from both a logistical and planning point of view. In addition, it worked hand in hand with the European Parliament election observation mission (also 6 Members).

The mission began its work in Bamako on Thursday, 26 July. Its aim was to attend a series of information and coordination meetings before polling day.

A meeting was held with the Minister of Territorial Administration, Decentralisation and Regional Planning (MATDAT), Moussa Sinko Coulibaly, who was in charge of all the practical aspects of organising the elections. The mission also met the Delegate General for the Elections, General Siaka Sangare, and the President of the Constitutional Court, which had a very important role to play as the body responsible for validating the election results.

The mission had talks with the representatives of three of the four main candidates – Soumaila Cissé (URD), Modibo Sidibé (FARE) and Dramane Dembélé (ADEMA-PASJ). A representative of Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta (RPM) cancelled his meeting. The mission also had interesting discussions with six important NGOs.

As regards the international community, the mission had an exchange of views with General Lecointre, head of the EU Training Mission (EUTM), responsible for rebuilding the Malian army. A meeting was also held with international and national observers and another with a number of diplomatic missions, including seven EU missions, the United States, Canada, China, Mauritania, Algeria, Burkina Faso and the head of the EU delegation, Richard Zink. Michel Reveyrand-de Menthon, EU Special Representative for the Sahel, also attended the latter meeting.

4. **Election Day**

On election day (28 July), one team was sent into action in Segou while the other two focused their observation on the capital Bamako and surrounding areas, and Koulikoro.

The three teams agreed that the population was calm, eager to vote and that turnout was high (estimated at around 50%, whereas in the past, maximum turnout had been 34%). This was confirmed by the EP election observation delegation, which was deployed in the same regions but visited other polling stations. People were friendly towards the observers, and even grateful, because they appeared to understand the observers’ role.

On election day, the JPA election observation mission (EOM) cooperated closely with the EU EOM and in particular with its long-term observers, and with the European Parliament EOM. From an operational point of view, the JPA EOM contributed to the EU’s joint effort by filling in the same observation forms as all the other EU short-term observers.

5. **Observations and conclusions**
In the polling stations observed, a number of administrative errors were committed due to the inexperience of the polling station presiding officers or, sometimes, the illiteracy of voters. Generally speaking, voting secrecy was respected. Some difficulties in finding the right polling station were noted, in certain cases.

Women were well represented among returning officers and delegates accredited by the political parties in the polling stations observed. The delegates were highly motivated and attentive throughout the day, until the votes were counted after 18.00, despite the constraints of Ramadan.

The overall impression was that of a ballot that was well organised by the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Decentralisation and Regional Planning (MATDAT), with some inevitable imperfections, the nature and extent of which certainly did not call into question the legitimacy of the results.

The Preliminary Statement of the JPA Election Observation Mission is attached hereto as Annex 2. Detailed recommendations will be made in the final report of the EU EOM on the basis of the remarks made by all short-term EU observers.

6. Days after the ballot

On 30 July, the day of the mission’s departure, the Minister of Territorial Administration announced that after almost 30% of the ballots had been counted, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK) was well ahead and that, if this trend were to continue, a second ballot might not be necessary.

This initial trend, however, was not confirmed at the announcement of the provisional official results on Friday, 2 August, which were as follows: turnout: 51.5%; Ibrahim Boubacar Keita came in first with 39.2% of the vote, followed by Soumaila Cisse, with 19.4%.

According to the final results of the first round, as proclaimed by the Constitutional Court on 7 August 2013, a second round of the presidential election, on 11 August 2013, would see Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (39.79%) run against Soumaila Cisse (19.70%). Other interesting figures: registered voters: 6 829 696; voters: 3 345 253; spoilt ballot papers: 389 876; votes cancelled: 113; valid votes cast: 2 955 264; absolute majority: 1 477 633, and turnout: 48.98%.

Annexes: 1. Programme
2. Statement to the press (31 July 2013)
**APP ACP-UE**

**MISSION D'OBSEVATION DES ELECTIONS AU MALI**

**26-30 JUILLET 2013**

**ELECTIONS PRESIDENTIELLES AU MALI**

**26-30 juillet 2013**  
(Premier tour)

**PROGRAMME FINAL**

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<th><strong>Mercredi 24 juillet 2013</strong></th>
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<td>Arrivée du secrétariat et transport à l'hôtel</td>
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<th><strong>Jeudi 25 juillet 2013</strong></th>
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<td>Réunion avec le prestataire de service GIZ sur la logistique de la mission <em>(secrétariat uniquement)</em></td>
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<td>Finalisation du programme de travail de la délégation <em>(secrétariat uniquement)</em></td>
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<td>Arrivée des députés et transport à l'hôtel RADISSON</td>
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<th><strong>Vendredi 26 juillet 2013</strong></th>
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| **08.00** Réunion technique interne Mission de l'APP ACP UE  
Radisson Blu  
Salle Nanayé |
| **09.00** Ministre de l'Administration territoriale, de la Décentralisation et  
Ministère |
de l'Aménagement du Territoire (MATDAT), S.E. M. Moussa Sinko Coulibaly

**10.00** Réunion avec la Mission d'Observation Electorale de l'Union européenne et l'équipe cadre
- Analyse de la situation politique
- Analyse de la situation électorale et juridique
- Media
- Sécurité
Salle Tamani 2

**11.30** Réunion avec Harouna Cissé, Représentant du Parti ADEMA-PASJ (candidat Dramane Dembélé)
Salle Tamani 2

**16.00** Réunion avec le Président de la Cour Constitutionnelle
Salle Balanzan

**18.00** Réunion avec le Général Siaka Sangaré, Délégué général aux élections (DGE)
Salle Balanzan

**19.00** Réunion de coordination interne
Salle Nanaye

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**Samedi 27 juillet 2013**

**09.00** Rencontre avec la société civile - 6 ONG (Conseil national de la société civile, Forum des Organisations de la Société civile, Coordination des Organisations de la Société civile/Ecole pour tous, Wildaf, Association malienne des Droits de l’Homme, Groupe Pivot droit et Citoyenneté des Femmes)
Salle Tamani 2

**11.00** Général Lecointre, Chef de la mission de l'UE de formation de l'armée (EUTM)
Salle Tamani 2

**13.30** Départ de l'équipe pour Ségou
5 Hr de route

**14.00** Réunion avec les observateurs nationaux (APEM, Caritas, AMDH) et internationaux: OIF, UA, UEMOA CEDEAO (Président de la CENI au B.F.), Ambassades d’Afrique du Sud, des Etats-Unis, du Canada, IRI (en présence du chef de la délégation de l’Union européenne, M. Richard Zink)
Salle Tamani 2

**15.00** Réunion avec le représentant de l’URD (candidat Soumaïla Cissé)

**15.30** Réunion avec le représentant de FARE (candidat Modibo Sidibé)

**16.00** Rencontre avec les Ambassadeurs de l'UE (7), et les Ambassades des Etats-Unis, du Canada, de la Chine, de la Mauritanie, de l’Algérie, du Burkina Faso, et avec le représentant spécial de
l’UE pour le Sahel (en présence du chef de la délégation de l’Union européenne, M. Richard Zink)

17.00 Candidate indépendante, Mme Haidara Aissata Cissé

18.00 Réunion interne de la mission pour préparer le déploiement à Bamako et à Koulikouro

18.00 Réunion d'information par les observateurs long terme Ségou

**Dimanche 28 juillet 2013**

*Jour des élections*

Ouverture des bureaux de vote 08.00

Fermeture des bureaux de vote 18.00

**Lundi 29 juillet 2013**

11.00 Rencontre avec les observateurs internationaux Tamani 2

13.30 Retour des équipes déployées hors de la capitale (Ségou)

16.00 Réunion conjointe APP et PE - Evaluation du processus électoral - Debriefing Tamani 2

18.00 Réunion de concertation entre les délégations du PE, de l’APP et L. Michel Tamani 2

**Mardi 30 juillet 2013**

09.00 Réunion des Parlementaires européens avec les Ambassadeurs de l’Union européenne et le chef de la délégation de l’Union européenne, M. Richard Zink Tamani 2

10.00 Conférence de presse conjointe, présentation de la Déclaration préliminaire de la MOE UE

Fin du programme
Statement of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Election Observation Mission on the first round of voting in the presidential election in Mali

According to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Election Observation Mission to Mali, led jointly by Patrice Tirolien (S&D, FR) for the EU and Joyce Laboso (Kenya) for the ACP, the election was ‘transparent and reliable’.

Patrice Tirolien pointed out that the ACP-EU had shown a great interest in the consequences of the war in Libya for Mali and the Sahel-Saharan area and had devoted a number of resolutions and declarations to the issue. The JPA was thus following the current election process very carefully.

‘We are cautiously pleased to note that this stage, at least, of the normalisation of the situation in Mali has been successful, and I would like first of all to congratulate all the people of Mali who understood what was at stake and went to vote in large numbers’, he said. ‘I would also like to salute the interim government for the efforts it has made to ensure that the first stage of the electoral procedure was completed successfully.’

As regards the general attitude of the population, he said that ‘despite the announced risks, we were pleased to note the serene atmosphere that generally prevailed in and around the polling stations on election day. We hope that this climate will last in the coming days and months.’

Mr Tirolien also noted the sense of responsibility and motivation of all those working in the polling stations visited. In particular, he appreciated the strong presence of women as returning officers or delegates of candidates and political parties.

Likewise, he took the view that in spite of the fears of imperfect elections, the few imperfections noted in the polling stations observed were not such as to damage the credibility of the poll.

He was confident that the detailed comments made by the observers of the ACP-EU JPA would enrich the recommendations to be made by the European Union Election Observation Mission. These recommendations could be useful for the parliamentary elections expected to be held by the end of the year.

Mr Tirolien encouraged the people of Mali to keep up their sense of civic responsibility with a view to the parliamentary elections, which would help to strengthen the rule of law and the system of checks and balances.

On behalf of the ACP-EU JPA mission, Mr Tirolien wished the people of Mali ‘every success in the process of consolidating the Malian state and of national reconciliation, which is a starting point for the stabilisation of the Sahel-Saharan area.’

Mr Chegou (Niger), Vice-President of the ACP-EU JPA, meanwhile, welcomed the ‘fortunate achievement of this milestone in Mali’s recovery process, which will also be a starting point for the stabilisation of the Sahel-Saharan area.’