



ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Declaration by the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the situation in Mali

Mrs Louis Michel and Musikari Kombo, Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, have been closely monitoring recent developments in the political, military and humanitarian situation in Mali.

The Co-Presidents welcomed the statement by the High Representative/Vice President Ashton, on 6 February 2012, recalling “her attachment to Mali’s territorial stability and integrity, and to peace, democracy and stability in the region”.

The Co-Presidents paid tribute to H.E. Mr. Alassane Dramane Ouattara, President of Côte d’Ivoire and Chairman of the ECOWAS Heads of State Conference, and H.E. Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso and designated Mediator, for their role in the search for a solution to the Malian crisis.

The Co-Presidents welcomed the signing of the framework agreement between the National Committee for the Re-establishment of Democracy and the Restoration of the State (CNRDRE) and ECOWAS, which outlines a series of measures that are expected to lead to the re-establishment of constitutional order.

The Co-Presidents noted with satisfaction the recent progress made towards full restoration of constitutional order in Mali with the establishment of a 12-month transition period and the maintenance of interim President, Mr. Dioncounda Traoré, the Prime Minister, Dr. Cheick Modibo Diarra and the Government, to oversee the transition.

The Co-Presidents expressed support and encouragement for the transition authorities to successfully accomplish the priority tasks that they have set themselves, notably the restoration of social cohesion, recovery of Mali’s territorial integrity, and the organisation of free and democratic elections, within twelve months, to complete the process of restoring constitutional order.

The Co-Presidents expressed, nonetheless, their deep concern and consternation at the attack against President Dioncounda Traoré on 21 May 2012, and roundly condemned this despicable act, which is an affront to democracy, and called for the perpetrators to be caught and brought to justice.

The Co-Presidents urged the Malian junta to return to their barracks and to participate fully in the fundamental mission of the Malian Army, which is to defend that country's territorial integrity and national sovereignty and to respect and protect the legal and legitimate institutions of the transition.

The Co-Presidents urged Mali's political class and civil society to assume their responsibilities to expedite the return to constitutional order and to assist in strengthening the democratic institutions.

As regards the rebellion in the North of the country, the Co-Presidents strongly rejected the declaration of independence of the North of Mali by the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), considering it to be invalid and ineffectual, and reaffirmed their attachment to Mali's unity and territorial integrity.

The Co-Presidents expressed their continued support for the actions conducted by ECOWAS to address the Malian crisis, including the rapid deployment of ECOWAS troops, to restore Mali's stability and territorial integrity and to thwart the ambitions of the attackers whose two main groups, the MNLA and ANÇAR-EDDINE, had recently joined forces to create an Islamic State in the occupied territory. They urged ECOWAS to take the necessary steps to prevent the crisis from spreading to the sub region and called on the international community, notably the EU, the United Nations and the African Union, to provide financial and material support for ECOWAS' initiatives.

The Co-Presidents firmly condemned the terror, human rights violations, acts of vandalism and other atrocities committed in the towns in the North of Mali by the occupying forces and called for an immediate halt to such acts. In that regard, the Co-Presidents called on the International Criminal Court's prosecutor's Office to start up indictment procedures according to the Statute of Rome with specific regard to the perpetrators of the atrocities committed in Aguel-hoc and other towns in the North of Mali.

Considering the humanitarian crisis that has resulted from the occupation of the regions of the North of Mali by the combined forces of the MNLA, ANÇAR-EDDINE, ACQMI and other armed groups, the Co-Presidents urged the international community and the EU, in particular, to provide emergency aid to relieve the daily suffering of the people of the North, internally displaced peoples, and those who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, and to give adequate assistance to the neighbouring countries that are receiving increasingly large numbers of refugees, such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal and Mauritania.

Done at Horsens, 28 May 2012