



**COUNCIL OF
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NOTE

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Delegations
Subject : Plenary Session of the European Parliament, 12 June 2013
Reconstruction and democratisation of Mali
Oral questions

Ms JOLY (Greens/EFA, DE), co-author of the oral questions, stressed that a legitimate authority had to be rebuilt in Mali and felt that the forthcoming elections were premature. She urged the EU to support the victims of the conflict as well as infrastructure reconstruction, which she felt would lend credibility to Mali's democratisation efforts.

Speaking on behalf of Mr BROK (EPP, DE), co-author of the oral questions, Mr DANJEAN (EPP, FR) said that the debate on the reconstruction and democratisation of Mali should have been held years ago, and noted that the situation in Sahel was now more complex. He agreed with Ms JOLY that the forthcoming elections raised technical and political questions. Mr DANJEAN welcomed the role played by the French armed forces and by the EU Training Mission (EUTM). He also urged the Commission and the EEAS to work together on security and development in Mali, and said that the EU's 2011 Sahel strategy ought to be revised.

Speaking on behalf of the High Representative, Mr PIEBALGS welcomed the debate in the run-up to the July presidential elections. He stressed that the EU had risen to the challenge of the crisis, in line with its 2011 Sahel strategy, and had in particular shouldered much of the international effort to support Mali. Mr PIEBALGS stressed that considerable means for the reconstruction of Mali had been pledged during the May donors' conference held in Brussels, and pointed out that an EU Special Representative had been appointed. He emphasised that continued attention was needed, given that the reconstruction of Mali was a multi faceted challenge whose success would to a large extent depend on the commitment of local stakeholders. Mr PIEBALGS welcomed the fact that Malian authorities were now sensitizing their troops on human rights and called for a regional agreement in order to address the Saharan dimension of the Sahel.

Speakers on behalf of groups

Mr PREDA (EPP, RO) felt that the situation in Kidal had to improve for elections to take place. He welcomed the significant commitments made during the Brussels conference, but warned that the Malian needs were substantial.

Ms GOMES (S&D, PT) called for an end to violence, and stressed that a major effort at reconciliation was needed, in particular regarding the Tuaregs. She warned against the development of terrorist and criminal networks in the Sahel region, and insisted on the need for economic development, with EU support.

Mr GOERENS (ALDE, LU) warned that the Kidal region was still not safe, and pointed out the key role to be played by the Tuaregs. He welcomed the forthcoming elections, in spite of the undeniable difficulties, and said that the results of the Brussels conference were encouraging.

Mr ALFONSI (Greens/EFA, FR) emphasised the importance of the developments in North Mali, and said that a Malian military intervention in Kidal had to be avoided.

Mr ZAHRADIL (ECR, CS) regretted the devastation of the historic city of Timbuktu and welcomed the EU's involvement in Mali as well as the French intervention.

Other speakers

Ms STRIFFLER (EPP, FR) felt that the humanitarian situation was serious, and pointed out the risk of epidemics and malnutrition. Together with Mr TIROLIEN (S&D, FR), she said that the elections were a crucial step for a return to democracy.

Mr RINALDI (ALDE, IT) and Ms GABRIEL (EPP, BG) called on the Malian authorities to shoulder their responsibilities, whilst Mr COSTRÉS LASTRA (S&D, ES) said it was essential for the EU to coordinate its actions with other stakeholders, in particular NGOs.

Mr GAHLER (EPP, DE) and Mr ZALA (S&D, SK) stressed that the reconstruction of Mali was in the EU's interest.

Closing remarks

Mr PIEBALGS stressed the importance of Malian leadership, and hoped that the elections would be credible and democratic. He mentioned the important role played by the UN, and felt that the fight against poverty in the Sahel region would be long term. Mr PIEBALGS said that the EU's support to Mali prior to the crisis had been limited because of a reluctance on the part of the Malian authorities.

Following the debate, the plenary adopted on 13 June a Resolution on the reconstruction and democratisation of Mali.
