

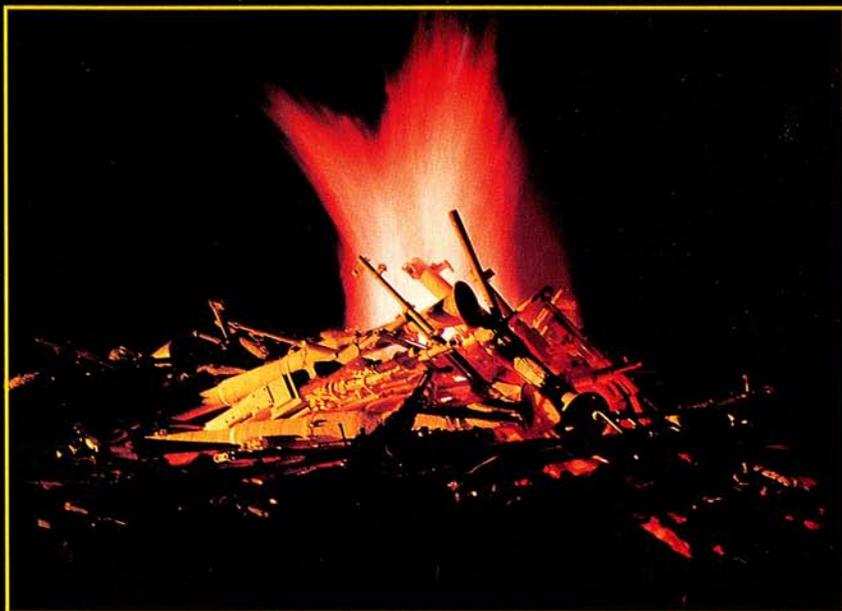
United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research  
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# A Peace of Timbuktu

Democratic Governance, Development  
and African Peacemaking

by

Robin-Edward Poulton  
and  
Ibrahim ag Youssouf



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UNIDIR  
United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research  
Geneva

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**UNITED NATIONS**  
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## Preface

Fifty years ago the United Nations launched its first peace-keeping mission. Since then, much of the work that the Organization has done to promote peace and security in all regions of the world has been accomplished with the aid of peace-keeping operations, interventions designed to create the necessary conditions for warring parties to find non-violent solutions to their disputes. While peace-keeping operations have evolved to address the needs of a great variety of conflicts and conditions, it has always been clear that it is a far better alternative to prevent violent confrontations from developing in the first place by being attentive to the signs of unrest and intervening in a manner which steers the political climate back towards peace.

Mali is a country in which this kind of preventive diplomacy has met with great success. Although we mourn the loss of life which occurred in the early 1990s, we are thankful that peace was soon restored. As a result, I hope that Mali will serve as an example for others to follow in recognizing the factors which cause unrest and in acting appropriately to build a solid peace. Mali should serve as a model both for peacemaking throughout the world and also for United Nations development and security initiatives.

This study published by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) will bring the Malian model to the awareness of Governments and policy makers around the globe. Herein lies not only a very frank account of the unfolding of the conflict and the efforts to contain it, but also an insightful analysis of which efforts to restore peace were effective and why. Moreover, the authors examine the role of the international community, and especially the United Nations, in helping the Malian Government to restore peace and to re-integrate its disaffected populations and refugees back into civilian life. One of the most important lessons is that even small actions, undertaken at the right moment, can have enormous positive impact in restoring hope among struggling people.

Another is that with proper coordination, the international community can help to prevent the outbreak of war and to provide the conditions necessary for economic development. Indeed, the coordination of the activities of the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies in Mali with those of non-governmental organizations and donor countries has been exemplary.

One highly symbolic moment in the peace process was the occasion of the Flame of Peace, held in Timbuktu on 27 March 1996. At this ceremony officiated by President Alpha Oumar Konaré, some 3,000 weapons were destroyed in a great bonfire. These were small arms that had been surrendered by the demobilizing rebels in exchange for assistance and training from the Government of Mali and the international community to help them re-integrate into society. The dramatic destruction of these weapons was a public display of the commitment to peace on both sides, and it was also a reminder of the plethora of such weapons which are available in this and in so many other troubled regions of the world. Recognizing the threat to regional security that the presence of so many small arms poses, the majority of West African States have not only established national commissions on small arms, but have also come together on a number of occasions to discuss the possibility of a regional moratorium on the trade and manufacture of these weapons.

My hope is not only that Mali will continue to work to build a lasting peace and an environment for sustainable development, but also that this country will serve as a beacon for other States to follow. Mali has for many centuries been regarded as a cultural and spiritual centre. Let Mali now be a political and economic model as well.

Kofi A. Annan  
Secretary-General

## Acknowledgements

The Peace of Timbuktu is an exciting story about an exciting subject: for what could be more important than peace? It is the story of the thousands who participated in the process of peacemaking. Have we sufficiently emphasized the important role which was played by every man and woman and child living and surviving in the Sahel? We cannot thank all of them individually. Let us therefore thank every citizen and resident of Mali and Niger, and dedicate this book to all those who work for peace in Africa.

A few groups of colleagues we must mention specifically. Individuals will recognize our appreciation of their help as part of the group, whether as administrators or field workers or researchers, or simply as friends. Firstly we must thank the teams in UNDP and UNIDIR who have given us hospitality and support. We thank also and warmly the other UN agencies which have contributed to this Peace of Timbuktu over the past few years, in particular, UNHCR, UNICEF, FAO and WFP in Mali, and the UN/DPA Centre for Disarmament Affairs in New York.

Among our many friends in the political, administrative and technical establishments of the Malian Government, we give particular thanks to leaders and colleagues in the Commissariat au Nord, the Ministry of Armed Forces and Ex-Combatants, the Ministry of Arid Lands, the Ministry of Industry, Artisans and Tourism, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Internal Security, the Decentralization Mission, and the Governorships in the Regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal.

The Peace of Timbuktu has been a triumph for grassroots diplomacy, necessitating special recognition for leaders and animators of civil society: both traditional community leaders, and those men and women who lead the modern associations and NGOs. We have tried to recognize them all in the text of our story, showing their dedication to development and peace building. But we must mention certain groups who have provided particular inspiration for our analysis for the present study: the Fondation du Nord, Institut Philanthra, the Coordination of Women's Associations, the African Commission for Health and Human Rights (CAPSDH), the World Council of Churches, the CCA-ONG and its "Pivot Groups", SCF, ACORD, Oxfam, Novib and the journalists of IMRAD and AMAP.

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Naturally the errors belong only to us. The same is true of the opinions expressed in this book, which do not necessarily reflect the official position of the United Nations, and which engage the responsibility of nobody but ourselves.

*Robin-Edward Poulton*

*Ibrahim ag Youssef*

## **Executive Summary**

Mali is admired for two recent accomplishments. The first is the country's transition to democracy, which took place in 1991-1992. This effort included the overthrow of Moussa Traoré's 23-year-old military dictatorship on 26 March 1991, a process of military and civilian collaboration which fostered national reconciliation, a referendum for a new constitution, and elections which brought to power Mali's first democratically elected President, Government and Legislature. The second achievement is the peacemaking between the Government of Mali and the rebel movements in the northern part of the country: this process successfully prevented the outbreak of civil war and presents useful lessons for the international community in preventive diplomacy. The peacemaking culminated in a ceremony known as the Flame of Peace, when rebel weapons were incinerated in Timbuktu on 27 March 1996. This study of the events surrounding the uprisings in the North of Mali and the measures which restored peace (and those which will maintain it) is the result of a collaboration between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

### **Peacemaking and Democracy**

Peacemaking covers the ways in which the armed factions were brought to peace and disarmament through community-based negotiation. Their re-integration into Malian society began the process of peace-building, which includes all the measures necessary to assure peace and security in the longer term. Peace-keeping (i.e. the intervention of international forces to establish the security necessary for peace talks) was never necessary in Mali.

The story of the peacemaking can only be understood in the wider context of the environmental and political events which have preceded it. Thus, this study touches on the drought and history of neglect in the North as well as the transformation from dictatorship to democracy in the capital. General Amadou Toumani Touré (Mali's head of state during the 1991-1992 transition) observed at a recent conference on conflict prevention that Mali has just lived through its third Touareg rebellion. The 1990-1995 "Touareg problem" was not an isolated incident. It had its root causes in history and in general economic and political neglect, compounded by drought and a too-heavy military hand on Mali's northern regions. When he ousted Moussa Traoré in 1991 at the head of a

popular revolution, Touré was faced with negotiating a peace accord with the rebel movements in the North before handing power to his elected successor. He was successful in that a National Pact was signed on 11 April 1992 before Dr. Alpha Oumar Konaré became President of the Republic on 8 June 1992; however, outbreaks of violence continued in the North, and it was left to the democratic Government to restore peace.

Certain aspects of the democratic State were very important to the process of peacemaking. The first was genuine participatory democracy (not only in the form of the ballot box, but also of the “palaver tree”, i.e. local community debates, and local language radio). Furthermore, the Government encouraged collaboration between the military and the Malian population (an essential element of national reconciliation) as well as the relaunch and liberalization of Mali’s economy (involving a revival of the private sector, better management of public finances, and reduced corruption).

Once democracy had been established, the agreement with the armed movements had to be translated into the disarmament, demobilization and re-integration of the rebels. Drawing on the cultural reserves of Mali’s social capital, the Government reduced its military and administrative presence in the North in 1994 in order to make space for civil society (community and religious leaders and grassroots associations) to create the local conditions for peace and the return of displaced populations.

This peace process was also remarkable for the way in which the United Nations agencies were able to help, discreetly dropping oil into the machinery of peacemaking. For a cost of less than \$1 million, the United Nations helped the Malians to avoid a war, and lit the Flame of Peace. With less than \$10 million, the United Nations became the leading partner of Mali’s government and civil society, in peace-building, disarming the ex-combatants and integrating 11,000 into public service and into the socio-economy of the North through a UN Trust Fund. The experience shows that not only is peacemaking better than peace-keeping, but that it is much cheaper.

### **Peace-building under the Palaver Tree**

Mali’s peacemaking phase has been successful in the short term. What remains is the building of lasting peace, which can be achieved only through the economic and social development of the North: this includes tackling difficult issues such as land tenure and decentralization, rethinking education and communications, strengthening democratic governance and civil society to enforce the rule of law. The United Nations is taking the lead in supporting

Mali's peace-building, encouraging donors to invest in peace. Peace-building has injected a more unified United Nations presence in the field under the UN Resident Coordinator, at the very moment when the Secretary-General is seeking greater operational efficiency. In this regard, the Malian experience is exemplary, as the UN Political Secretariat and UNIDIR have collaborated with the UN Development Programme in New York and in Bamako, promoting security in the North of Mali so that development programmes can get back to work.

Mali shows that peacemaking and peace-building are integral parts of the development process. Although the Malian authorities have constantly been short of funds for things which appear essential to the peace-building process, such as training ex-combatants, tracking car thieves, or re-training and re-equipping the police force, the success of the democratic experiment is making Mali into a favoured partner for commercial banks and for development agencies (many of which have cut their funding in neighbouring countries). Democratic governance is profitable in many ways.

### **Five Years on: The Lessons Learned**

What are the risks that the peace in Mali might fail? The two greatest areas of risk are clearly rainfall and civil unrest. A good rainfall brings huge political (as well as economic) benefits, but there is not a lot that Mali's democratic leadership can do about it. Better management of existing water and infrastructure on the Niger River would help. Mali could have a regular annual cereal surplus if every farmer along the river had access to family-scale water management through small dykes and portable pumps. It is also important to remember the significance of herding in Mali. Coherent land management and better yields are vital both for crops and for livestock. Increased cultivation of pasture areas along the river is a recipe for declining livestock and export revenues, and for unrest. Post-colonial legislation has consistently favoured sedentary cropping, neglecting the needs of herders, and a new legal conciliation process is proposed to solve conflicts and avoid violence.

While decentralization should lead to a better mobilization of human, financial and natural resources, there is a risk that it may fail: either through administrative paralysis, or because the State and Mali's development partners fail to achieve the cultural, economic and environmental integration of "rich" and "poor" regions. If this happens, it could undermine existing commitments to national unity and undo the National Pact.

West African States have realized that national unity and security cannot be treated as purely internal matters, as long as there is an uncontrolled flow of small arms across the sub-region. To address this problem, the United Nations has partnered Mali in promoting a sub-regional approach to disarmament. United Nations advisory missions have facilitated multi-national contacts, while UNIDIR has been associated with the UNDP and the Political Secretariat in supporting discussions on improving relations between the military and civilians and furthering cross-border collaboration. A key to reducing the availability of illegal firearms is a proposed moratorium on the trade and manufacture of light weapons.

### **Principle Findings**

#### *Important events and characteristics of Malian peacemaking:*

- the State created space for communal healing under the leadership of modern and traditional civil society
- civil society organizations (including women's associations) proved crucial to Mali's peacemaking
- the ex-rebels passed through a process of cantonment, disarmament, and re-training
- the criteria for training and selection of candidates to be integrated into public service were defined by military and civilian authorities in conjunction with rebel leaders
- there was strong symbolic value in the burning of rebel weapons in the Flame of Peace
- security forces were demilitarized and placed under the Ministry of Territorial Administration, separate from the army

*Priority needs for peace-building in Mali:*

- Northern Mali needs urgent assistance to re-establish administrative and social services, particularly health and education
- Mali needs programme development: it does not need flamboyant mega-projects, nor will it benefit from donors scattering micro-projects like salt-and-pepper
- the people of Mali need to be able to rely on the rule of law: civil society has a crucial role in ensuring that the law is applied fairly and in curbing administrative abuse; and the right of association needs strengthening
- while the ex-combatants are men, many returning refugees are women and their re-integration has been less spectacular: development priority needs to be given to women and women's associations
- civil-military relationships need to be transformed through the adoption of a new code of conduct

*Recommendations for ensuring continued peace and development:*

- the strengthening of civil society and the social economy is critical for successful decentralization (this appears particularly urgent in the North of Mali, where a UN-assisted Government programme has helped 9,000 ex-combatants to start a new economic life, but the individual projects will thrive only if the economy is growing)
- the United Nations must provide leadership to NGOs and civil society, working to strengthen and democratize Africa's civil society and social economy
- Mali's partners must adopt new development strategies and decentralize decision-making

- financial resources must be available to support human and technical resources: alternative financing mechanisms could include credit, bank guarantees, community capital funds, and foundations
- most agro-pastoralists in Mali seek collective use of resources at the appropriate season, not “ownership” of geometric space in the European sense: rules and legislation must take account of the pastoralists’ use of space
- new local Conciliation Councils proposed for the decentralized communes could strengthen the judicial process in solving land and water disputes
- security forces need better training and equipment rather than more guns (in reaction to heavily armed security forces, bandits invest in heavier firearms and security is ultimately decreased)
- security forces must be trained to know and respect civil rights, and women must participate in their training
- sub-regional initiatives are required to transform frontiers from barriers into “a shared development space”
- to avoid the export of civil unrest across borders and to suppress the circulation of illegal small arms, the proposal for a West African moratorium on trade in light weapons is a valuable initiative

### **Conclusion**

A renewed breakdown of peace in northern Mali would threaten the stability of the whole region, from Senegal to Chad. Only the relaunch of socio-economic development will convince ex-combatants and returning refugees that they have a future in northern Mali, and that they should believe in the Malian State. Local political disputes in Bamako and the mismanagement of the 1997 elections show how difficult it is to replace African traditions of consensus

politics with imported models which award a “victory”, just as it is difficult to keep separate the political and administrative parts of government. A look into the abyss of failed States in the region is likely to bring Mali’s political actors back to solutions of national consensus under the “palaver tree”.

There emerges from the Malian experience the doctrine of “security for development” or “security first”: an understanding that without a minimum of security, development work cannot take place. As national security is dependent upon regional stability and cross-border cooperation (involving both communities and officials), the regional initiatives that the West African States are currently considering are of great importance.

Ensuring continued peace and development depends on justice and democratic governance, but also on access to resources (credit, banking, technical knowledge, health and veterinary services, appropriate education) and imaginative infrastructure investment not just in roads, but in telecommunications, rural radio, river transport, community-based solar energy and irrigation pumps which reduce the competition for natural space. Such investment is critical for lasting peace in the Sahel. Mali’s donor friends share responsibility for ending the economic marginalization of the North: for without peace in the North, there can be no economic development in the whole of Mali, nor in the West African sub-region.



## Chapter 1

# Mali's History and Natural Environment

*A close neighbour is better than a distant relative.  
Arab proverb*

This chapter will set the scene for our story of Malian peacemaking, providing basic information about the history, geography and social composition of Mali for those who are not already familiar with the country. It is important for the reader to understand that the crisis described in subsequent chapters grew not only from drought and political dissent, but also from roots deep in the colonization and decolonization of West Africa. The success of peacemaking also had historical roots, in what we call Mali's social capital. Much of the cultural value of Malian society resides in the value placed upon its women and in the spirituality of family and community cohesion. That is where our proverb comes in, for it was neighbours who made peace. The crisis in northern Mali was not an ethnic confrontation (although it almost became one): it began as a revolt of all the northern populations against economic and political deprivation.

### 1.1 The Peoples of Mali and Their History

On the bend of the Niger, where Africa's third longest river makes a great sweep to wash the edge of the Sahara Desert, at a place named Tawsa (the French write "Tossaye"), three great rocks dominate the river. Legend has it that a woman and her two quarrelling sons (a Targui—the singular of Touareg—and a Songhoy) were turned to stones here. Between the heedless half-brothers, where the river swirls and eddies angrily in the narrows, stands the mother attempting to keep her quarrelling sons apart. In West Africa, you may disobey your father, but you must never disobey your mother. God heard the curse of the mother at Tawsa and turned her warring sons to stone. Henceforward the brothers should never again fall into anger. The moral is clear: the woman's surviving children—the Songhoy and the Touareg—must live in peace with one another despite their differences of language, way of life,

and complexion. The relations between these two groups are a central theme of the Peace of Timbuktu.

Although they are minorities within Mali, the Songhoy and Touareg dominate the northern regions. The Songhoy (who speak a language of the same name) grow rice, wheat, millet, and sorghum along the bend of the Niger River from Niafunké to Gao (and on to Niamey). The Touaregs are a people of Berber descent who speak the Tamacheq language. Traditionally, they lived a desert nomadic life, but almost everyone in the North is now an agro-pastoralist.

For the Republic as a whole, about 50 per cent of Mali's nine million inhabitants are Mandé-speaking peoples (Bambara, Malinké, Soninké) inhabiting the southern and western half of the country. The Fulani or Peul (speaking Fulfuldé) are the next most populous group (approximately 17 per cent of the population): a traditionally nomadic cattle-herding people from the Nile, who are thought to have crossed the Sahara when it was grassland 2,500 years ago and settled from Senegal to Cameroon. In Mali, the Fulani are concentrated in the area around the interior delta of the Niger and near the conflict-prone border with Mauritania, where certain Arab (Moor) tribes also live and trade and herd livestock. Fulani groups settled around Gao have adopted the Songhoy culture and language and were victims of Mali's northern troubles, along with the Bozo fishermen and their families who migrate along the Niger river, following the fish stocks. There is a plethora of smaller linguistic and ethnic groups in Mali, but these are principal actors in our book.

Approximately 90 per cent of Malians follow the Islamic faith, but there are also minorities who follow Christian or indigenous beliefs.<sup>1</sup> Malians are very tolerant people, and few are attracted by the narrow interpretations of sects such as Christian Baptists and Moslem Wahabists (although the latter seem to be gaining ground).

The people of Mali are truly multi-cultural, their diverse heritage blending many traditions. Intermarriage between groups is common and the relationships between various clans or families can be quite complex. Ethnic groups in Mali are sometimes defined on the basis of language, but this can be misleading as so many individuals speak (and sometimes massacre) several local languages.

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<sup>1</sup> Africa is monotheistic: indeed the polytheist Abraham found God in Africa. We do not accept the term "animist", which derives from colonial denigration of traditional religion. Mali's name for God is *Ngala* (different languages use different names, of course, and the Arabic *Allah* is most widely used today).

There are ten major national languages in Mali, and around thirty in daily use if we include groups which overspill the frontiers. French is the official language of Mali. Few of the population speak it fluently, but it is valuable as the language of administration and law, of the press, and of international exchange.

Malian society is clan-based. We must not however avoid the question of "ethnicity". The Touareg refer to themselves as *Kel Tamacheq*, "those of the Tamacheq language", thereby recognizing language as their strongest bond. The recent problems of northern Mali have been subject to the claims of certain Touareg and Songhoy intellectuals, that there is an "ethnic problem" (claims about a Touareg separate identity appear in articles published by a handful of Tamacheq writers, for example the FPLA's "*Nous les Touaregs*", 1994). We find them unconvincing. For the analysis of African cultural phenomena, we need to evolve African tools of analysis and to refuse the imposition of inappropriate models and literature. The process of cultural change is ongoing. Some Touareg of Araouan north of Timbuktu—descendants of Sidi Ahmed ag Adda—first became Moors through contact with the Berabich, then Songhoy as they settled in Timbuktu. We can find Songhoy-speaking Fulani (such as the *Gabero*) and Touareg (the *Farana*, *Awaki*, and *Niafunké*) who hardly know the language of their ancestors.

A recent political science treatise written in Mali addresses the question of "ethnicity" in the specific context of northern Mali. The author arrives at the same conclusion as Frederick Barth that "What counts most is the ethnic frontier which defines the group, and not the cultural substance which is inside" (Walzholz 1996, p. 6). Ethnic identity is not an "absolute something", but a question of perception: identity can be *perceived* by the group or family themselves, and identity may be *attributed* by outsiders. The attribution may be a determining factor in promoting ethnic conflict, but it may be wrong because it is usually superficial. Seeing should not be believing. In Northern Mali nearly all men wear turbans. Many Touaregs are dark brown or black. Nearly everyone in the North speaks one or two languages besides his mother's tongue: whether Tamacheq, Arabic, Fulfuldé, Songhoy, or French. Language, like dress and skin-colour is a poor guide to ethnic origin.

Language cannot be used as a guide to ethnic identity in any part of Mali. "Bambara", for example, is used by Westerners for the people and language of a group which is not at all seen as an ethnic group in Malian cultural terms. If you ask a so-called "Bambara" what his language is called, he will tell you that it is *bamanankan*, the "farmers' language". If then asked if he is therefore a farmer, a Keita will reply, "I am not a farmer, I am a hunter," and Kanté will

say “I am a Blacksmith.” People travel so widely in West Africa, that names and identities are often changed, simply to promote neighbourliness. In a village of mixed immigration in the Gourma<sup>2</sup>, we were told that all the Traore and Guindo families had decided to call themselves Cissé from now on, so that the whole village would have the same name as the Fulani village chief. From the point of view of the visiting anthropologist analysing the “human zoo”, they should be seeing themselves strictly as “Bambara” and “Dogon” and “Fulani”, but most annoyingly, they do not. Their concept of identity appears to conform closely to the proverb with which we opened this chapter, and very quickly one finds that family names, language, dress, and skin colour are not reliable guides to ethnic origin in Mali.

This book is not a history lesson, but we can skip briefly across the peoples and the centuries to provide the unfamiliar reader with some knowledge of West Africa’s past (for details see Konaré 1983 or 1993). The 4th through 13th centuries saw the Soninké of Wagadou and the Ghana Empire and their offspring the Bozo and Somono fishermen who founded the famous civilization of Djenné. Iron was the secret of power in the early Middle Ages. The Kanté Blacksmith Kingdom of Soso (1076-1235) gave way to Soundiata Keita’s Manding Empire of Mali (founded in 1235, it lasted 300 years) and the successor kingdoms of Malinké offshoots and migrations which made this the largest of all the political alliances in West African history. The Songhoy empire started in the 6th century, and at its apogee in the late 15th century the Askia (Emperor) in Gao held sway from the Hoggar Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean. Descendants of the Christian Berber Kingdoms which ruled most of the Maghreb until the Arab invasions,<sup>3</sup> the Touareg clans ran a system of floating alliances through most of the Middle Ages, guarding their independence while protecting Timbuktu and the northern frontiers of each successor State. One of their most famous rulers was a woman: Kahena, queen of Aurés in modern Algeria, who resisted the Arab invasions and died in battle in 698 AD.

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<sup>2</sup> South of the river is the Gourma, north of the river is the Haoussa. The Niger in the North of Mali is called *Issa Ber* (the Great River); the *bamanan* call it *djoli ba* (the Great Life-giving Artery, where the word *ba* means both Big and Mother, and *djoli or djeli* is “blood”).

<sup>3</sup> Kusayla, Chief of the Awra Berbers renounced Christianity and adopted Islam after the battle of Al-Urit in 674. He later defeated the Arab conqueror Oqba at the battle of Tahuda in 683, ruling over Kairouan and Ifrikiya until his death in battle against Zubair in 689.

**Table 1.1**  
**Key Dates in Malian History**

Date and event	Comment or explanation
2000 BC: organized communities exist by the Niger	Archaeology is constantly producing new evidence of early social organization
500 BC: Fulani migrations from the Nile	The Sahara was grassland and had been occupied for a long time
ca. 1 AD: camels first came to Africa from Arabia	The Sahara was slowly drying out
400 AD: Wagadou is in existence, the Ghana Empire is expanding	Wagadou is the ancient name, Ghana is what the empire became in history
622 AD: the <i>hegira</i> (Mohamed flees to Madina)	The Moslem calendar starts from this date
674 AD: battle of Al-Urit (Kusayla the Berber chief accepts Islam)	From here the Arab invasion rapidly reached Morocco and Spain
1076 AD: Kingdom of Sosso founded on the power of Blacksmiths	Ghana's power is declining
1235 AD: Soundiata Keita founds the Mali Empire	Legends abound concerning this national hero who defeated the Kanté Blacksmiths
1311 AD: Aboubakri hands power to his brother and sails westwards	He never returned: linguistic and musical evidence point to his arrival in Brazil
1325 AD: Mansa Moussa returns from Mecca	His wealth was so great that Mali's gold created the legends of Timbuktu
1332 AD: death of Mansa Moussa, Mali begins to decline	Songhoy hostage princes escape, and Mali now comes under attack from all sides
1492 AD: death of Sonni Ali Ber, builder-conqueror of Songhoy	1493 Sonni's son was ousted because of anti-Islamic actions, replaced by Askia Mohamed

1496 AD: Askia Mohamed's pilgrimage to Mecca	The fame, piety and wealth of Songhoy will be destroyed by disputes of his successors
1591 AD: battle of Tondibi sees the end of the Songhoy Empire	The Moors defeated in Spain destroyed the Songhoy Empire with firearms
1712 AD: Biton Coulibaly creates the Bambara Kingdom of Ségou	Later the Diarra clan replaced the Coulibaly in a <i>coup d'état</i>
1760s AD: French traders are visiting Kayes	French expansion was gradual, in competition with other colonial powers
1818 AD: Sékou Amadou founds the theocratic <i>Dina</i>	The Peul (Fulani) of Macina followed the <i>kadiriya</i> rite of Islam
1862 AD: El Haj Oumar Tall defeats the <i>Dina</i> , kills Amadou	A Fulani war waged by Senegalese <i>peul toucouleur</i> imposing the <i>tidjania</i> rite of Islam
1883 AD: the French establish themselves in Bamako	The French had established a fortress in Kayes in 1855, which Tall failed to capture in 1859
1898 AD: French occupation of Gao and Sikasso	Samory Touré defeated in Guinea, and Amadou, successor of El Haj Tall are exiled; Babemba, beaten in Sikasso, commits suicide; Touareg chiefs fight on but will be defeated

Source: Adame Ba, 1993.

The Songhoy empire ended with the Moroccan invasion and the battle of Tondibi in 1591, giving rise to a *de facto* Moorish Arab emirate in Timbuktu (16th-18th centuries). The invaders married Touareg and Songhoy women. The children of Songhoy mothers, the "Arma", played a dominant role until they came under Touareg rule in the 18th century. Meanwhile, further south and west there were independent States such as Kaabu in what have now become the Gambia and the Casamance, and the Khassonké Kingdoms around Kayes which were forced to cede power to the French.

The Bambara Kingdoms of Segou and Kaarta rose in the 18th century from the ashes of Songhoy, to find themselves 100 years later, in confrontation with the Fulani theocracy of Macina (the *Dina*) and the raiding Moors of the Mauritanian desert described by Mungo Park.<sup>4</sup> These small 18th-century units were perhaps the first centralized states in the history of the region: the Bambara through their innovation of a standing army of *tonjon*, the *Dina* because of the religious dominance and orthodoxy of Sékou Amadou, and thanks to his improved governance through better tax administration, collegial government and conflict-avoidance in the *bourgoutières* delta pastures. The *Dina* was soon undone by a different interpretation of Islam, as the Toucouleur army of El Haj Oumar Tall swept through the region during the mid-19th century to spread the *tidjania* creed. It was thanks to European firearms that they conquered the region so fast, and it was with firearms that the French overwhelmed them before the century ended.

The original arrival of Islam in Mali was peaceful. Since the first century of the *hegira* (the Prophet's journey from Mecca to Medina which took place in the year 622) the desert caravans had brought Islam with their other goods. Timbuktu became a centre of Islamic scholarship. The southward travels of *marabouts* took Islam along the Niger River. Malian society condemned the intolerance of the *Dina* and the violence of the *Tijania*, just as history condemns the excesses of the Bambara *tonjon* with their culture of ferocity. Malian tradition is one of peace and reconciliation, achieved through democratic discussion beneath the palaver tree and the use of mediators, or through the intervention of Elders as the leaders of traditional civil society.

None of these political units and alliances conformed to the imported model of the Nation State as we know it today. This model evolved in war-torn 18th-century Europe and was mainly the result of conquest. European conquerors impose their own identity, nationality and language on other peoples. Apart from the Moroccan and Bambara successors to Songhoy, most of the so-called "kingdoms" and "empires" of West Africa were composed more by alliances than by conquest. One local chieftain or *tigi* inspired greater respect, or dread, than his neighbours who therefore expressed their respect by sending presents. This made a stronger alliance, which encouraged other neighbours to send a

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<sup>4</sup> This Scots doctor was the first European of modern times to see the fabled Niger, in 1796, and to report that it flowed towards the east. He died on the Niger during his second trip in 1805, near Sokoto in Nigeria. But other "Europeans" were there before him during the Middle Ages, including traders and most notably Timbuktu's greatest architect Abu Ishaq al-Sahili of Grenada, who lived there from 1324 until his death in 1346.

horse or a wife for the chieftain. If he felt that the conditions justified it, he adopted the title of *Mansa* in Malinké or *Askia* in Songhoy. But each group which sent him gifts remained autonomous and self-governing. This is not to deny that military power played an important role. Ghana maintained a large (although not permanent) professional army. The *griots* praise singers recall the memory of Mali's 13th century conquerors, but their armies were composed of farmers who returned to their lands after a campaign. Government was decentralized.<sup>5</sup> Decentralized governance is in the West African tradition, with each group respecting the differences and the languages of its neighbours. This is the historical foundation of Mali's social capital which we shall discuss below.

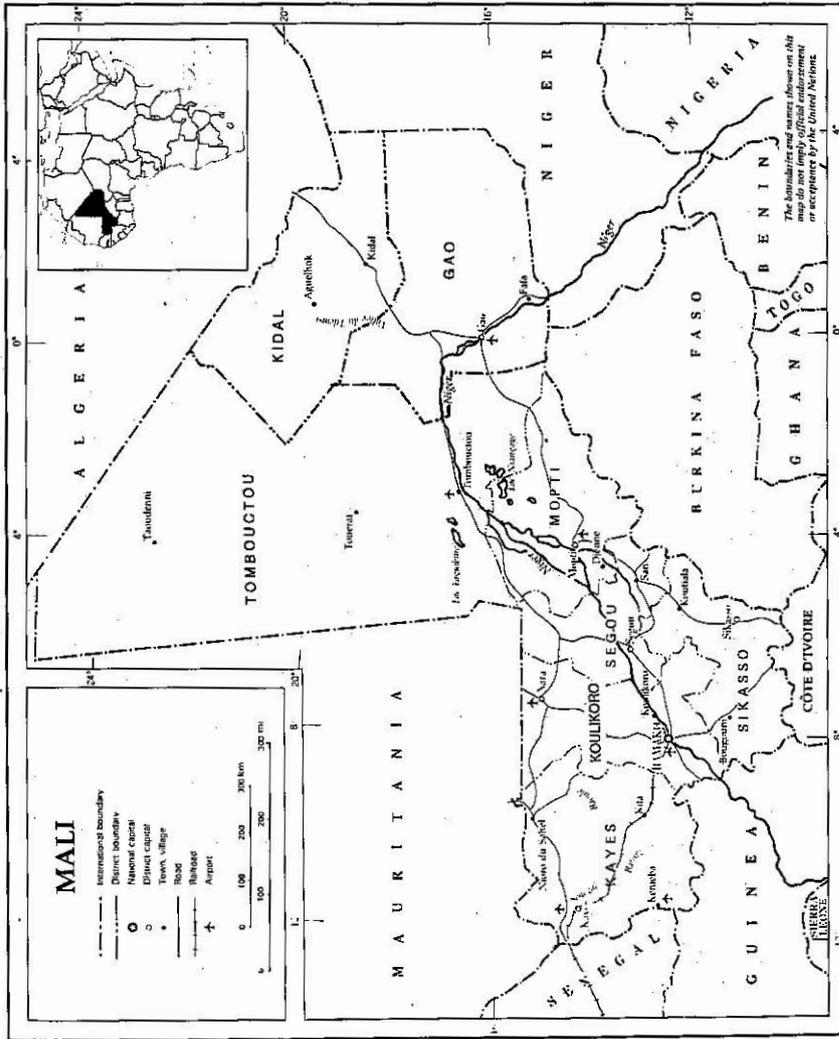
## 1.2 The Natural Environment

A commercial crossroads (*pays carrefour* as the Minister of Tourism likes to say), Mali's multi-cultural society is based on the Niger River which flows for 1,700 km through Mali: the natural trade route between the forest producers of cola nuts and gold in the south, and the desert producers of that most essential of products, salt (see Map 1.1). Every wealthy kingdom through the centuries has derived its principal income from this trade. With its vast northern desert, Mali is one of Africa's largest countries in area: its 1,241,300 square kilometres (nearly 500,000 square miles) make Mali twice the size of France or Texas. Only about 9 million Malians live in this vast area. The River Niger flows from the Guinea highlands, past Bamako and Segou, and then branches out into its famous interior delta which lies between Mopti and Diré. Passing north to Timbuktu, the river slowly turns southward through the sand, past Gao and finally out of Mali into neighbouring Niger. The semi-arid zones south of the desert compose the Sahel, a fragile, arid zone of drought-resistant scrub. Further south the savanna lands around Bamako and Segou merge into the humid, semi-tropical surroundings of Sikasso, adjacent to Côte d'Ivoire.

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<sup>5</sup> For example Songhoy was governed by officials called *koy* in each province, and by functional Ministers for the army (*dyna koy*), navigation (*hi koy*), forests (*sao farima*), relations with Europeans (*korey farima*), etc. Mali was decentralized into provinces (governed by the *tiamana tigi*), districts (*kafo*) and villages (*dugu*). The most important post in terms of governance was certainly the *dugu tigi*.

Map 1.1: The Republic of Mali



Mali's rainy season lasts from June through September each year. If the rains are late, or light, or if there is a disastrous dry spell during August at the height of the growing season, the millet or sorghum or rice or wheat crops may fail. From October onwards, no rain will fall in the North until the following June (although there are occasional light rains in some years south of Bamako, in January, or in April, known as "mango rains" because they wash the unripe fruit hanging on the trees). Along the Niger valley, the height of the river can be just as crucial as the rainfall: determining the success of the floating rice harvest and the *bourgou* grass which provides dry season grazing for many nomadic herds. A century of declining rainfall has increased pressure on scarce natural resources. Many of the big irrigation schemes waste water, but Mali's lands are fertile wherever its people succeed in working with the River Niger, despite temperatures of 45 degrees celsius (129 fahrenheit) in March, April, May, June, and October.

From September to January, the steamer goes from Koulikoro (the port of Bamako) to Mopti and Timbuktu, and by December the river should have enough water for two or three months of steaming to Gao. For the rest of the year, the huge land distances must be covered by truck (or by air for the lucky few): 1,200 kilometres from Bamako to Gao on the only tarred road (built just twelve years ago), and a further 600 km of sand to reach Tessalit. Travel is hot and costly: the sand dunes north of Mopti are a physical and psychological barrier to communication, cutting off the North from the rest of Mali.

The North of Mali includes three of the administrative regions:<sup>6</sup> Timbuktu with around 450,000 inhabitants, Gao with around 350,000, and Kidal with barely 40,000 (these are 1987 estimates: after the 1984 drought migrations, but before the onset of insecurity and the displacement of refugees). North of Timbuktu is the infertile Sahara where almost no rain falls. To the east is the oasis country of Kidal which includes the Aghagh (Adrar) mountains. North of the line of Kayes-Mopti-Niamey (in neighbouring Niger), Mali is semi-arid except for the interior delta of the Niger. Development planners often work on a "northern population" of 1-1.5 million because, in ecological and development terms, much of Mopti Region is really part of the North. These regions also share certain ecological characteristics with the semi-arid parts of Kayes Region, except for the far west where the Senegal River provides irrigation.

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<sup>6</sup> The Republic of Mali is divided into eight administrative regions: Gao, Kayes, Kidal, Koulikoro, Mopti, Segou, Sikasso, and Timbuktu, plus the District of Bamako.

Northern Mali faces serious economic and ecological challenges. The recuperation and exploitation of arid and semi-arid lands affect the whole of mankind, and this underlies the “Touareg problem”. For superficial economists or bankers, “marginal” lands do not yield an economic return comparable with the irrigated rice-fields of the south. This reasoning was applied to the cotton-growing areas of Mali’s Sikasso Region and to the groundnut zones of Central Senegal, which have largely been abandoned because the land has been exhausted by excessive monoculture. The search for financial gain has tended to degrade agricultural and forest resources in Africa, creating more marginal lands, eroding Africa’s economic and ecological capital.

Africa needs to husband its natural resources while exploiting them productively. Economically it would be foolhardy not to exploit the pastures of the Sahel, which feed livestock on an extensive herding system, using natural resources which cannot support other forms of production. Socially and culturally, people need to, and want to live on the lands of their ancestors. It is environmentally sound to exploit (but not to over-exploit) these lands, if this encourages the users to protect them against erosion and degradation. Ecologically sustainable production brings us close to “ecodevelopment”, which became the catchword of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations conferences on the environment. Ecodevelopment is one essential ingredient of sustainable human development.

### **1.3 The Republic of Mali and the Crisis in the North**

In the nineteenth century, French armies moved across West Africa from their coastal capital in St Louis, at the mouth of the Senegal river. By 1855 they had taken Kayes. Their decision to fix a garrison in Bamako around 1883 did nothing to lessen the dominance of St Louis (and later Dakar), as the source of centralized colonial rule for the whole of French West Africa. But considerable freedom was allowed to French army commanders in their ruthless—sometimes brutal—conquest of interior Africa. By 1894 the French had reached Timbuktu, and they faced fierce resistance from the northern populations even after they had conquered Gao in 1898 (Imperator 1977).

In due course, Bamako became the capital of Haut Sénégal-Niger, and one of the focal points for the independence struggle led by the elite of young African politicians and intellectuals who had been taken for studies in Dakar (the famous Lycée Ponty) and France. The Second World War provided impetus for change. Many thousands of West Africans travelled in the French

colonial army to fight for, and to die for, a cause they barely understood. But Africa's intellectuals understood the idea of "freedom" well enough. At the Brazzaville conference of 1944, Africa's new political leadership gained the right to form political parties. At the 1946 Bamako conference, the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* was founded: from this moment developed in West Africa (and in Mali, or French Soudan as it then was known) a serious movement towards national independence.<sup>7</sup> Independence for Africa became inevitable after the partition of India from Pakistan, with pressure coming from the consolidation of trades union power in French West Africa and from influential intellectuals in Parisian political life (Mamadou Konaté was Vice-President of the French National Assembly; Felix Houphouet-Boigny became Minister for the Colonies). In 1958 a Referendum was held in which Africa's populations chose independence, and the US-RDA formed a pre-independence government in Mali. At the time, the intention was to create a Mali Federation including Senegal, Upper Volta and Dahomey. The two last desisted, and instead a Federation was created between Senegal and Mali. It lasted two months. On 22 September 1960, an Extraordinary Congress of the US-RDA proclaimed the Republic of Mali.

The political wheeler-dealing in the south did not please the north. Traditional chiefs across Africa were suspicious of the new political elites, whose mandate was based not on traditional African values, but on their mastery of colonial education and languages. In Timbuktu, there were moves towards an *Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes*. Although this was never created, it is a significant pointer to the fact that the populations of the northern Sahel felt marginal to the political processes of independence. Modibo Keita's one-party regime confirmed their fears: almost no northerners were included in the top echelons of political decision-making. When dissent was expressed in the mid-sixties, it was repressed as brutally as under the French. Modibo's regime became increasingly unpopular and despotic, especially through the bad behaviour of his youth militia, so that the 1968 *coup d'état* which brought Moussa Traoré to power as chairman of the *Comité Militaire de Libération Nationale* (CMLN) was actually a relief for most of

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<sup>7</sup> The RDA was founded as a pan-African party with Felix Houphouet-Boigny as President. The Malian branch of the party, US-RDA or *Union Soudanaise-RDA* was founded by the combining of two existing parties: the *Bloc Soudanais* and the *Parti Démocratique du Soudan*. Mamadou Konaté was President, and Modibo Keita became Secretary-General. On Konaté's death in 1956, the post of President was abolished. A third party remained outside the alliance: the *Parti Soudanais Progressiste* (PSP) which was later repressed by Modibo Keita.

Mali's population. Originally 14, the military committee was riven with jealousies: only three remained when Moussa Traore fell from power in 1991.

The military proved incompetent as economic managers. Even after arresting in 1978 those colonels who were considered the most corrupt, Moussa Traore was unable to address "development" beyond the capital city and the armed forces. The peasants were exploited, and the social services neglected. Far from Bamako, northerners suffered proportionately more than the rest of Mali from neglect and marginalisation. In addition to political neglect, the North suffered from the abuse of military governors, while at the same period (1965-90) a cycle of drought was causing huge economic and social disruption, especially to the Touareg population. The two peak crises of this drought cycle fell in 1973-74 and 1984-85. Food aid destined for the North was sold abroad. Large numbers of northerners were forced to migrate within Mali, or across the frontiers. These were the men who returned in 1990 to launch the armed revolt against Moussa Traore's exhausted military regime.

The creation in 1978-79 of a new one-party State under the *Union démocratique du peuple malien* (UDPM), and the new constitution of 1979, did not improve management of the country: although it did allow a greater political representation to the people of Northern Mali. The corruption of the system became personified by the abuses of the ruling family. The brothers and minions of Madam Mariam Traore occupied more and more key posts, creaming a percentage off every contract, displaying the arrogance of despotic power. The "Touareg revolt" began in May-June 1990 with attacks in Niger and Mali by the *Mouvement Populaire de l'Azawad* (MPA), which was hailed by all the ethnic populations of the North. Under pressure from the democratic associations, criticised in Mali's new free press, denounced by unions, students, human rights associations, lawyers and mothers, Moussa Traore and his colonels reacted with savage violence both in the North and in the cities. On the crest of popular revolution, the army arrested Moussa Traore in the early hours of 26 March 1991.

The transition to democracy was led by Colonel (now General) Amadou Toumani Touré, at the head of a collective presidency, and with a largely civilian government under Prime Minister Soumana Sacko. We describe the process of peacemaking and national healing in further detail in chapters 3 and 4. Under a new constitution, the elections of 1992 gave birth to a Third Republic under Mali's first elected head of State, Dr. Alpha Oumar Konaré. But while a National Pact had been signed to bring peace to the North, the civil unrest had not stopped. Our story tells how this revolt developed, and how finally African peacemaking prevailed over the lure of violence.

**Table 1.2**  
**12 Key Dates since Mali's Independence**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event and explanation</b>
22 September 1960	Mali's Independence declared by the US-RDA
19 November 1968	President Modibo Keita arrested by military, Lt Moussa Traore becomes head of State
1973-75	First modern drought crisis
1979	New Constitution establishes one-party State with Moussa Traore as Secretary General of the UDPM
1983-85	Second modern drought crisis
May-June 1990	Touareg attacks in Niger and Mali herald the start of armed revolt
Dec. 1990-March 1991	Democrats, unions, lawyers, women and students increase pressure and violence in the cities
26 March 1991	General Moussa Traore is arrested, Lt Col Amadou Toumani Touré becomes transitional Head of State
August 1991	Mali's national conference
January 1992	New Constitution adopted by referendum, establishes multi-party, non-religious and non-ethnic democracy
11 April 1992	National Pact signed between the transition Government and the armed movements in the North
8 June 1992	Dr. Alpha Oumar Konaré is sworn in as Mali's first elected President

Source: Adame Ba, 1993.

## 1.4 Social Capital and the Value of Women

The ethnic harmony of Mali has for centuries astonished visitors from other regions of Africa. Between every set of neighbours around the Niger valley, there is a relationship based on mutual respect and interdependence. Translation of specifics into a different language sometimes makes a travesty of the original. Trying to render this social system into English, someone came up with the expression “joking relationship”. Certainly the socio-economic interdependency in Mali gives rise to ceaseless joking, but joking is also closely linked to marriage. Between cousins, joking may facilitate marriages and reduce jealousies between rivals for the same bride.<sup>8</sup> Between ethnic groups it usually goes with a marriage taboo. Thus a Blacksmith (which is an ethnic or clan group in Mali) cannot expect anything but insults from his Fulani neighbours whom he will chide and deride in the same spirit: as “cattle drivers” or “thieves” or *petits Peuls*. They would never intermarry. But should two Fulani ever be in dispute, you may safely send a Blacksmith to intercede, and the battle will instantly be over. The French use the expression *cousinage* which implies a relationship, but there is no intermarriage between these “cousins”.

This network of interlocking interdependencies underpins the tissue of Mali's most precious asset: social capital. Social capital is almost the opposite of the financial capital which has come to dominate the culture of the West. We must take the risk of offering a definition: “social capital is the sum of the human, cultural and spiritual values and patterns of personal interaction in a society”. Tore Rose of UNDP in Mali describes it as “the missing matter of the universe. You can tell it is there by seeing its consequences in Mali, but you can't quite put your finger on it” (see also Rose 1997). Social capital cannot be measured by economists nor banked by bankers, but it constitutes the most important asset in West African society. In fact even western bankers recognise social capital: for they know the value of a smile when they receive a customer, and they recognise the worth of the “old school tie network”. More recently, economists are coming to realise that there cannot be durable development nor economic growth without good governance. Bankers and economists would be

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<sup>8</sup> Such social conventions are well-known to anthropologists. A single mechanism may serve several purposes such as social cohesion, conflict avoidance, commerce promotion etc. Joking as a factor for facilitating cross-cousin marriages among the Touaregs is described in Nicholaisen 1963, pp. 465-6.

wrong to neglect social capital. Social capital is immensely valuable: it produced peace in Mali.

Mali's social capital is founded on the histories of its peoples and the strong ties which link them with their ancestors who have left them with taboos against inter-ethnic conflict and mechanisms to prevent such conflicts. And it entails a profound respect for the role of women in society. Mutual respect and pride is based on the fact that every group can boast of glory in the history of West Africa. No one has anything to prove. Every clan can boast of its great lineage. When the *griot* praise-singers—who are the guardians of legend and history, and the diplomats of West Africa—start their song at a wedding or at any other celebration, the clan name of any guest is sufficient to bring forward a flood of glorious memories to the greater honour of his or her family.

Each and every Malian is conscious of his personal history and origins, of his clan membership above all. The use of the patronymic is at one and the same time a salutation and a gesture of respect. Its repetition reinforces the historical value of the greeting: *i Tall, i Tall, i Tall!* As each repetition adds a dimension, so the first *Tall* honours the man you are greeting, the second honours his father, the third honours his grandfather and his lineage. Further repetitions push the recognition to historical and spiritual levels of personal identity, which exists only with relation to clan membership. "Each repetition of the clan greeting pushes identity further into time and space. Everything in Mali is religion," explains a descendent of one of the Manding's<sup>9</sup> greatest *griot* families: meaning that there is a spiritual dimension in personal identity which concerns the ancestral origin of each person, and which penetrates far deeper than the theology of the imported religions of Islam and Christianity. This spirituality is fundamental to understanding the depth of Mali's social capital.

In addition to the mutual respect derived from the ancestral traditions of various ethnic groups, the people of Mali live in harmony because the ecological conditions make it a necessity. We began this chapter with the story of the mother at Tawsa because it illustrates many of the components of social capital, not least the interdependence of pastoralists and farmers. Without trade and the economic support of your neighbours, you cannot survive in this harsh environment. Our links with our neighbours, their influence and importance, are

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<sup>9</sup> The Greater Manding is the space occupied by the Malinké diaspora since the apogée of medieval Mali in the late thirteenth century, stretching down into the forests to the south. Southern Mali and Northern Guinea are its centre. Its boundaries are the Sahara Desert, the Mossi Plateau, and the Atlantic Ocean.

not recognised enough. Factors which disrupt neighbourhood ties cause a crisis of identity. On the other hand, what constitutes the core of a person's personality must be recognised: maternity and paternity, language, and to a lesser extent, ethnic belonging. Without such recognition, a person cannot contribute anything useful to a neighbour, or to the community.

Each person in northern Mali has a "double label". The first label is his vertical family (or ethnic or cultural) label; the second label is stronger and is the horizontal geographical label which links him to his neighbours. In economic terms, your neighbour is more important than your blood relative. Ibrahim ag Youssouf is a full-blooded Touareg, but born and raised by the river with Songhoy neighbours. His links with his neighbours are normally stronger than the blood-ties with his geographically distant relatives in the Adghagh or near Menaka. His family has been cultivating rice (traditionally a Songhoy occupation) since 1720. Ibrahim's links with Songhoy are stronger than the blood links with the cousins of his father, Youssouf. The links of blood remain: cousins are cousins and the affection of lineage is permanent. But the links of true friendship and partnership develop with the neighbours you see every day.

The first and most important lesson from the Mali is it is possible to make peace if you build on social and cultural foundations. The corollary is equally true: making peace is impossible without involving the people and the social structures which underpin their society. The people you need to involve are those who live in proximity to one another: neighbours. Our opening proverb is particularly valid in an agro-pastoral society such as we find in northern Mali, where people are extremely mobile. If your children are sick or your granary burns down, the people to whom you turn for help are not your cousins of the same lineage and clan who are migrating with their herds at an oasis some 500 km to the north.... in your trouble you call on your neighbours, whatever colour their skin. They are the people with whom you chat and drink tea every week, with whom you pray and trade and party on a daily and monthly basis, come rain or come wind.

An important mechanism for promoting harmony between neighbours—whether they be of the same or separate ethnic groups—is the Malian tradition of communal discussion. One of the things which irritates westerners is the apparent slowness with which community decisions are taken. There is always need for another meeting. Malian society values peace and reconciliation, achieved though the use of mediators and democratic discussion beneath the palaver tree, or through the intervention of elders as the leaders of traditional civil society. This why the decentralization of governance (as we

shall see in later chapters) is important for peace-building and for reinforcing local community responsibility.

The rational exploitation of semi-arid zones can only be achieved through community action, with the support of the technical expertise which is available. The communities of the North have long adopted an inter-communal approach to natural resource management. The Sahara was once covered with extensive grasslands, across which the original Fulanis from the Nile wandered with their herds of cattle, where the Berber ancestors of the Touaregs galloped out of their cities, mounted on horses. As the desert expanded, everybody modified their lifestyles. Exceptional drought crises may lead to exceptional competition for pasture and water resources, but in a normal year the age-old community agreements on sharing resources hold good. No individual will break the rules of the community. Good neighbourliness and group loyalty are conditions for survival. Not that we are seeking to idealize unrealistically the nature of Malian communities “which can be the birthplace of conflict, as well as a place of harmony and development” (Philanthra 1993), in spite of the age-old tradition of consensus politics. In fact, it is women who provide most of the harmonious element in society.

Women occupy a place in West African society, education and food production which is difficult for many westerners to understand. This explains the frustration of African women with the western feminist movement and with their *discours et slogans officiels* as Adame Ba Konaré describes them in the Introduction to her monumental Dictionary of Mali’s famous women (1993). She asks, “What is the point of isolating women? Are women not a part of the social whole?” Women play a number of important roles in both traditional and modern society in Mali. Women occupy a fundamental place as in their role as mothers, they are traditional symbols of peace and harmony, they act as consultants for community decision-making, and they hold an increasingly important place in the modern democratic State.

The role of the mother in particular constitutes a vitally important part of social capital. “African Woman occupies a quasi-spiritual place in the family. Her status is almost divine,” explained Amadou Hampaté Ba (1992), the Sage of Bandiagara speaking to a UNESCO conference. The story of Tawsa with which we began, illustrates the power that mothers wield in society. Every woman is respected as a mother, even in her infancy. “Little mother” is one of the affectionate diminutives used to address small girls. It is a tragedy for

African women who are unable to bear a child: it is a far worse deprivation in Africa than in Europe or America.<sup>10</sup>

Woman's role as mother is related to her image as a symbol of peace and harmony in Malian society. "In the culture of Mali and Niger for example, the children produced by a mother *nya izé* in Sonrhai and Zarma, *bââ-din* in Bambara symbolize harmony, affection, unity; on the other hand, children of the same father *baba izé* in Sonrhai and Zarma, *faa-din* in Bambara symbolize jealousy and competition" (Mariam Maiga 1996, p. 13). So true indeed is this statement that *balimaya* denotes brotherhood, trust and social cohesion and also "children born of the same mother" in Bambara: the opposite is *fadenya* which means "rivalry" and "children born of the same father".<sup>11</sup> This telling comment on the disadvantages of polygamy for Mali, reinforces our understanding of the importance of women in peacemaking, and in the composition of Mali's social capital.

The key role of women in decision-making is nicely illustrated by the Manding proverb, "Behind every beard, you can see the point of a plait". Mali's national hero Soundiata founded his kingdom on the intelligence of his sister and mother. Indeed, his name is shortened from *sogolonjata* meaning "the panther of Sogolon" (the name of his famous mother). Community decisions are always taken through consensus, and only after consultation with the mothers of the family. This is just as true for hierarchical Touareg and Fulani clans, which follow the lead of a Chief, as it is in a Malinké village: women may not be visible at public meetings, but no decision may be taken, let alone implemented, without their consent. Unfortunately, the importance of women does not in any way reduce the reality and disadvantages of the gerontocracy in Malinké, Soninké, Songhoy, Bambara and Dogon (*hogon*) communities. There remains a need to modernize certain community functions, including independent decision-making for women (especially for younger, economically-productive women) to allow for speedier decision-making in the monetary economy.

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<sup>10</sup> *Fafa* in Songhoy and *ehaf* in Tamacheq mean both "breast" and "milk brotherhood". To drink from the same breast carries the same taboos as being born from the same womb. It is a great honour to call someone your "milk brother", as though you fed at the same breast.

<sup>11</sup> We use a different spelling notation to Mariam Maiga, but the roots are the same. The Touaregs use the expression *ahnammu*: "belonging to the house of the same mother" (derived from *ehan n ma* meaning "mother's house") as meaning "competition, rivalry". This is because, in Touareg matrilineal society, inheritance is through the mother and therefore her sons are in competition. *Ahnamm* therefore is the opposite of *balimaya* or *nya izé*, but confirms the concept.

Women are beginning to take an increasingly active role in Malian politics. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's new Government named on 17 September 1997 contained six women ministers (described by Elimane Fall in *Jeune Afrique* as "a record for Africa"): Fatou Haidara, Kadiatou Sow, Fatoumata N'Diaye, Afsatou Thiero, Aminata Traore, Oulématou Tamboura. What strikes us as most important is that each of them emerged not through political society, but through their individual contributions to civil society and NGOs (even though some of them may belong to a political party and the first two were reappointed from the previous government). So women's voices are beginning to be heard even at the national level. Women also played an important role in promoting the peace process (in Bamako as much as in the North). This was recognized on the public platform by the award, on 5 June 1992, of the title of *Chevalier de l'Ordre National* to the women's peace association: *Mouvement National des Femmes pour la Sauvegarde de la Paix et de l'Unité Nationale*. In this way Mali's Third Republic chose to honour the nation's mothers, including all those hundreds of women who are not members of the MNFSPUN but who have worked for peace.

Africa is varied, and the position of women is different in each society. West African women are often horrified to discover how their sisters are treated in other regions; just as their sisters are shocked to discover the prevalence of polygamy in West Africa. Western journals emphasise the energy expended for fetching wood and water, pounding millet and tending animals and infants. It is of course true that many (and perhaps most) West African women are overworked: but this is a result of poverty, it is not a function of their social status. Western women were overworked before they had electricity, running water and washing machines. The solution is to help Africa's women finance solar cookers, better wells, and grain mills to replace the pestle and mortar. The solution to fight against the causes of poverty.

Touareg women own their tent, which they bring with them to the marriage. And they take it away with them if they divorce, leaving the man sitting foolishly in the sun, obliged to crawl home to his mother. Songhoy and Touareg men help pound the millet, and draw water for the animals. Nor have Malian women been diminished by the advent of Islam. While there are plenty of obscurantist politicians in western Asia and north Africa (but few in Mali) who feed the fears of the western anti-Islamic press, Islam does not need to be a conservative religion, nor a force against change. Much reactionary Islam is promoted by ignorance and based on a poor reading of the historical texts. Some is politically motivated. The Islamic feminist lawyer Fatma Gailani writes:

The accusation that Islam itself hinders women from having equal rights in education and the workplace is an accusation which I reject totally. The principal objective of my training in Islamic law was to prove strongly that there is equality. Throughout the history of Islam, wise and educated women such as Khadidjah, Aïcha, Salama, and later the great teachers such as Amra and Hafsa bint Sirin—who were respected students of the law, and Umm Isa bint Ibrahim and Amat bint Abdullah—who were famous students of jurisprudence, participated fully in social and political life; and mention must also be made of teachers such as Chadjarat-al-durr in Egypte and Razia Sultana. Their influence and importance did not remain confined to groups of women, but spread throughout the community. The Prophet himself (peace be upon him) sought the opinion of Umm Salama in difficult political situations.... (he) requested the *bay'ah* from the women, which is the equivalent of the vote of our modern era. And the men also went to receive instruction from the women teachers I have cited (Gailani 1997, p. 7).

In an international publication such as this, it is useful to stress such elements, which may not immediately strike people who are infrequent visitors to the region. The importance of women is of course obvious to all members of Malian society, and it is clear to the informed observer that any development strategy which does not mobilise women's social influence and social structures involving women, is doomed to miss its mark. For not only do women occupy a major place in society, their role in the community symbolises peace and harmony.

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This first chapter has set the historical and geographical, and also the socio-political context, for our story of peacemaking. It is self-evident that history and environmental degradation played significant roles in what has come to be known as the "Touareg problem". But it will not be easy for outsiders to understand the process of peacemaking and disarmament we describe in chapter 4, unless they have grasped the importance of the social capital we have described above, including ethnic interdependence, and the value of motherhood in Malian society. Now we shall move on to a more detailed examination of economic and ecological decline in the Sahel, providing further explanation for the origins of conflict in northern Mali.



They made a pyramid of the weapons surrendered in cantonment by former members of the rebel Movements, and the people of Timbuktu gathered in their thousands to witness the symbolic ending of hostilities, and to hear their spokesman declare the Movements dissolved.



Madam Ellen Johson-Sirleaf, Director of UNDP's African Bureau, with UNDP Resident Representative in Mali Tore Rose, and one of the authors.

## Chapter 2

# The Buildup to the Crisis in Northern Mali

*Every chick which leaves the egg will make itself heard one day.  
Songhoy proverb*

In this chapter, we examine first the political and then the economic causes of the “Touareg problem”. One-party centralized mismanagement turned the disparities of nature into inequalities. Years of *mal-développement* were aggravated by the economic and social disruption of drought, while donor neglect of northern Mali reinforced the effects of poor government and political marginalization. Many northerners were forced into economic exile, while Mali’s wealth moved increasingly southwards. Finally, as our proverb predicts, northern youth rebelled against the Bamako regime. Aid agencies’ actions in favour of human development in the North were paralysed by five years of insecurity: which further accentuated inequalities, and created a refugee problem with all its attendant misery, cross-border implications, and promotion of social change. As we shall see in the final chapters of our book, it is only the relaunch of this damaged socio-economy which will ensure permanent peace in the Sahel.

### 2.1 How Centralized Government Marginalized the North

The first centralized states in West Africa were based on the invention of a standing professional army, as we saw in our first chapter. The Bambara Kingdom of Ségou, founded around 1712 by Biton Coulibaly, created a permanent regiment of *tonjon* composed partly of warriors captured in battle. The *tonjon* became so powerful that they made and unmade kings, who rewarded them (and placated them) by giving them the right of pillage.<sup>1</sup> Apart from this regime of terrorists, the only other centralized systems of government arrived as imported ideologies. In

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<sup>1</sup> Many Bambara proverbs illustrate the ruthless nature of this regime, such as “sleep on a goatskin, and turn it into a pair of sandals the next morning”: illustrating lack of gratitude, an abuse of hospitality, and the way in which the *tonjon* behaved.

the Niger interior delta north of Djenné and Mopti, the Fulani theocratic State of Macina was created around 1818 by Sékou Amadou: the *Dina* was run with centralized dogmatic rules based on the *sharia* Islamic law. A similar structure emerged in Sokoto, northern Nigeria. The Fulani social hierarchy allowed a fairly decentralized application of the rules by each *ardo* or local chief who accepted Islamic law, but the Manding palaver tree tradition of democratic debate was diluted.

If Islamic centralization started with the *Dina*, it worsened with the *tijania* invasion of El Haj Oumar Tall, who mixed the autocracy of the conqueror with anarchy, destroying the *Dina* rules but offering only prayers in their place. Apart from such isolated cases, Islam has been a factor of unification and peace in the Manding Region. Unlike the Arab invasions of the Maghreb, Islam filtered across the desert over the centuries, and installed itself peacefully along the Niger River. Those who have used Islam to justify conquest (the Moroccans, Sékou Amadou, Cheikh Oumar Tall, Samori Touré) are criticized in the songs of Mali's *griot* historians... except of course by their own family *griots*!

For many Malians in the mid-19th century, the arrival of the French provided respite from the despotism of anarchy. Centralized government became institutionalized with the French military occupation. "*Papa Commandant*" became the arbiter of law and order, and exactions were routinely perpetrated by the guards who were always brought in from another part of French West Africa. The richest Malians were soon the interpreters, who were able to manipulate the decisions of the Commandant. In many cases it was the interpreter who, on Independence Day, 22 September 1960, replaced the white Commandant, taking over the desk, the uniform and many of the abuses of his role model. Distressingly, after thirty-two years of independence and 5 years of democracy in Mali, the *Commandant* is still with us in 1997. The dominance of a centralized administration and its abuses of power only slightly diminished by Mali's embryonic *Etat de droit*, which is still a long way from establishing the impartial rule of law.

In fact, importing the republican logic of the Jacobin State into French Sudan has resulted in the creation of a centralized administration which pushes to its furthest extreme, the separation between the public service and the life of local society (Walzholtz, p. 17).

Though the village and its chief remained intact, centralization destroyed many of the mechanisms which regulated local life, thereby emasculating traditional civil society. If the *dugu tigi* was the main source of governance in medieval Mali, he is now subordinate to every paid government functionary. In no area was this more

unfortunate than in the abuse of natural resources. The Dogon provide a neat example of villagers and transhumant populations respecting the good management of trees, crops and pastures, thanks to the village environmental police (known variously by local names such as *alamadiou*, *ogokana*: see Dembele 1995). Colonial rule replaced this system with a paid foresters. Local policing and environmental management systems are being revived in numerous communities since 1991, largely through the influence of the NGOs.

The most extreme example of abuse of the Malian one-party State was certainly provided by the Forestry Department, a para-military force based on the French model created by Bonaparte to place retiring soldiers. Mali's foresters were expected to supplement their salaries with fines. Each man had a monthly quota of fines to fill, and every step in the hierarchy received an official percentage of the takings. It used to be said in the North that no Targui herdsman would venture into the bush without his water-bottle, his green tea, and his 10,000 Fcfa note (worth \$20 these days, but twice as much before the January 1994 devaluation). If the herdsman heard the sound of a Landrover engine, his hand would dive immediately to the bottom of his chest pocket, and bring forth the 10,000 francs. If he was lucky, the government official would just lean out of the window and take the money. Experience showed that, if ever the Landrover turned off its engine, the "fine" would be much higher. For twelve months after the March 1991 revolution, no government forester dared leave his house for fear of the intense anger in Mali's villages and camps, for fear of being killed.

Touareg rejection of centralization was already evident in their resistance to the French. On 15 January 1894, the Touareg chief Chebboun ag Fondogomo destroyed a French column led by Col. Bonnier. The brutality of France's revenge is still talked of in the North. In the camps they still sing of Firhoun's heroic resistance in 1916. When the French finally trapped Firhoun in the Forest of Anderamboukane, they killed 750 of the clan Ouillimiden. People do not forget such slaughter. Cheibane Coulibaly, Gaoussou Drabo and Alassane ag Mohamed (1995, pp. 4-5) describe the resentments which built up over the past 100 years, erupting as intermittent revolts against central authority. In 1954 the colonial regime paraded the head of Alla ag Albacher through Boureissa, to show what happened to people who did not toe the French line. In 1963 the successor regime of Modibo Keita used fighter bombers to put down a Touareg revolt said to favour the creation of an independent *Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes* (OCRS), an idea dating back to a 1957 petition to the French Parliament initiated by the Imam of Timbuktu.

Not until 1977—nine years after he ousted Modibo Keita—did Moussa Traore release from prison those who had been arrested in 1963-64. Meanwhile the 1973 drought had passed through the North, creating misery and exile for thousands of the population. International aid destined for the hungry populations of the North was stolen by army colonels to build luxurious villas in Bamako, known as “the castles of drought”. It is sometimes said that the sons and brothers of those who starved to death in Kidal and Boureissa in 1974, returned in 1990 to take their revenge on Moussa Traore.

The new urban elites who seized power at independence took over the 18th century European model of the Nation State from their colonial teachers, and turned “sovereignty” into an instrument of personal power. The first to do so in Africa was Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana (UK and US educated). In the case of Mali, it was Modibo Keita (educated in France) who became Mali’s first President in 1960. Having captured power, the young politicians in each country then set out to destroy the traditional elites which the colonial administration had used in a form of co-governance (eg *Chefs de Canton*). The Malian historian Professor Sékéné Mody Sissoko (1996) tells the Malian story:

Around 1958, the RDA government got rid of the Canton chiefs, replacing them with village chiefs who possessed only moral authority.... When the RDA regime ended (1958-1968), some attempt was made to restore the honour of traditional chiefs and elders. The present regime has gilded the lily of traditional and religious leaders and elders, but only in the sense of their moral authority, in order to reawaken traditional values.... In the regions, traditional chiefs are becoming better known. They are public figures. Some of them are happy with decentralisation, because it allows them to dream of reclaiming the whole of their traditional authority....

This is of direct relevance to the situation in the North, where the armed revolt was against both the military regime, and against the chiefs who collaborated with the regime. A simple decree is not enough to ensure that everyone buys into the Nation State. To give it life and hope, the State requires a covenant between the governors and the governed. That is the basis of leadership in Africa’s traditional societies. Those who fail to create a similar trust inside the modern State, sow the seeds of coercion and revolt.

The independence administrations were initially weak because there was a serious dearth of trained cadres, especially in the technical areas of human and veterinary health, water and forest management, agricultural extension, and in modern management. Later the technical gaps were filled: this has been one of the successes of “development”. But serious weaknesses remained, especially in terms of leadership, management and motivation. The one-party State replaced, in the

lives of the civil administration (and later the armed forces), the work and service ethic with “obedience to the Prince”:

The concept of the Prince which was encouraged for several decades, created an environment in which Mali's citizens were unable to grasp the idea that the authorities ought themselves to be subject to the Law. A large part of the population—and especially young people—have never seen in their lifetime an organisation outside the village which was based on the application of democratic disciplines. The present Constitution of the IIIrd Republic does little to encourage citizens to see the Constitution as anything other than a list of objectives to be aimed at, and which therefore constitute an unattainable dream (Coulibaly 1995).

Under Mali's totalitarian regimes, the quality of public services continued to slide downhill. It is very discouraging to work for a “Prince” for whom you have very little respect, and two other major factors intervened which undermined the morale and morality of the public service. The first was corruption, the second was non-payment of salaries. Although Modibo Keita took no money for himself, he wasted huge sums on oil-exploration while neglecting Malian agriculture. After the coup d'état of 1968, funds were quickly diverted from development programmes into private pockets. Those who wished to remain in their posts were obliged to connive in the dishonesty of the oligarchy. Under Moussa Traore there was rapid expansion of villas in Bamako, farms beside the river, large herds of cattle owned by colonels, bank credits for fictitious commercial and industrial activities, etc. Soldiers were the only public servants who were usually paid on time.

In 1979-1981, the new party *Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien* briefly promised local representation and democracy. Instead, the UDPM became a vehicle for decentralized plunder across the country. Initial hopes of one-party democracy evaporated, leaving the party cadres, as much as the local administration officials, in the hands of central decision-making and career-creation. As in so many countries, it was finally the excessive greed and increasing arrogance of the ruling family, which made the Prince's regime intolerable and almost bankrupted the country. Certainly the army and the air force and the police were run down less quickly than the education and health services, but the transition Government of 1991-92 revealed to an amazed Malian public, that the ordinary soldiers lived in the same discomfort and misery as the rest of them.

Public servants had little prospect of achieving job satisfaction beyond the accumulation of wealth, and they came under increasing pressure as salaries were paid later and later and sometimes not at all. Government employees with families to feed and no salary, either had to extort illicit payments through their work, or else to generate revenues from alternative employment. In either case, their work

for the public good was diminished. Training was another neglected area. Those who received training (and the *per diem* payments which have traditionally accompanied government training sessions in West Africa) were naturally close to the Party. A 1992 analysis of training in the Ministry of Education revealed that only 17 per cent of teachers had received in-service training during their career, but the lucky 17 per cent had benefitted from lots of training courses. The others were left to rot in distant provincial schools.

Those were times of persistent abuse. While the forestry agents imposed fines and forbade hunting in the desert, military officers in Landrovers went out shooting with automatic rifles, bringing home dozens of antelopes and ostriches at every outing with a total disregard for the laws protecting these species. When irrigation was most needed in the rice fields, soldiers would requisition fuel reserves for their own use leaving the irrigation pumps unable to work. Marketing of cereals and many other items was a State monopoly: this in a land which has lived on trade from time immemorial. In the deficit years of drought, how else were pastoralists to obtain grain, if not through trade? Many peasant farmers were reduced to the status of serfs, hiding their harvests deep in the bush. Respectable elders and civil servants were forced to bribe soldiers for the right to purchase grain from the government stores.

This state of affairs did nothing to improve the self-regard of the military. While senior ranks enjoyed their power to requisition private vehicles and fuel, the whole army was composed of Malian citizens who resented the feeling that they were rejected by their fellows. This is a communal society. The Party forced uniformed Malians out of mainstream society into a "social ghetto". The army suffered from an additional and serious defect: senior officers stayed in the capital, leaving young and inexperienced officers (and in many cases poorly educated cadres) in charge of isolated garrisons. As usual, the problems were most acute in the North. Life was better in the prestige garrisons of Kati and Gao and Kidal and Mopti, but in the army as in the civil service, loyal service in distant locations was not rewarded.

Service in the North was aggravated by distance and isolation. Unable even to contact their mothers by telephone, southerners naturally felt that northern Mali was the back-of-beyond. It was difficult to get there, far from parents and friends. It was very hot and intolerably dusty in the dry season. Meat was cheap, but everything else was expensive. People working in the North never received training and had little chance of getting a coveted scholarship for study abroad. Dissatisfaction was accentuated by the policy of posting cadres away from their regions of origin: ostensibly in order to build Nationhood, but more importantly (from the point of view of the early political leadership) to ensure that the

intellectuals were separated from their cultural base. Divide and rule! Many cadres were technically ineffective: southern agriculturalists were unfamiliar with the ecology of the North, teachers didn't speak the languages of their pupils, and so on. All of this increased the alienation between governors and governed, annihilating any concept of public "service".

If civil service morale was low in other regions, cadres posted to Gao and Timbuktu felt that they had been sent into exile: a feeling reinforced by having military Governors, and by the gloomy presence in the two regions of the political prisons: Taoudenit with its political salt mines and Kidal with its colonial prison-fortress.<sup>2</sup> Many technicians posted to Gao and Timbuktu (let alone to outposts such as Tessalit, Ansongo, or Rharous) refused to take up their post. Those who accepted, had often requested a transfer before they even arrived, and they grabbed every possible excuse to travel to the regional capital. Northern towns had to survive for months on end without any qualified health personnel. After twenty-three years of military rule, the state of morale in many government services amounted almost to self-loathing, which is hardly a good basis for achieving progress and development. Northern Mali is still suffering from the resulting alienation of the government administration from the people it was supposed to serve.

It is hardly surprising that Mali's Third Republic started life in June 1992 with a demoralized and ineffective public administration. Worse, after thirty years of one-party rule the thought of change was abhorrent to many of them, most particularly in services which had been in the forefront of repression or corruption. The less competent the cadre, the greater the threat posed to him by any change to the established order. Having won the elections, Alpha Oumar Konaré discovered that the real opposition was to be found inside the administration: an opposition entrenched against change, against reform, against any threat to their personal hegemony. Five years later, many of the same faces are still in place and taking decisions.

The long years of centralized administration were equally demoralising for the uniformed and civil administrations. After a few months of "attacks" in 1990 and 1991, the whole of the civil and technical administration had left the outlying areas to seek the protection of army garrisons in Gao or Timbuktu or Kidal. Consequently there are lots of citizens who haven't seen the "State" for years. All the northern populations—and especially those who fled to the refugee

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<sup>2</sup> Taoudenit was closed in 1990, and the decision to close Kidal prison was announced late in 1997.

camps—have called for the re-installation of administrative and technical services as a priority. Of course the North needs resources as well as good technicians, for everything has been plundered or destroyed. The administrator needs a desk and files and a typewriter; the teacher needs blackboard and chalk and books; the health supervisor needs bandages and drugs, syringes and needles and the means to sterilize them. In many places even the buildings have fallen to pieces. Calls for the restoration of the authority of the State refer as much to the need to restore the physical presence and the moral authority of the State, as to the need to ensure security and order throughout the region.

One result of this marginalization of the North was that people lost faith in their Malian nationality. When Moussa Traore overthrew Modibo Keita in 1968, “Mali” was barely eight years old. There had been little time to create loyalties towards the new Malian identity. Modibo’s youth militia and trading monopolies had lost him the affection of the people. The State remained as a legal entity: but there can be no Nation without a constant renewal of the covenant between people. Most Northerners resented the RDA government which ruled for ten years (1958-68) before the military coup, especially the regime’s restrictions on cereal trading. Huge sums were poured into the North in a fruitless search for oil. In the atmosphere of the time these explorations appeared like a “southern secret”. Certainly they benefitted no one in the North. The 1968-78 military regime quickly became unpopular, and Malians became progressively more disappointed with the UDPM after 1979 as it failed to deliver first democracy, and then development. Older public servants ostentatiously called themselves “Soudaniens”, to distance themselves from the corrupt military regime of “Mali”. In such an atmosphere of alienation, there was little opportunity for a renewal of the covenant between the governors and the governed.

During the 10 years that Modibo Keita was in power, no Touareg was appointed minister and there was very poor political representation.<sup>3</sup> Although Moussa appointed a few Northerners to positions in government (his “token” Touareg minister) and later in the Party, the North had little influence over national or local politics.<sup>4</sup> The region was under military governorship for most of the period. At various times, this was justified because of tensions between Mali

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<sup>3</sup> For example, the Parliamentary Deputy for Kidal was a Songhoy from Bamba, and for Menaka he was a Songhoy from Bourem. Both were imposed by the USRDA party machine.

<sup>4</sup> Lode (1997, p. 64) points out that “apart from Kidal, the Tuaregs had a broader representation on top level under Moussa Traore than they have now. No Arab was elected to the National Assembly during the last elections, held on 20 July and 3 August 1997.”

and one or other of her neighbours, but it was seen by the majority of the northern populations as a military occupation, especially when they remembered the bloody repression of Touareg dissent by the regime of Modibo Keita.

It was the alienation which led to demands for autonomy. Fortunately for Mali, none of the movements claiming the Azawad identity seriously believed that an independent Azawad was viable.<sup>5</sup> The pastures cannot afford to be separated from the riverine agriculture. The economy of the North is based upon a synergy between the two production systems. The peoples of the North themselves know this and they have lived together for centuries. Nevertheless it is necessary periodically to renew the decision, both between themselves and within the Malian Nation.

This is where the French word for ending isolation, *désenclavement*, takes on political meaning: for the North is cut off from the South. Until the tarmac road was opened in 1985 between Gao and Mopti, Gao's trade took place mainly through Niger and Algeria. Kidal traditionally faces north and trades with southern Algeria. It is not just by chance that the rebellion started in Kidal, where people did not feel integrated into the national economy, nor the body politic. "*Désenclavement*" can be achieved without physical displacement, if the telecommunications are adequate. Mali's are not. Until quite recently, neither telephones nor televisions were to be found in the North, leaving the people not only physically isolated, but also intellectually isolated from Bamako. Such was the political context of resentment which fed the northern revolt, and which was aggravated by the stress of drought.

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<sup>5</sup> *Azawa* is the word for an eating bowl, and also for the geographical depression north of Timbuktu which is currently the territory of the Berabich (who were once Touaregs, are now considered as Moors, but who mostly speak Songhoy). The word *Azawad* has come to signify the whole of Mali's 6th, 7th and 8th Regions. Walzholz (1996, pp. 9-11) highlights the ambiguities of the term which can include all peoples (Touareg, Songhoy, Bozo, Fulani, and Moor) living in these regions, or only the Touareg and Moor nomads, according to the political needs of the moment.

## 2.2 Drought Hits the Sahel: 1965-1990

While none of Mali's land is very rich outside the river valleys, the semi-arid soils of the North are particularly fragile. Traditional resource management leaves lands fallow for nine years, after they have been grazed extensively, or cropped for three seasons. Light rains mean light crops, or no crops at all. Without improved rice fields and small irrigation pumps, even life beside the river is risky. Agropastoralists scrape an uncertain living.

"Do not aggravate Nature's disparities," advises a leader of Malian civil society, "for then disparities become inequalities." As we saw in the previous section, the one-party State did not follow this advice. Land was nationalized. The inheritance from the ancestors now belonged to the Governor or the Forestry Department. Age-old agreements on sharing resources depended on the discretion of civil servants. Extensive pastoralism does not fit easily inside new national frontiers which were drawn on a map in Paris, using a ruler. The north-south caravan routes had been declining slowly since the Portuguese first rounded the Cape, and they were severely hit by the imposition of colonial monopolies in favour of three French companies which were able to impose fixed trading points and fixed purchase prices. The Malian State continued the practice under "socialist marketing" principles. Add to the problems of frontiers and customs officers and trading tariffs, the competition of motor vehicles owned by Party stalwarts from the South, and it is apparent that land-use and trading patterns were subjected to serious changes which did not work in favour of the North.

To make matters worse, the State passed a new law (on 4 February 1983) on nationalized lands. All land left fallow could be taken over by the State. This encouraged farmers to abuse fragile soils by cutting short the traditional fallow periods. The *Code domanial et foncier* of August 1986 allowed the State to take over all lands which were not registered: providing military and civil officials with the legal opportunity to claim the best lands, notably along the banks of the rivers and lakes. Walzholz comments that:

The State is the final owner of land, and areas which are not cultivated by a private user are at the State's disposal. On the other hand, Touareg nomads traditionally lay claim to a flexible space in which they migrate freely according to environmental demands. Distribution of land to private ownership is seen as an assault on their freedom of movement.... Lands left for pasture... are constantly being reduced, as the market economy encourages cultivation of the savannah with cash crops for international markets.... In arid regions the only possible productive activity is extensive herding; yet the nomads find it more and more difficult to take their herds south to the river during the dry season. The Interior Delta of the Niger has seen the surface of rice fields (cultivated and fallow) increase

by 42.5% in 23 years, and they are expanding by 1.55% each year. National rice production has more than doubled between the middle of the 1980s and the early 1990s (1996, pp. 22-23, citing Bernus 1990, pp. 46-47).

These institutional factors weakened the agro-pastoral economy at a period when the North was receiving a further onslaught: from 1965 until 1990 a cycle of low rainfall afflicted the whole of the Sahel region, with two great troughs around 1974 and 1984. This gave birth to the terrible expression of *Le Mali inutile*, implying that “development” is a matter of high productivity alone. On this argument, only production is *useful*, the human factor is irrelevant. Some donors sincerely embraced the concept that there were “two Malis”, and that there was no reason to invest in “useless, unproductive, arid parts of Mali”. USAID and the World Bank more or less pulled out of northern Mali after the 1974 drought, and concentrated on Bamako and surrounding areas. During the 1970s, the only development activities in Gao and Timbuktu regions were undertaken by the NGOs. In the early 1980s, UNICEF joined in under the leadership of Mme Annick Miské (whose husband we shall meet in Chapter 4.2). The drought crises led to food distributions by WFP, EEC and later the donor consortium PRMC.<sup>6</sup> Large projects which promised much were a great disappointment to the populations: Mali Nord-Est in Gao, PSARK in Kidal, the French irrigation project in Forgho and their hotel in Timbuktu, USAID’s wheat irrigation in Diré, the EEC road to Niafunké, the German phosphate project in Bourem.... Like earlier oil explorations, these projects swelled the official figures for investment in the North but brought little to the lives of ordinary people. Only the road Mopti-Gao made a significant contribution to northern development. Donors in general, in line with the military regime, neglected the North and accentuated regional inequalities.

Irregular rainfall and declining river levels destroyed the confidence of a large proportion of Mali’s population. Again, the effects were most serious in the North. It is difficult to produce reliable statistics to illustrate the effects of the drought, given the nature of the terrain. Among the statistical indicators, cereal production and livestock figures seem to be the most helpful. Guestimated figures like Gross

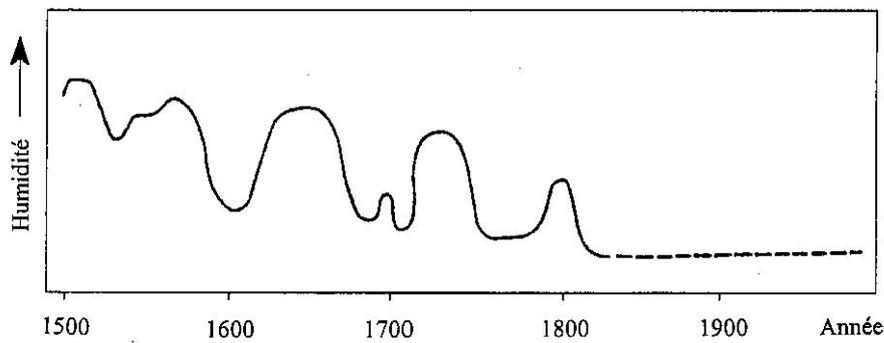
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<sup>6</sup> The *Programme de Restructuration du Marché Céréaliier* was a great success story for donor cooperation. Starting in 1980, the donors persuaded Mali’s military regime that progressive liberalization of the cereal market was in its interest, in exchange for gifts of grain to build up a strategic food reserve. The technical drive in 1980 behind the PRMC came from WFP and UNDP, with political clout from the EEC and the Germans. All the donors joined in, and the last restrictions on the last cereal (rice) were lifted in 1993. Meanwhile the PRMC has become a source of agricultural credit and an important stimulus for modernization.

Domestic Product<sup>7</sup> and annual revenue by region have little meaning in a country where most of the population uses money only to pay taxes (and who in rural Mali is paying taxes these days?). The very same statistical department which publishes revenue figures, declares that they probably represent only half the reality (Rospabe 1997, p. 18). That Mali is a very poor country is an established fact. Low life-expectancy figures (under 55 in most of Mali, 66 years in Bamako) are brought home to us each time we bury our friends, or their infant children.

Economists who really understand the Sahel follow the “Goat: Millet Index” rather than estimating millet-based monetary incomes. In September 1996 in the Gourma, you could only get 50 kilos of millet for a mature goat (Thiam 1996): so local harvest predictions were not good, and goat-owners needing to buy millet were expecting a tough time in the market place.<sup>8</sup> Cereal production in Mali is a function of rainfall. The hydro-meteorologist Nicholson (1981) has produced an historical reconstitution. In the following Graph 2.1, only the data she used from after 1890 can be taken as “measurements”, but her overall picture shows that the

**Graph 2.1**  
**Sahel’s Declining Rainfall over the Centuries**



(Nicholson, 1981)

<sup>7</sup> GDP is variously quoted as \$220, \$250 or \$480 per inhabitant, according to the publication you read: given the inaccuracy of the guesses and the impossibility of calculating the incomes in money terms of cereal farmers, herders and artisans, none of these \$US figures impress.

<sup>8</sup> It can be argued that the trade advantage is always on the side of the cereal grower who will buy a goat as an investment: whereas the owner of the goat has no choice, and sells because he needs millet as a staple food. This “law of comparative fragility” works against the pastoralist whenever crops are poor.... which means most of the 20th century.

Sahel has been drying out for the past 300 years, with each phase appearing to be dryer than the one which preceded it. Likewise the “wet cycles” appear to be progressively less wet, both in length and in intensity. The graph presents what Chaouche (1988, p. 42) calls the “evolution of the climate of West Africa on a secular scale”. It shows the serious decline in rainfall during the past hundred years, since about the time when the French captured Timbuktu in 1894 (we are not suggesting any direct causal relationship!). This period has seen the progressive undermining of the Touareg and Songhoy agro-pastoral equilibrium.

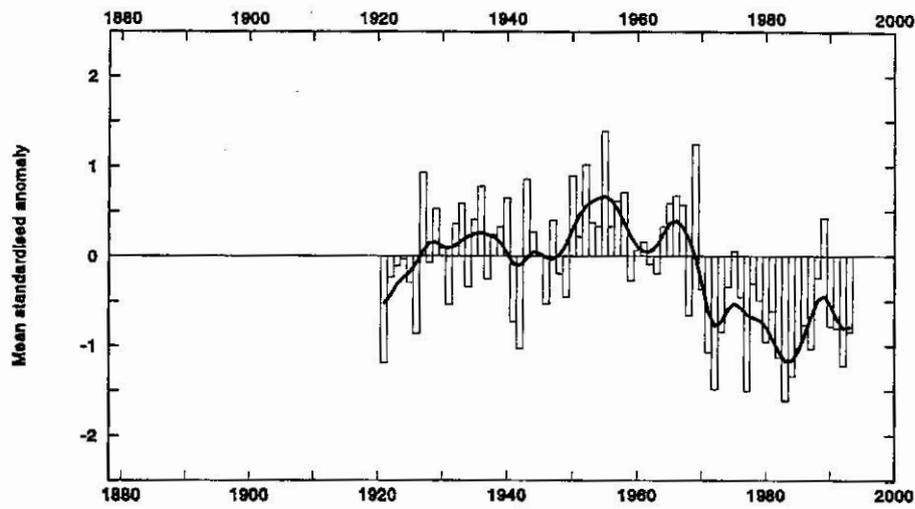
We also reproduce as Graph 2.2, Hulme’s graphs for Mauritania, Senegal, Central Mali and Central Burkina Faso for most of this century (for a further discussion see the UNSO Assessment of Desertification and Drought 1992). We can see that there were plenty of bad rainfall years; but that from 1965 onwards, Mali suffered a permanent period of drought and that the famous 1973-74 and 1983-84 droughts were in fact extreme troughs in a 25-year period of dryness.

The comparative rainfall figures for Timbuktu, Gao and (most of all) Tessalit between 1964 and 1994 show how serious was the local impact (Table 2.1). The cumulative effect was to undermine many of the population’s traditional survival strategies, and eventually (in 1984) there was nothing much left to survive on.

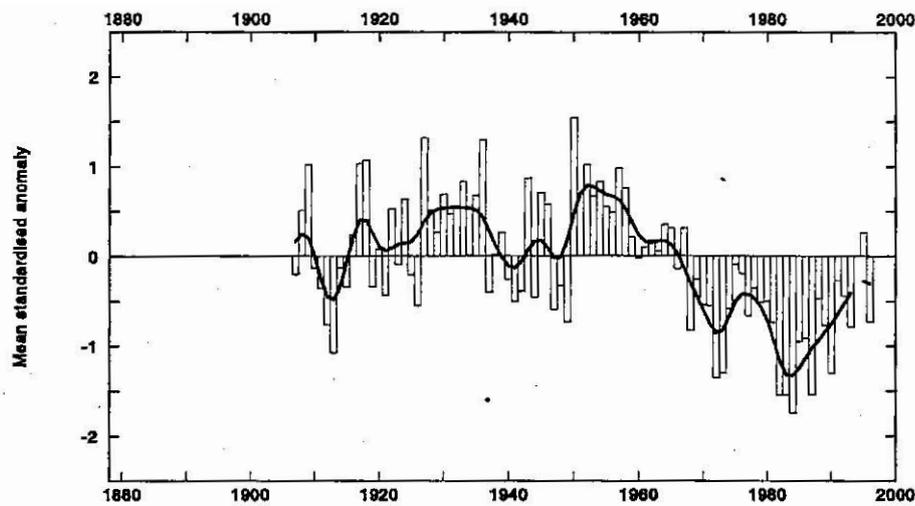
The declining and erratic rainfall explains the failure of rainfed agriculture and pastures. For the economy of the North, there is a second factor of prime importance: the level of the Issa Ber, the Niger River. The best studies of this phenomenon have been carried out by the French research institute ORSTOM. Hallassy Sidibé, one of their research associates, in his doctoral thesis on the lakes of Timbuktu has produced an historical analysis of the river levels at Diré and their subsequent effects on the levels of the region’s biggest Lake Faguibine, which shrunk to a fraction of its 18th century dimensions. In 1941-44 and 1983-84, Faguibine was dry. Even a poor year results in declining fish stocks, while irrigated agriculture is diminished (with dry season sorghum virtually disappearing as a crop). Dry lakes obviously produce nothing at all. Fed by rains in the Guinea Highlands and the south of Mali, the Niger River reaches its highest point at Diré in December (1996 cubic metres per second) and the minimum comes in June (48.5 cubic metres per second) (Sidibé 1993, p. 49). Graph 2.3 shows the huge variations which have taken place during the past century.

**Graph 2.2**  
**Rainfall in Four Sahelian Countries**

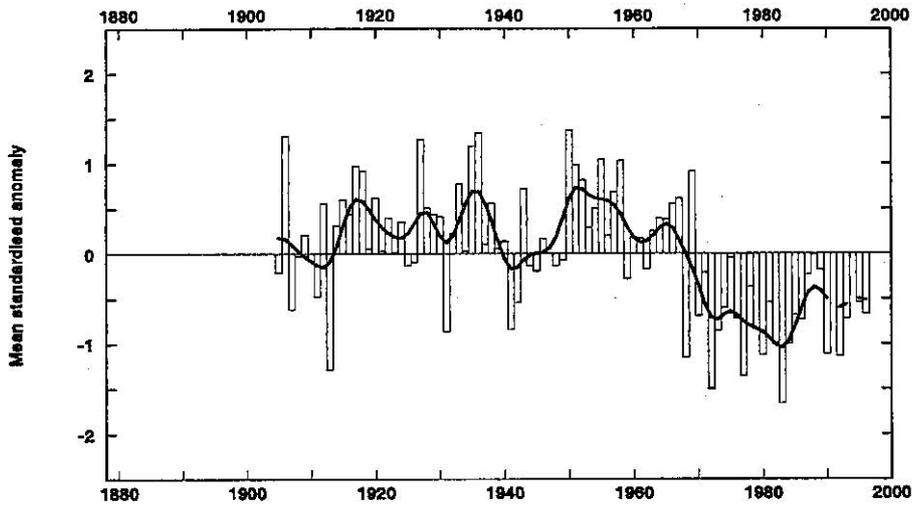
**Mauritania, 1921-1993, May-October (1951-80 mean = 216mm)**



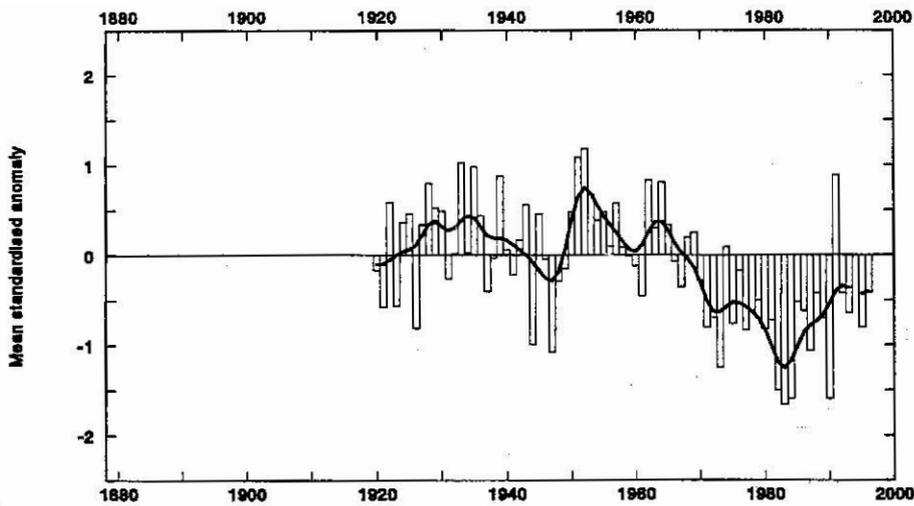
**Mali, 1907-1996, May-October (1951-80 mean = 623mm)**



Senegal, 1905-1996, May-October (1951-80 mean = 733mm)



Burkina Faso, 1920-1996, May-October (1951-80 mean = 840mm)



Source: M. Hulme, Climatic Research Unit, University of East Anglia; see also UNSO Assessment of Desertification and Drought (1992, p. 26).

**Table 2.1**  
**Precipitation in Northern Mali for Selected Years**

	<b>Timbuktu (mm)</b>	<b>Gao (mm)</b>	<b>Tessalit (mm)</b>
1953	262	431	12
1954	380	363	71
1963	200	285	183
1964	217	285	217
1973	104	143	41
1974	134	129	68
1983	74	103	66
1984	239	142	55
1993	251	240	267
1994	...	247	253
1995	226	265	255
1996	230	278	236

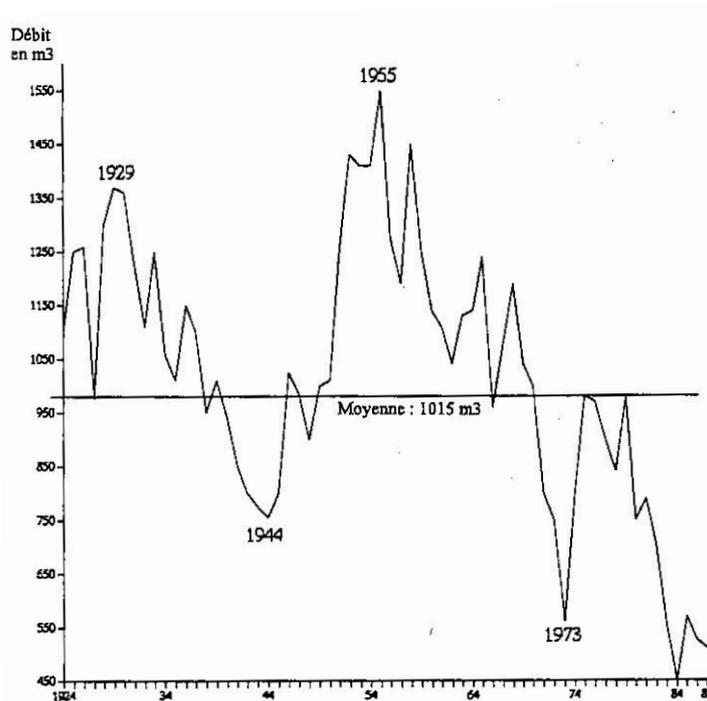
*Source:* Department of Meteorology, Bamako.

The years 1924, 1929-30, and 1951-60 were good periods, which filled the lakes and refuelled the underground aquifers. Most of the remainder of this century has been poor. Since 1964 there have been few years when the aquifers did not actually decline. The *nadir* came in 1984. Nothing illustrates better than this graph, the underlying natural causes of the Touaregs' economic difficulties.

The terrible effect of the drought years was severely aggravated by the insecurity which started in 1990. The fact that economic activity and development programmes stopped in the face of ambush and hijacking, must be included in the cumulative impact of the bad years of drought:

... economic and social development had come to a virtual stop in Mali as a result of the security situation. Fully funded overseas aid programmes, particularly in the North, could not be implemented. National programmes which were meant to consolidate the cease-fire agreement between the Government and the rebellious Touareg groups were also on hold because the government could not afford to implement them (Eteki 1996 p. 1).

**Graph 2.3**  
**Average River Levels at Diré 1924-1987**



Source: H. Sidibé 1993, p. 48.

### 2.3 Social and Political Consequences of Drought

The social confidence of northern society took a terrible bashing during the drought years. Individually and collectively, Malians lost confidence in themselves and even in their ability to feed their children. This does not mean that people should start shooting each other. Rather the contrary, in times of trouble the links of traditional solidarity are reinforced. Yet there are losers: families go hungry and the men in particular are forced into seasonal emigration. Family ties are loosened and heads of family lose some of their authority, and therefore their status. People begin to wonder who they are, and why God or their Ancestors have deserted them.

Drought appears to be cyclical. The 1914 drought was also a catastrophe for the North, directly contributing to Firhoun's revolt of 1916 against the French colonial system. In 1941-44 we have seen that Lake Faguibine dried up altogether. We believe that the loss of self-confidence in family and social structures during the 1970s and 1980s is attributable both to the debilitating effects of repeated droughts, and to the cumulative effects of political repression since the time of French colonialism. It is difficult to fix "colonialism" at any precise date, since the French came in from the West and their conquests were gradual. As Table 2.1 shows, the colonial experience certainly reached Gao decades later than it reached Kayes or Bamako, and this "delay" explains in part the fact that northern Mali has never quite caught up—in social and psychological terms—with the southern part of the country.

The 25 years of drought 1965-90 which weakened the whole northern economy, also led to a revival of certain questions about the colonial heritage. Many Africans have been reluctant to challenge the colonial heritage, especially those who have inherited a share of power through their mastery (or control) of the colonial French or English or Portuguese language. But certain Malian thinkers criticize what they see as "colonial labelling". They imply that received definitions of ethnicity and race, class and caste, social and economic classification, have been based less on the realities of Malian life, than on the agenda of colonial domination and deprivation.<sup>9</sup>

In the context of the North, "sedentary" and "nomad" are misleading labels. This categorization derives less from scientific socio-economic analysis of northern Mali, than from a deliberate labelling of populations for internal French military purposes. Defeat for French army patrols trying to make their way southwards from Algeria, opened the way for the French navy to sail down the Niger river to take Gao. It was in the navy's interest to identify the pacification of "nomadic pastoralists" as an army task, reserving the riverine "sedentary" population for control by the French navy. It is easy to see how this would suit

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<sup>9</sup> There are strong references in this to the tragedy of the Great Lakes region of Central Africa. French academics and colonial administrators may have misunderstood certain aspects of African society. A small example would be the unfortunate assimilation of the Manding ethnic Blacksmiths *namakalan* (meaning initiated and initiators, or "those who are the transmitters of knowledge") with the word "caste" which has unmistakable Hindu overtones of social inferiority. Even more hideous is the English word "witch doctor" which lumps together in a single derogatory expression, a vast range of spiritual, social and medical attributes from a thousand different cultures. The Europeans burned their "witches" (6 million of them according to medieval historians).

local military commanders, while conveniently ignoring the reality that valley and pastures are intertwined, that the population's survival has always depended on the insurance of productive diversity by which every family grows some crops, every family owns some livestock.

The ancestors of today's nomads used to live in the cities of the Sahara.<sup>10</sup> As the desert expanded, survival depended on every family adopting the insurance policy of becoming agro-pastoralists. Edmond Bernus emphasises the importance of "the complementarities between nomadic migrations and the oasis, and between herders and farmers, and the regular rotation in both directions, of the nomadic and sedentary way of life... as well as all the intermediary combinations which defy rigid classification" (1990, p. 44). This is vividly illustrated by the experience of Cheik Abdoulaye Bathily, an agricultural engineer, formerly Mali's Director of *Génie Rural*, who now works for FAO in Bamako. Bathily spent the worst months of violence during 1994 living in a village called Hama Koulagi, up on the Bend of the Niger. He was helping the villagers to construct a 50-hectare rice perimeter supported by FAO with cement, and WFP with food-for-work. This was a dangerous place to be, at a time when Malian administrators had all fled to the towns. Why, we asked, did Bathily stay? Did he not feel threatened?

Bathily replies that he was protected by the community. It turns out that these lands are jointly owned since ancestral times, by the Songhoy of Hama Koulagi and the Touareg of Tin Aouker. Which lands? All the lands. The Songhoy herds are kept in Tin Aouker until the dry season, when they descend to Hama Koulagi to take advantage of the common grazing along the river. Bathily went to Hama Koulagi to create a rice project with the community, feeling responsible for the failures of the nearby Forgho irrigation project built by the French CCCE in 1982 with Bathily's consent. Bathily was left to work in peace because the FPLA population of Tin Aouker wished it so. Every time the youths of Hama Koulagi collected food from the World Food Programme store in Gao, a distribution was organized by the village Elders. Food-payments were carried out in public, each receiving what he had earned. And on each occasion, a part of the food was sent to Tin Aouker. The villagers considered that the rice perimeter was part of this common interest and therefore Tin Aouker received its share of the common food from WFP.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibrahim ag Youssouf of the Kel-Essouk was one whose family migrated. He was brought up south of the river. The impressive ruins of Essouk lie 48 kilometres to the NW of Kidal. This trading city declined from the 16th century onwards, as the caravan routes moved away from Timbuktu and Gao towards the east: Agadez in Niger survived much better than Essouk.

This illustrates Bernus' "complementarities", and the importance of exploiting all the agro-pastoral resources as an insurance policy for survival. In years of catastrophe, even the insurance policy may fail. When there is neither pasture nor rain, and when the rains fail also in the Guinea Highlands which fill the Niger River, there is nothing left to feed either livestock or children. These were the conditions in 1974 and 1984, when men were forced to leave their families to seek work and to send home money for survival. Findlay reports (1994, p. 549) that short-term migrations from Kayes Region more than doubled during the drought: instead of needing to purchase 40 per cent of their food, families had to purchase 60 per cent and they depended on migration for survival. The North suffered even more than Kayes: livestock reserves were reduced to skin and bone, cereal prices rose, and agro-pastoralists found themselves destitute.

It is a terrible thing for the head of a family to fail in his duty to his children, albeit through no fault of his own. It is appalling on the personal level, to hear your own babies crying because they are hungry, and not be able to feed them. It is terrible on a social level, because you have failed in your duties as head of the family. Each person has duties to fulfil in Malian society. A man who fulfils his duties, however humble, receives greater respect from the community than a chief who is unable to fulfil his duties. Thus an elderly servant may occupy a place of great importance. Amadou Hampaté Ba (1991) tells how the succession as head of his noble Fulani family in Bandiagara passed to a former slave with no blood relationship whatever, because he had gained the respect of the family. There is an "annual examination" which no man can escape, and a final examination at his death, when the balance sheet of his achievements leads to his praises being sung. Or not: but the shame would be too great.

That was written from the point of view of a man. The effects were at least as serious for the women, mothers of the hungry children. Women and children were the ones who suffered most. Often nuclear families migrated to the towns, leaving behind their whole social support system. Women were reduced to petty trading, begging, even prostitution. Findlay found that among 30-34 year olds, the female population of Bamako in 1984 contained a higher proportion of migrants than the male population (1994, p. 539). Their migration took Touaregs to Algiers or Tripoli, to Bamako or Conakry or Lagos, while the Songhoy tended to follow their tradition of emigration to Ghana: for drought and insecurity hurt every community. More often it was the men only who travelled to find food or money to buy food: leaving the women with hungry children to feed and care for. Women became *de facto* heads of family. It is the mothers who had to tend their sick children, and bury those who died. Women had to find food for the elderly as well as their infants. After the troubles started many families fled to avoid the violence, living

in extreme hardship in the sand dunes, far from the market and sometimes even far from water. Others were forced into exile, spending years in refugee camps in Mauritania or Algeria or Burkina Faso (as we shall see in section 5.2 below).

The violence of the rebellion was worst for the women, not only because they and their children were physical victims (which is always the case in time of war) but also because of their role in Malian society. Women are the cement of the family. Especially when clans are fighting for power, the women are the bridges between patriarchal units: they may be the daughters of one side, the wives of another side. Sons may fight for a share of the political or economic power of their fathers; the women are the ones who try to bring them together, to restore the peace. *Nya izé, balimaya* (if not *ahnammu*, as we explain in footnote 11 to chapter 1.4) symbols of motherhood, cohesion and peace derived from Africa's ancient matriarchal societies.<sup>11</sup>

Many Touareg chiefs lost their herds and were forced into exile. Those who stayed found that they were weakened in their moral authority. Society began to disintegrate. In this "culture of controlled violence" where every man carries a sword and owns a gun with which to protect his herd, his honour and his family, social controls began to fail. The first people to migrate were the young men, those who must send money back to their parents, and who cannot think of marriage unless they have the wherewithal to support a wife and family. Iyyad ag Ghali, leader of the MPA and of the first armed attack against Ménaka in 1990, was one who left Mali at the age of 11 years (at the time of the 1974 drought).

In his thesis on the lakes south of Timbuktu, Sidibé (1993, pp. 238-240) emphasises:

... from the human point of view, the departures have very bad consequences both for the abandoned zone, and for the area of immigration. Emigration from the abandoned zone implies the destruction of family life. It disorganises social dynamics and causes the departure of the most active elements of society. Productivity falls on the land and labour becomes hard to find, which severely hits economic activity as a whole. This is the present situation in the region of the Issa Ber.

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<sup>11</sup> Briggs (1960, p. 134) elaborates an interesting "double descent" theory, which does not suit Cartesian classification systems. He suggests that West African societies, including the Touareg, have both a patriarchal vertical lineage, and a matriarchal horizontal lineage, which is socially more important: a Targui receives his or her status from the mother. This, according to Briggs, explains the huge respect and prestige accorded to Touareg women.

As a geographer, Sidibé goes on to analyse the ecological impact of immigration, especially in urban centres which consume large quantities of local fuel wood and encourage desertification. Thus the social and ecological impacts of drought-induced migration are cumulatively negative, and at both ends, for Songhoy, Fulani, Touareg, Arab and others.

The large-scale emigrations of young Touareg males between 1974 and 1984 created a new class of people who have come to be known collectively as *ishumar* which is a berberization of the French word *chomeur* meaning “unemployed” (discussed in Bourgeot 1990, p. 144 and Walzholz 1996, p. 30). These *ishumars* make up a general group aged between 18 and 40, most of whom went northwards and finished up in Libya where they came under the influence of Islamic radicals and Gaddafi’s ideas of equality and revolution.

The *ishumars* returned to Mali to claim a share of national development and natural justice. Their arrival with guns and ideas of equality inevitably contributed to the further dislocation of a society so traditionally hierarchical as that of the Kel Tamacheq with the *amenokal* chief, the *imouhar* or *imajeghan* nobles, the *ineslemen* religious clans, the *imghad* free vassals, the separate *inaden* blacksmith clans, the *bella* serfs or former captive serfs. In this transitional society, the new group of *ishumar* was bound to cause confusion. This took the form of armed conflict, including “class conflict” culminating in the 1994 battles between MPA and ARLA which we describe in Chapter 3.

## 2.4 Economic and Environmental Consequences of Drought

In a society which has lost its economic and social cohesion, it is the chief who feels the shame most keenly of all. In the Sahara there is no such thing as a rich chief. Chieftainship and respect and affection are gained through the generosity of distribution. This is not at all the case (let us hasten to add) under the culture of the kleptocratic one-party State: rather the reverse. The kleptocracy has brought in new values and degraded the chieftaincy. The ambition of Africa’s new leaders is to accumulate riches; they will send their offspring to college in the USA, rather than educate all the children in their father’s village. Traditions of generosity and redistribution of wealth, fit uneasily with imported western values of acquisition and market liberalization. The drought reduced many northern chiefs to poverty: Touareg, Arab, Fulani and Songhoy. They were no longer able to fulfil their social obligations of redistribution to those who had nothing, for they themselves had nothing left to give. Many of the chiefs lost their herds during the drought, and were forced to emigrate to the cities. Some went into the refugee camps. Now

many chiefs, like their *ishumar* juniors, are trying to re-establish the agro-pastoral economy in the dry lands of the North.

Given the amazing capacity of the pastures to regenerate themselves, we are far from pessimistic. With adequate and appropriate (i.e. not wasteful) investment and with good management and a climate of peace, Sahelian agro-pastoralism can still be profitable beyond mere survival. Decent rains will produce pastures sufficient for a successful livestock industry. Everybody knows that Timbuktu and Gao do not produce huge amounts of grain, but in a good year they are self-sufficient. The Bend of the Niger valley is rich agricultural land which could produce a surplus every year: in particular in the irrigated production of wheat and rice, and winter sorghum which grows as the flood waters recede. We who are concerned by the economic causes of the rebellion, can only be sympathetic to the arguments of the villagers of Timbuktu, Diré and Goundam who would like to supply the needs of the bread-eaters of Bamako. The capital is mainly fed on imported wheat, some of which comes in as gifts from the donor community:

The Region of Timbuktu was always the principal wheat granary of French Sudan, and therefore of the Malian Republic.... The populations... are able to supply national wheat requirements if they have adequate motor pumps and commercial credits. We hope that our reminder will not fall on deaf ears, and that our country will rely on its peasant farmers and help them to solve the wheat problem: rather than undertaking huge operations with foreigners, which are not only excessively expensive, but which are also bad for our trade balance. Mali's farmers need to be organised and mobilised to realise their potential (Sididié Oumar 1996).

Similar arguments support our view that the region could produce a rice surplus in most years if the villagers had small pumps to compensate for irregular rainfall, and the small-scale technology needed to tame the river flood. This can only be achieved at the village level. Plenty of expatriate macro-economists contest our belief that the North can be self-sufficient, but they have not spent as much time as we have with the rice-growers. Donors, like military governments, do not like small-scale projects. Sitting under a spreading *acacia albida* ancient enough to have seen the Songhoy Empire, a couple of farmers in Balamaodo village south of Timbuktu told Poulton and the Care Mali team how their flood-control system had saved the village. To reach their fields from Diré had taken us three restful hours travelling by canoe. They told us they had 80 bags in 1989 when the river was low, and 200 in 1991 when the river was high and the rains were good. "In 1991 we sold some rice for profit. But the 80 bags of 1989 were the most important: without the assistance of the NGO Care and the dyke we had built, we would have had no rice at all in 1989: nothing to feed to our children, and no seed

for the following year.” In monetary terms, using local Diré market prices, we calculated (Tangara 1991) that the investment of the NGO, WFP<sup>12</sup> and the villagers had been repaid 12 times in five years, but the value in food security is greater still.

The flood control dykes are important not just to regulate water levels, but also to keep young fish out of the rice fields where they devour the young plants. Outside the rice-paddies people love fish, which is a major source of protein for Malians. Fortunately for the Bozo and Somono fishermen who make their living by catching and drying the migrating shoals of fish, and happily for the economy of the North, natural life in the Niger River showed remarkable resilience during the drought. When water returns, fish return and their average size seems to have recuperated from the undersized (and presumably underfed) fish which were caught during the drought years.

The most important activity of the Northern economy is livestock. “Counting sheep” is such a difficult exercise, that Europeans use the expression for a frustrating task which will make you dizzy and induce sleep. Counting sheep and goats is all but impossible in a desert the size of Western Europe: like counting nomadic cattle grazing in the myriad water meadows of the interior delta. Official Malian government figures talk of 2.7 million head of livestock in Timbuktu Region in 1990, 1.3 million in Gao (we reproduce figures from Rospabe 1997, p. 13). What is important however is less the actual figures, than changes in the northern economy which have been induced by the drought.

Table 2.2 shows that the northern regions are no longer the most important for livestock: Koulikoro and Segou and Sikasso together have about as many animals as the traditional livestock regions of Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao. The geographical change in regional livestock herding is dramatic in itself, testifying to the weakness of the northern pastures and to the overall southward orientation of Mali’s economy. In 1985 an estimated 30,000 herders migrated from Timbuktu and Mopti Regions into Sikasso Region (UNSO 1992, p. 50, quoting Thiam 1988).

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<sup>12</sup> The United Nations World Food Programme provided food-for-wages which enabled the NGO to mobilize both the young men of Balamaodo, and other local men who were otherwise forced to migrate to seek dry season wages elsewhere. This is a good example of food-for-work leading to increased food production and reducing urban migration. Young men migrate because, without a dry-season income, most families on the river cannot pay their taxes.

**Table 2.2**  
**Livestock Distribution: Estimates for Mali 1990**

<b>Region</b>	<b>No of animals</b>	<b>% of Mali's total herd</b>
Kayes	2,284,000	12.6
Koulikoro	3,093,300	17.2
Sikasso	2,225,800	12.2
Segou	2,207,700	12.2
Mopti	4,311,100	23.8
Timbuktu	2,679,600	14.8
Gao and Kidal	1,303,300	7.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,104,800</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source:* Ministry of Rural Development.

These figures hide the fact that livestock ownership has also changed dramatically. The years of drought during the 1970s and 1980s, forced traditional Touareg and Songhoy and Fulani herding clans to sell off their animals, often for less than the value of their hides. They sold them to Party officials, military officers and wealthy merchants: the only people who had money to buy, and the vehicles with which to transport the animals towards the south. These people do not own traditional grazing rights in Segou or Sikasso or Koulikoro: so how are they able to feed the vast herds which they accumulated? The answer is that, under the dictatorship, their herds wandered where they wished, crossing village lands at random, eating the bush and reducing villagers to impotent fury. The forestry, administrative and judicial authorities supported the merchants who bribed them, and the herding colonels who had appointed them to their posts. Decentralization and democracy are reducing the abuses of the former kleptocratic regime: we shall return to this source of conflicts in Chapter 6.4.

There has also arisen during the past 15 years, a new semi-industrial fattening business around Bamako, owned largely by retired civilian and military government officials. The cotton mills furnish seed as feed for this industry, which now supplies a significant proportion of the city's demand for meat. As you fly

into Bamako, the ring of rectangles you can see surrounding the city are the stables of this new *embouche bovine* industry. Most of this livestock was originally bought cheap in the North; and the fattening business benefits from hidden subsidies because so many of the owners can access free government transport and fuel. How can ordinary pastoralists compete?

The new large herds in the south are as much of a threat to Mali's ecocodevelopment, as the herds which wander the fragile pastures in the north. But it is the North which concerns us particularly. The "economic growth" beloved by the West is about creating wealth.<sup>13</sup> And the basis of all wealth is to be found—not in a factory—but in the extraction from Nature's renewable resources of the means to live and to thrive. In the northern pastures we have one of Mali's richest resources, and this half of the country can only be exploited profitably through extensive herding. The profit is not adequate, of course. There are huge improvements to be made in the area of quality: better animal health, better animal selection, better care of the hides, better exploitation of the meat products (through drying and other forms of processing). The traditional export of live animals removes from Mali the opportunity to create additional wealth from the "fifth quarter" of the animal: the horns, the hide, and the intestines. All these ideas constitute areas of hope and new profitability for northern Mali: the NGO ACORD believes indeed that the Gao-Menaka zone could, with appropriate Government support and commercial investment, become the highly profitable centre of a major livestock-driven "development pole".

The destocking of the North suited the political prejudices of a military regime which disliked the "disorganization" of nomadic herding. Centralized administrations since the colonial era have always preferred the idea of "sedentary" populations. The bureaucrat may not realize that the northern populations are all agro-pastoralists. Certainly he finds it difficult to relate to the nomadic concept of "space". Europeans have a geometric conception which is quite different from the herders' functional conception of space. A Targui's space is composed of a series of complementary points, places where he can find the elements that he needs for his animals. No one is less adventurous than the nomad, who wanders along a defined route from which he seldom strays. Even his camels will not leave their customary transhumance trail. Most Touaregs do not "know the

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<sup>13</sup> Which reminds us of one of the favourite wisdoms of Youssouf, Ibrahim's father: "Why do Whites have to come and eat their soup in our territory?" He likes to observe that *toobabs* are more interested in counting money, than in looking to see if their money has been used intelligently.

desert”: they know the areas which contain their traditional pastures, in a regular sequence of fresh grasses fed by the rains in July and August, long dry grasses when the rains have ended, desert salt licks where the cattle obtain necessary minerals, fresh water in the river (rich in oligo-elements) as the water levels fall after January, and riverine pastures sweet with the stalks of *bourgou* grass which fatten the cattle so that they can survive the “hungry” season before the next rains.

Administrators are reluctant to recognize pastoral ownership of this disparate pastoral space. They cannot measure it, nor circumscribe it with lines on a map. Yet this is where we find Mali’s livestock economy, following a production cycle which is in harmony with its natural resource base, unless drought or violence disturb the balance. It is easy to find “experts” who believe that the North cannot feed large herds: this is self-evident under extreme drought conditions, but is not at all obvious overall. These are “non-equilibrium but persistent ecosystems” according to a famous ecological definition (Holling 1973 quoted in UNSO 1992, p. 41) and the dry grazing exerts a self-limiting effect on livestock numbers, which decline before they reach the level at which they damage the pastures. Agropastoralists protect their pastures. Most of the damage is done by outsiders. When, for example, one finds the branch of an *acacia* tree badly cut, it is the work of a stranger. Mali’s professional herdsmen know how to slice a branch so that their animals can reach the seeds, adjusting the cut so that the branch will grow back again. These are their pastoral areas, and they protect them. But they do not claim exclusive ownership. The concept of “ownership” here is different from the imported legal definitions. People are responsible trust-holders, not proprietors. No one seeks exclusive ownership of these pastoral resources, because survival is based on mutual support systems between clans and neighbours. The State is needed to ensure the rule of law: but when the State interferes too far, the systems of interdependence are disturbed. Nobody is made responsible for a “government well”. It belongs to nobody, so everybody leaves maintenance to “government”.

We are of course in favour of government veterinary services and efforts to improve the northern economy. Provided they take the time to listen to the population, such services actually strengthen community relations and economic interdependence. Northern pastoralists recall with affection the days when government veterinarians travelled by camel and spent days with the herders. The older veterinary staff also recall with pleasure those days of drinking milk and moving with the herds. Modern vets drive home in their government jeep to spend the night in town.

Mali’s livestock industry needs better animal health, higher incomes from higher productivity and improved marketing, in place of huge numbers of poor quality animals. For the livestock owner confronted by drought, selective and

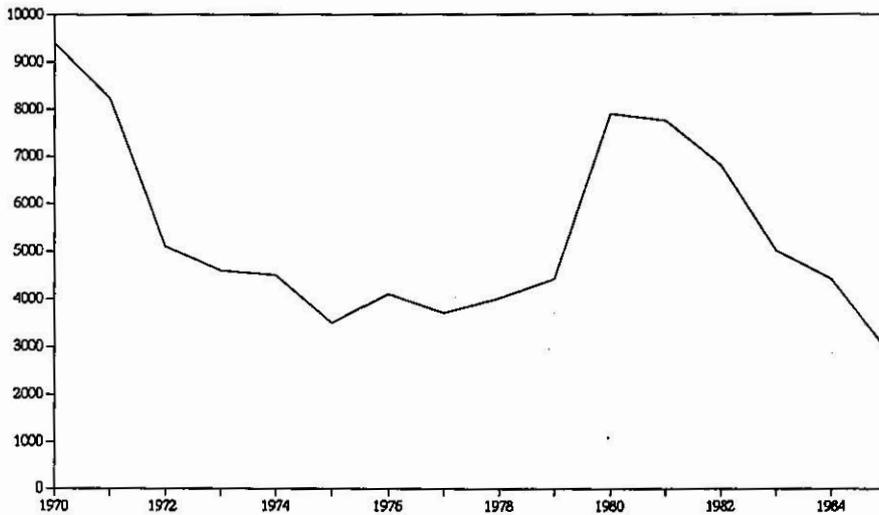
profitable de-stocking is a good option. The only programme of this nature we know of was initiated by ACORD in 1984. UNICEF agreed to support a modest programme of slaughter and meat-drying, purchasing the meat as a precious source of indigenous protein to feed children. Such a programme was not feasible on a country-wide scale, partly because of the lack of communications and other infrastructure, and partly because the market for Sahelian meat had slumped. When the drought came, most owners lost the value of their herds.

Livestock prices had fallen because the EEC's policy of dumping subsidized meat had flooded the Sahel's traditional coastal markets in Accra and Abidjan and Lomé. A report from the Economic Commission for Africa speaks of:

... distortions in the trade policies of the major world economic groupings and the dumping of subsidised frozen meat by EEC, even in African developing countries that produce livestock. Hence meat imports increased annually by 4.2% on average during the last decade, despite the potential for collective self-sufficiency at a higher level of per capita meat consumption (ECA 1992, p. 55).

After the 1974 drought when herds declined radically, the NGOs concentrated on helping the nomadic and sedentary groups with reconstructing their economy: and in the area of livestock, small revolving loan funds had great success. By 1981, the national herd was back to pre-drought levels as Graph 2.4 shows (using estimates from Mali's Livestock Department the graph is taken from Rospabe 1997, p. 9). There were consistently more animals for sale than the market could absorb. The impact of the 1984 drought was all the harder, since the pastures were now relatively overstocked, and the reserves around the river valley could not support them. Not only was the livestock population greatly reduced in 1985, but conflicts between herding and farming became acute. These factors all contributed to the economic crisis which sparked rebellion.

**Graph 2.4**  
**Evolution of Animal Numbers in Mali-Nord (thousands)**



Source: Ministry of Rural Development.

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We have seen in this chapter how the North was marginalized politically and isolated physically from the rest of the Malian nation. The roots of the conflict in colonial history were compounded after independence in 1960, by one-party rule and an over-heavy military presence in the North. Declining long-term rainfall reinforced the effects of bad government. With the decline of livestock and the virtual disappearance in some years of rain-fed agriculture, the morale of all Mali's northern populations had sunk to a state close to collective depression. Thousands of northerners were forced to migrate. When they returned, some came with weapons. Later chapters will discuss their reintegration into society. Since the Malian revolution of 1991, the rains have improved (although they were patchy in 1997 and long-term predictions for 1998 are not good). With less subsidised competition from Europe and Argentina, livestock prices started to rise in 1994, and exports are now booming. The North still badly needs investment in roads and telecommunications, to reduce its isolation from the rest of Mali. As we shall see

in Chapter 6, appropriate efforts to improve animal quality, allied to policies which promote small-scale irrigation along the river valley, can give the North every chance of achieving the economic prosperity which is needed for peace to prosper. But first, we must see how the violence erupted, and study the many Malian efforts to restore peace.



People came from miles around, some travelling for three days on camel-back, returning from their exile in the dunes to witness the return of peace. It was the biggest gathering in Timbuktu for thirty years.



Leaders of civil society, led by the Imam of Timbuktu, joined political leaders led by President Alpha Oumar Konaré and an international gathering led by the Secretary-General's personal representative Ibrahima Fall.



## Chapter 3

### The Armed Revolt 1990-1997

**The high grass may hide a partridge, but it will not smother his shriek.  
Fulani proverb**

Having looked at the historical, socio-economic and political background to the problems of northern Mali, it is time to see what happened during the years of violence and uprising. We have tried to achieve a balance and to focus on the most significant events, without denying the complexities. It is difficult to choose between massacres when it is your friends and colleagues who are often the victims, and sometimes the perpetrators. On a global scale, the violence in Mali was small. Plenty of people suffered, but this was never a civil war (in time it might have become one). Often there was more noise than action. Our proverb could refer to the propaganda surrounding the troubles, but throughout the conflict and the making of peace, we have kept in the forefront of our minds the cries of the widows and orphaned children, whose suffering is the greatest and whose scars are the deepest.

#### **3.1 1990: The Revolt of Young *ishumar* Against the *nomenklatura***

The seeds of revolt, sown by French conquest and by the massacres of 1963-64 under Mali's First Republic, had time to grow and multiply. The droughts of 1974 and 1984 increased the number of young men forced into emigration. Many went to Libya. Col Muammar Gaddafi's desire to be recognized as a leader of the region had led him to declare in 1980 that Libya was the natural homeland of all Touaregs, and to offer them Libyan nationality. 1981 saw the creation of a phantom political movement: the Popular Front for the Liberation of Central Arab Sahara. Meanwhile many of these young men were recruited into Gaddafi's Islamic Legion, seeing active service in Chad, Lebanon or Afghanistan.

A more Mali-centred organization appeared in 1988, called *Mouvement Populaire de Libération de l'Azawad* (MPLA). The Secretary-General was

Iyyad ag Ghali who, on the night of 28 June 1990, launched the Mali rebellion with two attacks by about fifty armed men seeking to liberate some interned comrades from Niger: four people were killed at Tidermène, fourteen in Menaka of whom four were Malian soldiers. Some days later, the bodies of two elderly peasants were found under a tree near Ansongo. They had sat down in the shade for a chat. Somebody had slit their throats. These were terror tactics. The Malian authorities knew about the MPLA, but no one was prepared for this. President Moussa Traore (like the rest of Mali) was stunned, his understandable first reaction was anger. Mali's soldiers unleashed a campaign of violence with all the freedom that the declared state of emergency provided. Nomads who had heard nothing of "rebels" from Niger or Libya were killed in Tejaret and Taikaren, in Telemse and Adghagh. Within a few weeks the Malian army had created hundreds of new "rebels", as Touareg youths fled into the hills to escape massacre. It is important to understand the indiscriminate nature of this violence, in order to follow subsequent events. Among army officers who became hated in the North, the late Siaka Koné gained a particular notoriety. (He died in a parachute accident near Bamako, which was interpreted throughout the North as God's justice.)<sup>1</sup> He is believed to have doused a group of Dawsahak with gasoline near Talatayt. Before setting them on fire, the soldiers announced that they did not want to waste bullets. The army made no distinction between Touaregs from Kidal and elsewhere, nor between Touaregs and Arabs, forcing the latter to join in a rebellion which had nothing to do with them at all. The Malian government could have used the Arabs against the Touaregs (as the French did): instead, it turned them into rebels.

When he realized that a swift army victory was hopeless against desert guerrillas, Moussa<sup>2</sup> initiated negotiations, under the persuasion of Touareg leaders whose authority was being weakened by the indiscriminate reprisals, and of his Chief of Staff Mustapha Deme. In September 1990, Moussa Traore went to Djanet, in Algeria, for a summit meeting with the Presidents of Algeria,

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<sup>1</sup> Since the days of French conquest, soldiers in the North have been perceived as southerners, as outsiders. The Wollofs of the *Tirailleurs sénégalais* may have been replaced by Bambaras and Bobos, Soninké and even some Songhoy, but the army never became a part of northern society. For peace and stability in the North, the challenge of integrating the armed forces into society is as important as the integration of ex-combatants into the army.

<sup>2</sup> Clan names such as Traoré and Keita are so widespread in Mali, that given names are used: Moussa had several Ministers called Traoré. We shall allow ourselves the liberty of following Malian practice and refer to the Presidents as Modibo (Keita), Moussa (Traore), ATT (Touré) and Alpha (Konaré).

Niger and Libya. This was the famous occasion when Gaddafi appeared magnificently attired as a Touareg. The Libyan participated little in the discussions, using the meeting to project onto the world's television screens the image of himself as Chief of the Touaregs.

The Libyan threat was clear. Nevertheless Moussa believed that he could control the rebels, using the Touareg chiefs and the hierarchical system of traditional loyalties. In contrast to Modibo's unfriendly regime, Moussa had gently cultivated the Touaregs. To some extent he had restored to Intalah ag Ataher, Chief of the Iforas, the age-old role of protecting the northern frontiers of the Niger River basin. When the initial attack took place against Menaka, nearly all the Touareg notables were in Bamako, attending a Party meeting.<sup>3</sup> It was to Intalah, now Deputy at the National Assembly and Secretary-General of the Kidal Section of the UDPM, that the President turned for mediation. The Chief changed the official vocabulary from "armed bandits", declaring that the "Maliens who had strayed from the path were youths who had made a mistake" and would soon see reason. The "youths" would have none of it, accusing the hierarchy of subservience to regimes which oppressed the Touareg people, of exploitation, of perpetuating tribalism, of incapacity to adapt to modern life. Imbued with Gaddafi's *tumast* ideology of equality, the rebels forbade anyone to identify himself with the social hierarchy. They even went so far as to kidnap Intalah (although that was not until 1994). It became evident that the revolt of these angry young men was not only against the military regime, but also against the traditional domination of the Touareg aristocracy.

But the ties of tradition proved stronger than the imported ideology of equality. The MPLA gave way to two separate organizations: the *Mouvement Populaire de l'Azawad* (MPA) of Iyyad in Kidal, and the new *Front Islamique Arabe de l'Azawad* (FIAA) based on Arab clans from Timbuktu and towards the Mauritanian frontier, who were afraid they would get a smaller share of the negotiations if they remained under the Touareg umbrella. The FIAA was the first movement to appear with a declared ethnic bias. It appeared to claim a more militantly Islamic orientation, which gave rise to talk of links with Mauritania and the FIS in Algeria, and wilder rumours involving the West's demons in Iraq and Iran and Sudan, and of course, Libya.

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<sup>3</sup> Their support of the *Union démocratique du peuple malien* (UDPM) had been assured by the freeing in 1977 of leaders of the 1963 Touareg revolt. With the creation of the UDPM in 1978-79, Touareg representation in local and national politics increased dramatically, and this was also true for other minority groups in Mali.

### The armed movements

For people who are not familiar with the story, it may be difficult to sort out the various groups, and so we offer the following checklist of the main protagonists. At the Timbuktu Flame of Peace, the movements presented themselves as follows:

#### Mouvements et Fronts Unifiés de l'Azaouad (MFUA)

1. The *Armée révolutionnaire de libération de l'Azaouad* (ARLA) represented by its Secretary-General Abdourahmane ag Galla;
2. The *Front islamique arabe de l'Azaouad* (FIAA) represented by its Secretary-General Boubacar Sadeck ould Mahmoud;
3. The *Front populaire de libération de l'Azaouad* (FPLA) represented by its Secretary-General Zeidane ag Sidalamine;
4. The *Mouvement populaire de l'Azaouad* (MPA) represented by its Secretary-General Iyyad ag Ghali;
5. **The Mouvement Patriotique Malien Ganda Koy (MPMGK)** represented by its leader Captain Abdoulaye Hamadahamane Maiga. But the more usual initials are MPGK, or else *ganda koy*, and these are what we use in the text.

The movements were mainly clan-based, composed of armed fighters and peacemakers. Alongside them lived many neutral agro-pastoralists who (in particular the women) wanted nothing more than peace of mind, a happy and healthy family, a bit of land and some small ruminants, and access to a water-

hole. Most of the Touaregs living along the Niger river never joined the rebellion.<sup>4</sup>

The rebels were clever enough to realize that they must negotiate while they had the military advantage, and while the Touareg population could still stand the reprisals. They came up with a 21-point declaration, composed of demands “reasonable”, “unreasonable” and “negotiable”.<sup>5</sup> The first category concerned mainly improved economic development, with specific demands for better communications, health services and agro-pastoral banks. In the second category we find the demand that Touaregs should be named as Vice-President, and four Ministers: Foreign Affairs, Defence, Interior and Rural Development! The “negotiables” included things like reducing military presence, appointing locals to administrative posts in the North, the creation of Franco-Arab bilingual schools, the integration into the Malian army of “rebel” soldiers, the installation of multi-party democracy, and the proclamation of an amnesty.

### 3.2 1991: The End of Dictatorship and Mali’s National Conference

The end of 1990 was tough for Moussa Traore. The democrats were marching in the city streets, a free press was increasingly virulent, and the majority of his party believed that it was time to open up the political process. In August 1990, Djibril Diallo had even wanted to resign as Number 2 in the party. Moussa soon stopped that. As a military man, the President’s priority was to bring back to Bamako the troops he had sent to the North to fight the rebels. He needed soldiers to restore his authority in the streets of the capital.

On 6 January 1991, the Chief of General Staff, Colonel Ousmane Coulibaly travelled to Tamanrasset in Algeria, where he signed an agreement with the MPA and the FIAA, known as the *Accords de Tamanrasset*. Malians were left with the impression that the army had capitulated. No one knew what had been

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<sup>4</sup> Nok ag Agtia from Diré, one of the leading members of the UDPM *nomenklatura* (he was Vice-President of the National Assembly), replied famously when asked about the rebellion: “If there are no carp or catfish in the revolt, then it has nothing to do with me,” meaning that he felt closer to his riverine Songhoy and Sorkho neighbours than to rebelling nomads from the Adghagh (Adrar) mountains of Kidal.

<sup>5</sup> We have borrowed from Coulibaly, Drabo and Alassane ag Mohamed (1995, p. 7) this categorization in three groups.

agreed, and the army was not in the habit of sharing information.<sup>6</sup> Even government Ministers hadn't been involved in the negotiations, which were organized by a military coterie. When the regime fell on 26 March 1991 and Mali's new leaders published the *Accords*, they were rejected almost on principle.

The rejection came from the grass roots, rather than from the political leadership. Many soldiers misunderstood the political, financial and strategic constraints on a regular army: they were sure that they hadn't won only because they hadn't received enough weapons from Bamako. Songhoy leaders expressed dissatisfaction with the *Accords* (negotiated and signed without them) because they suspected them of re-establishing Touareg hegemony in the North, despite the fact that the text made no mention of any ethnic group. The official Malian radio spoke of "decentralization" rather than mentioning a *statut particulier* and some rebels felt they had been cheated of their "special status" (whatever that meant). Immediately after the signature in Tamanrasset, Iyyad ag Ghali was brought to Bamako. He was not given time to go back to his base to explain just what he had signed. Invited to return to the northern cities for reconciliation with the populations, certain rebels arrived as gun-toting, fast-driving hoodlums: confirming the fears and prejudices of soldiers and citizens alike. Idle fighters used their weapons to hijack vehicles. Banditry continued. While in the South there was a revolution taking place, in the North the cycle of violence resumed. Mutual confidence had already been lost before Moussa fell from power.

The military arrested Moussa Traore in the early hours of Tuesday, 26 March 1991, and they were welcomed as heroes by a crowd of 20,000 outside the trades union building, *Bourse du Travail*. There, the officers proposed to hand power to the democratic movement led by unions, political associations and lawyers, together with student and youth leaders. One of the key factors in the Malian transition was the refusal of the civilians to accept power: "The power is not yours to give: it belongs to the people. We propose that civilians and officers of all the uniformed forces should jointly accept responsibility for the transition to democracy."

The *Comité de Transition pour le Salut du Peuple* (CTSP) was a sort of collective presidency, composed of 15 civilians and 10 army officers. Lt Col Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) was elected President of the CTSP, and transitional Head of State. Places on the CTSP were allocated by consensus,

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<sup>6</sup> Secrecy is a Soviet inherited illness. Since the Malian Ambassador in Algiers was Sinaly Coulibaly, younger brother (same father and same mother) of the Chief of Staff, Moussa Traore was really making sure that he kept it inside the family.

with two places being given to the movements: Cheikh ag Bayes became the representative of the MPA, Hamed Sidi Ahmed for the FIAA.<sup>7</sup> This inclusion of the movements in the management of the State represented a considerable gesture of reconciliation, particularly on the part of the military members of the CTSP. It was also tacit acknowledgement that the rebels in the north had been the first to act against the one-party State, and that they had made a significant contribution to the overthrow of Moussa Traore.

Cheikh ag Bayes became a leading spokesman for the North during the transition (he is, at the time of writing, working with UNHCR in Kidal). At the National Conference in August 1991, he argued unsuccessfully for the inclusion in the Malian Constitution of a "special status" for the North. The National Conference rejected all notions of federalism, and this strengthened the hand of those who harboured illusions that the army could still "win". Touareg, Songhoy and Arab alike, the northerners realized that they carried very little weight. All the political parties were anxious to avoid the topic of northern Mali, reluctant to voice any opinion which might be held against them in the upcoming elections. The proposal for a special status for the regions of the North presented to ATT by the *ad hoc* committee headed by Baba Akhib Haidara was not even discussed by the National Conference.<sup>8</sup> Instead a Special Conference on the North was planned for the end of the year, to be held in Timbuktu. The subsequent negotiations highlighted the distinction between the "military" wings of the movements, which had started the rebellion, and the "political" (francophone) wings who were essentially peacebrokers. The credibility of the latter depended on their getting a hearing both from the Malian people and leaders, and from the hard men in the field. Their difficult role is illustrated by the fact that the FIAA were often not active in the

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<sup>7</sup> When the grass roots were able to make a careful selection of their most adequate representatives, Acherif ag Mohamed replaced Cheik, and Malainine ould Badi replaced Ahmed. On the creation of a government by Prime Minister Soumana Sacko, Mohamed ag Erlaf became Minister, perceived as the representative of the rebellion in the Transition government. He has remained a Minister in all the Adema governments since 1992 and after the elections of 1997.

<sup>8</sup> As we describe later, the distinguished Malian educationalist Baba Akhib Haidara had returned from UNESCO, to be named by ATT as Delegate for the North; Algerian mediation was reinforced; and the Pisani-Miské mediation Mission was programmed (see section 4.2 below). Although preparatory meetings were organized in Ségou (25-27th November) and Mopti (15th December), the special conference in Timbuktu was never held. This period is particularly well analysed by Drabo and ag Mohamed (1997).

meetings, making Cheikh ag Bayes of MPA practically the only spokesman for the rebels.

Throughout this period the violence continued in the North, persecuting nomad and sedentary populations, Touareg and Songhoy and Bozo and Arab and *Gabero* Fulani in more or less equal proportions. The refugee resettlement “fixation” sites prepared by the IFAD-funded project PSARK were sacked. The official and non-governmental development agencies were forced to stop travelling outside the towns, or to freeze their programmes altogether. Their vehicles were stolen and their staff threatened (in some cases killed). The reaction of certain army units was unfortunate: with the fall of Moussa Traore, the military had lost status and some of them used the rebellion to retain the reality of power. Unable to catch the real bandits, they turned to killing and looting any available “red-skin”. All Touareg and Arab shops in Gao were looted. Summoned to a meeting in Léré, Touareg leaders were simply executed. The elite of the FIAA was imprisoned in the barracks in Timbuktu, and killed. The state of insecurity stretched right across Timbuktu Region to the Mauritanian frontier. Fearing to become victims of army frustration, thousands of Touaregs and Arabs fled the towns and abandoned their livelihoods, becoming displaced persons and *de facto* dependents of the rebel movements. Some of those who were driven out of their homes, retaliated against their black neighbours. Mainly thanks to army indiscipline, the seeds of civil war were sown.<sup>9</sup>

By this time the rebels had split into more groups, each with internal stresses and dissensions. The MPA had run into class-struggle. Iyyad was seen as too close to the traditional hierarchy. A group of young men, mainly of *imghad* rather than noble family and imbued with the spirit of equality which they had learned from Gaddafi's *Green Book*, broke away to form the *Armée révolutionnaire de libération de l'Azawad* (ARLA) with Abdrahmane Galla as leader. The fighting between MPA and ARLA would be some of the most bitter. Rhissa ag Sidi Mohamed had already broken from the MPA to lead the *Front populaire pour la libération de l'Azawad* (FPLA), and he would prove over the next two years to be the most obdurate “refusenik” in the negotiations with the State. But each of these

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<sup>9</sup> One striking aspect of this period is the sudden silence of Radio France Internationale. Previously the “loudspeaker” of the Touaregs, RFI fell silent after the fall of Moussa Traore in 1991 signalled the arrival of what the French took to be “democracy according to the gospel of la Baule”. After the elections of 1992 RFI again took up the story of the Touaregs, with an “anti-Mali” stance which seemed to blame the newly elected government for the violence which had happened during the transition.

groups contained differences of opinion. Zeidane ag Sidalamine has explained (1994, p. 15) his disagreements with Rhissa.

In the midst of this confusion, the Algerians proved to be the best at twisting rebel arms to bring them to the negotiating table, and at the end of December 1991, Algeria accepted a request from the Government of the Republic of Mali to act as Official Mediator. The Algerians had brought all the movements together on 13 December 1991 in El Goléa, where they had formed a *Coordination des Mouvements et Fronts Unifiés de l'Azawad* (MFUA). Spokesman for the MFUA was Zahaby ould Sidi Mohamed, formerly one of Zeidane's colleagues in the Norwegian Church Aid programme in Gossi, who was in the FIAA in charge of information. In due course, Zahaby would become the "man to hate" in the Malian press. But at this stage he, like Zeidane and the other francophone intellectuals, was one of the peacemakers.

The differences between the "peaceful political" wing of the movements and the various dissident groups of military hard men, are well illustrated by the FIAA preparations for the crucial Mopti meeting of 15th December, which united for the first time on Malian territory the GRM and the MFUA (flown in for the negotiations in an Algerian government plane). On 11th December, while Zahaby was negotiating in Algeria, a FIAA group attacked the Holy City of Timbuktu. The full story emerged only much later, and history may see this as the evening when God and the 333 Saints of Timbuktu decided that Mali should be protected against ethnic civil war. It is known now that the group went to Timbuktu that evening with two missions: to destroy the diesel generator which provided the town's electricity, and then in the darkness, to assassinate a list of City Fathers, all of whom were leading Songhoy citizens. If this plan had worked, Mali might have been plunged into ethnic strife. Mali was saved by a miracle. The Arab leader of the raid had spent his childhood in Timbuktu. He knew the city intimately. Yet he attacked the wrong building. Instead of the electricity generator, he attacked the Governor's kitchen. The Governor, Lt Col Seydou Traore was at home upstairs, entertaining a group of rather grand ladies who had arrived from Bamako to mobilize their sisters in the cause of peace. To their horror, these ladies spent the next half-hour flat on the floor, while Col Traore repulsed the attack. Firing first from one window, then from another, running upstairs and downstairs to provide the impression of a substantial garrison, he succeeded in panicking the attackers. The electricity generator was supposed to be unguarded. No resistance was expected. Still firing, the rebels retreated into the desert. One hundred and fifty bullets were

collected from the Governor's kitchen, but the generator remained intact, and the assassination of the Songhoy Elders never took place.<sup>10</sup>

### 3.3 1992: Transition, Elections and Negotiations

Algeria and the Pisani-Miské mission (see 4.2) put enormous pressure on the MFUA to agree terms before the end of the transition. They also helped persuade Amadou Toumani Touré and his senior military aides that a new negotiating approach was needed, and on 8 November 1991, ATT made a key Address to the Nation in which, for the first time, mention was made of *un véritable Pacte national*, a National Pact, which would guarantee a negotiated peace in an undivided Mali. ATT and the CTSP wanted a peace agreement before handing over power to the soon-to-be-elected Government. Intensive negotiations in Mopti (December 1991), Algiers (January 1992) and elsewhere, led finally to the signing on 11 April 1992 of the *Pacte National*, a peace agreement between the rebels and the Government.<sup>11</sup> It is the document which would eventually provide the legal basis for the peace process. It was signed by Lt Col Bréhima Siré Traore for the transitional government and by Zahaby ould Sidi Mohamed for the MFUA. All four MFUA groups were present; although Rhissa was absent, Zeidane initialled the Pact in the name of the FPLA. Peace seemed assured, provided that the GRM was able to fund its promises: including the integration into the Malian uniformed forces of the armed rebels (who would thus get a salaried government post despite the recruiting restrictions laid down by the IMF and the World Bank), an exchange of prisoners, the return of the refugees, the development of the North, the reduction of military presence, and the policing of the peace by local people. In

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<sup>10</sup> Another version (which does not contradict our story) is that the attack was intended to lure the Timbuktu army garrison out of their barracks and into an ambush in the dunes. They refused to come out during the night. The following day, with tension high in the city, a group of soldiers rushed into the house of Mohamedoun ag Hamani and shot him, together with seven male members of his family including his 12-year-old son, and a nephew still wearing his Forestry Department service uniform. A former member of the *Bureau Exécutif Central* of Moussa's UDPM, this member of the *nomenklatura* made a very improbable "rebel" but an easy target for angry, undisciplined soldiers. With mixed garrisons, there were frequent instances of soldiers refusing to obey the orders of officers from other uniformed forces. Later the democratic government changed the structure to improve army discipline.

<sup>11</sup> We reproduce the text in annexe 2.1. Details can also be found in the *Livre Blanc*, GRM 1994, and in Diarra 1996, and a summary in Coulibaly 1995 and Rospabe 1997.

recognition of what was described as the *special status* for the North, the post of Commissioner for northern Mali was to be created in the office of the President.

In the earliest days of negotiations a cease-fire was agreed, and the Transition Government set up a tripartite *Commission de suivi du Cessez-le-Feu* (the Cease-fire Commission or CCF). Officers from Algeria, from the Malian military and from the rebel movements patrolled together to ensure that banditry was kept down.<sup>12</sup> In addition, an independent commission of enquiry was promised which would attribute responsibilities for the various exactions and estimate damages for the victims.<sup>13</sup> In these days of 1991, immediately after the fall of the dictatorship, the Malian authorities had almost no resources available with which to support the CCF. They housed and fed the officers in Gao, but that was all they could manage. Unable to obtain enough fuel to scour the vast countryside for bandits, the officers of the CCF were frustrated (in Gao the CCF was soon nicknamed *Commission pour Chercher la Femme!*). Donors were not prepared to put money into peace-keeping. Of the ten CCF units planned, only four became operational. The principal support for the CCF (vehicles and some fuel) was provided by Algeria, showing its commitment to brokering the peace. The presence of Algerian officers also contributed to restoring a sense of dignity and discipline in the Malian army. Despite their limited resources, the CCF arrested some trouble-makers and did buy a year of peace for Mali.

Funds were promised for creating small enterprises, and for compensating victims, but without money, none of this could happen. To prepare for the return of refugees from Mauritania (and in the absence of leadership from UNHCR which was preoccupied with refugee problems elsewhere in Africa) the NGOs obtained American, Swiss and EEC funds, and set up a system of grain depots along the river valley in Timbuktu region: later, when the refugees failed to return, the grain was distributed to displaced nomads and villagers inside Mali. The fact is that confidence in the reality of peace did not return to the North. No foreign government was willing to invest in peace. Probably, they did not believe that the election process would truly bring Mali to democracy. And the GRM was broke: one year after the fall of Moussa Traore, the coffers were empty.

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<sup>12</sup> We discuss Algeria's valuable mediation efforts in more detail in Chapter 4.2 below.

<sup>13</sup> It was obvious from the beginning (even to the MFUA negotiators) that it could not be operational: too many army officers and rebel leaders had done too much harm. Some people feel it is best to leave the bitterness undisturbed; others that the truth must be known, if only as a record of modern history. Malians are watching the South African Truth Commission with interest. Meanwhile an Amnesty Law was promulgated in 1997, which we reproduce as annexe 2.4.

1992 was the year of Mali's first proper elections. There was a referendum on the new Constitution, then elections for local urban councils, for a President, and for the National Assembly. All went well (especially for the winning party: Adema).<sup>14</sup> The country remained calm. On 8 June 1992, Alpha Oumar Konaré was sworn in as Mali's first democratically elected President. The Third Republic was born. The previous week, seven Touaregs had been shot in Goundam, and just before that there were 12 killed in Gossi.<sup>15</sup> Ten days after Alpha's inauguration, there were rebel attacks on the Gossi road. Gao was cut off from the rest of the country (even by air, since the aircraft of the internal airline, Malitas were being serviced). Banditry was frequent. The northern economy was paralysed by bandits, or by rebels, or by both. Of the dozens of horrendous problems which the new democratic government had to face, the most dangerous was the North, which threatened the very existence of Mali's Third Republic, and the stability of the entire Sahara region.

The Pact itself was far from obtaining unanimous support. Rhissa of the FPLA was openly dismissive, and the new *Commissaire au Nord*, Col. Bréhima Siré Traore travelled to Burkina Faso to meet him. Some of the military had not liked the Algerian mediation with the MFUA, from which they felt excluded, and they were not at all keen on integrating into their own forces, the rebels against whom they were fighting. Meanwhile the Malian general public was becoming increasingly fed up with the banditry and the repeated attacks which continued throughout 1992. There were reprisals in Gao, Timbuktu and Sevaré against Touareg and Arab traders: once again there was an exodus of "red-skin" populations, who went to live as best they might in the sand dunes, far from food sources and even from water. Violence is unjust to the innocent. There were even threats of violence in Bamako against shopkeepers whose skin suggested that they might be of Touareg or Arab origin. As the banditry continued in the North, it was clear that the peacemakers who had signed the Pact were having great difficulty in selling it to their military brothers.

Diplomats and journalists showed, in our view, a remarkable lack of understanding as to the regional significance for the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, of the Malian peace process. Supposedly in favour of democracy, the Western donors played a curiously negative role at this stage, providing virtually no

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<sup>14</sup> For the organization and results of Mali's 1992 elections see Diarrah 1996 or Vengroff 1993.

<sup>15</sup> The latter were mostly NGO agents, executed following an FPLA attack against the AEN. Some were victims of the attack, yet they were rounded up by the army and shot.

financial support for the democratic regime, expressing nothing but scepticism as the new President and his inexperienced ministers (appointed on June 10th) struggled with the problems of rebellious Touaregs, revolting students, recalcitrant youth groups, subversive political opponents of democracy, an antagonistic civilian administration, a suspicious military, an empty treasury and a taxation system which had not functioned for at least the past three years. The international press and human rights bodies showed a similar lack of understanding of what was happening. Sometimes they sounded as if they were still attacking the deposed military regime. Reading articles in the foreign press, or listening to the radio in Timbuktu late in 1992 (by which time RFI had again become the loudspeaker of the rebels), one had the impression that the world was not aware that Mali had rid itself of a dictatorship, had come through a model period of Transition, had brilliantly organized a National Conference and a complex series of elections, and had installed a democratic government.

To his credit, Mali's new President never reduced his commitment to peace and human rights, nor his level of optimism. Meetings continued to take place. The second personage of Mali according to the Constitution: the President of the National Assembly, Professor Nouhoum Ali Diallo (a surgeon from the northern town of Douentza) led a delegation of deputies and ministers and NGO leaders to the important (and nearly violent) meeting at Taikaren north of Gao, where the FLPA's Rhissa ag Sidi Mohamed agreed to return from Burkina, to emerge as head of the MFUA. The meeting demanded a withdrawal of troops from the north, and some reductions were made. Constructive talks took place with the dissident groups of the FPLA, and attacks diminished by December 1992 to a level where President Konaré was able to visit Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal Regions to address the people on supporting the Pact. His visit followed the United Nations inter-Agency Mission, led by Lionel Seydoux and Abdoulaye Bathily. This collaboration of the UN Agencies provided a spirit of confidence and leadership which geared up the development community for the relaunching of the northern economy.<sup>16</sup> The Mission had a similar effect in the North, where the presence of United Nations vehicles symbolized the arrival of peace. As one of the participants remarked: "We found people living in the dunes who had not heard the sound of a motor vehicle since 1989." Thus 1992 ended on a note of hope.

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<sup>16</sup> There was also exemplary collaboration with the French IRAM Mission composed of André Marty, Dominique Gentil, Ibrahim ag Youssouf and Hamidou Magassa, and arranged by Yves Gueymard at the French Mission. Ibrahim was a member of both the French and the UN Missions, which facilitated coordination.

### 3.4 1993: Hopes of Lasting Peace

Looking back, we can see that 1993 was a period of relative calm... the calm before the storm. The French and UN Missions led to the very frank *Journées de Concertation pour le Développement des Régions de Tombouctou, Gao et Kidal* in Bamako's Amitié Hotel. The active participation of GRM (at minister level) and donors and movements and NGOs and the openness of the debates left us all feeling positive and optimistic: even though it was pointed out that the North might suffer acts of banditry for many years, and might never again know the peace of the 1980s.

Also in February an agreement was reached to integrate into the Malian armed forces a list of 640 officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers, in addition to 13 cadres named as Ministerial advisors. Zahaby was appointed First Deputy to the *Commissaire au Nord*. The Commissariat itself was a hive of activity, and even though there were plenty of grumbles of the "they are not really listening to us" kind, there was an impression of progress in Bamako. Although thefts of vehicles and herds of cattle were frequent, everyone was optimistic. The Cease-fire Commission (CCF) was functioning sporadically. Though only 4 of the planned 10 CCF units were functioning (and with limited resources), some thieves were caught. Hopes remained high. Even if travel was only safe in military convoys and development programmes were still handicapped, donors started making more encouraging noises about development in the North. They were beginning to get used to democracy.

Further encouragement came in May, when Rhissa ag Sidi Mohamed of the FPLA came to Bamako for a meeting with the President, and later held a press conference in which he stated his complete support for the objectives of the Pact. The first refugees also returned from Algeria. But those who came to the Kidal region returned to Algeria when they found that the sites proposed by IFAD had been destroyed during the fighting. Others who settled at Agouny, north of Timbuktu (and rather too close to FIAA training areas), fled when violence again flared up between the movements and the Malian army.

The integration of rebels into the armed forces proved to be the main headache of 1993. Official Flag Presentation ceremonies were held in Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal on 19-20th August and the MFUA elements seemed satisfied to be part of the army. With the benefit of hindsight it is clear that the passage into the army had not been well prepared. There was no basic training provided, there were no tests of competence, the new soldiers were in effect appointed by the MFUA. The army was not happy, and refused to be placated by a wave of promotions on

Independence Day, 22 September 1993. They did not in fact integrate the ex-rebels at all, but left them to their own devices, dangerously grouped together in their camps in the North.

### 3.5 1994: Violence Breeds Violence, and *Ganda Koy*

Frustrations were growing on both sides. While the ex-rebels grumbled in their camps, groups of them, or groups of their friends and cousins, continued to kill and steal goods and take hostages for ransom. There was growing feeling of anger in the army and among the local populations. In the prevailing insecurity, trade was paralysed except for traders protected by elements of the MFUA: which created further resentment among the influential business, trade and transport community in the towns. Illegal export of stolen livestock benefitted the economies of Burkina Faso and Mauritania, and frustrated Fulani herders began to arm themselves in self-defence. There was even talk of creating their own *Laafya* movement. Meanwhile the ARLA was fighting MPA for control of Kidal. FIAA was seeking revenge from the FPLA which had robbed Arab merchants. In short, chaos was returning to the North.

Bamako was so caught up with local problems, that the dangers of the North were allowed to slide into second place. On 14th January, the cfa Franc was devalued by 50 per cent, causing disruptions which are still being worked through four years later (with a steep rise in the cost of imported goods and in the cost of urban living, but with commensurate opportunities for internal economic activity and for sub-regional trade). At the same time, the students were raging, with secret financial encouragement from certain quarters. Political parties with more money than votes, had captured the political debate. Alpha Konaré's first Prime Minister, Younoussi Touré had resigned in September 1993. The resignation of Prime Minister Abdoulaye Sékou Sow in February 1994 rocked Mali's young democracy. The President appointed his third Prime Minister in 20 months: if Ibrahim Boubacar Keita had not succeeded in bringing calm, Mali's democratic experiment might have foundered. As it was, IBK applied recipes of firmness before relaunching the dialogue. He started by closing the nation's schools. Later the *Concertations Régionales* broadened political debate by taking it out of Bamako and into the regions (as we describe in Chapter 5.1). By so doing, AOK

and IBK regained the initiative which had seemed to be slipping out of their control.<sup>17</sup>

In detailed negotiations in Tamanrasset during April 1994, and again in May, the MFUA had raised the stakes by demanding, among other things, the integration into the security forces of 2,360 men, with an additional 800 civilians in the administration. In fact the main problem appears to have been rivalry between the component parts of the MFUA, with Zahaby demanding 40 per cent for the FIAA, leaving 20 per cent for each of the other three groups. Soon the Malian government delegation found itself mediating between the movements.

Subsequent events suggest that Zahaby was having great trouble in persuading the FIAA hardliners to accept the Pact, that he was being pushed by the refugees exiled in Mauritania to produce something for them, that he was running ever faster in order to keep ahead. Zahaby had previously claimed that the MFUA had 10,000 combatants, and demanded placements for 7,000 of them: 3,000 in the armed forces and 4,000 for re-insertion into society. The Malian government negotiator congratulated him on having more men than the total Malian armed forces, and wondered mildly how he managed to feed them all. On the basis of the previous inflated figures, the numbers now presented in Tamanrasset were a significant reduction. This is not how it seemed to the Malian public however, when the private press published rumours from Tamanrasset. The GRM offered to take in 1,000 for the army and 120 for the administration, rejecting all the semi-ethnic demands for ministerial posts. Even this position did not go down well with the Malian public.

The temperature moved close to boiling point when a disagreement within the garrison in Menaka led to a shoot-out between regulars and the new *intégrés*. In Gao, a young Touareg who tried to steal a Landrover near the mosque during Friday prayers was lynched by the crowd. It so happened that an army officer in his jeep had just dropped off a newly integrated Sergeant who was going to the mosque for the communal prayer, and when the crowd spotted the unfortunate Sergeant they killed him too because "he looked like a rebel". In revenge, a group of *intégrés* opened fire on a crowd of civilians at the hospital of Gao. After these incidents of course, the integrated forces disintegrated: the Touaregs withdrew to their rebel camps, taking with them whatever vehicles and arms they could grab. The military situation was back to square one... worse, it was at freezing zero.

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<sup>17</sup> The best analysis of this period is provided by Cheikh Oumar Diarrah (1996). Diarrah organised the Regional Concertations as Counsellor in the PM's office; he is now Ambassador in Washington.

The whole political chess-board changed on 19 May 1994, with the creation of a new movement called *Mouvement Patriotique Ganda Koy* (MPGK), an armed response from the sedentary population. It wasn't entirely unexpected: apart from the rumours we have mentioned about a Fulani *Laafya* movement, there had been a *Ganda Koy* manifesto *La Voix du Nord* which had appeared in 1992. The Commissioner for the North had already warned Zahaby and his colleagues, as they were demanding more and more concessions while acts of banditry occurred weekly, that "the Songhoy are dying, their parents are dying, their families can no longer get food because the Arab and Tamacheq merchants have taken control of all trade. If you are not careful, you are going to create a civil war."

A certain Captain Abdoulaye Hamadahamane Maiga deserted his post in Sevaré, taking with him part of the contents of the armoury and a couple of 4-WD pick-up trucks from a nearby cotton depot. He announced that he was Military Commander of MPGK. Although his main support was from Songhoy rice-growers, Maiga's soldiers included Bozo fishermen, Fulani herders, Bella labourers, and riverine Touareg agro-pastoralists who had little patience with the wild men of Kidal. Almost overnight, *Ganda Koy* acquired a *Committee of Elders* in Gao and a *Support Committee* in Bamako: neither of which had much real contact with Captain Maiga although they brought notoriety to their opportunist leadership, which needed to show support for Captain Maiga in order to keep credibility with their own population. Maiga's much more significant support was to be found inside the army and the state security apparatus, which were frustrated with the conciliatory approach of Mali's political leadership.

The idea of *Ganda Koy* had enormous popular appeal. A meeting organized at the Islamic Centre in Bamako was well-attended, and Touaregs were denied entry. Well-educated mild-mannered people started uttering violent opinions which were closer to European ideologies of ethnic cleansing, than to the Malian President's African consensus-building approach. Anyone who adopted a position of neutrality was attacked as "rebel sympathiser" or "spy". NGO and civil society organizations working with northern agro-pastoralists of all colours were accused of "arming the rebels". Mass hysteria was not far away. Those of us who continued to believe in the possibilities of peace, found conversations becoming strained even with some of our closest friends.

The whole *Ganda Koy* experience is packed with irony. Iyyad's 1990 revolt against the underdevelopment of "Azawad", won approval from all the populations of the North. Economic neglect affected them all. The drought hurt everybody. But the rebel leaders were largely from Kidal, had spent years abroad, and were politically naive. They made no effort to forge an alliance with their natural allies, so that along the Niger River even the Touareg populations never felt

personally involved with the rebellion. The army however, made no distinction in its reprisals, and turned peaceable sedentary Touaregs into “rebels”. In September 1993, Touareg and Songhoy leaders of civil society had tried to stem the tide of violence by the creation, at a meeting in Gossi, of the Foundation for the North. But the war-lord mentality of certain rebel leaders allowed the banditry to continue. The creation of *Ganda Koy* showed that the rebels had succeeded in alienating not only the southerners, but also their main political support in the north.<sup>18</sup>

*Ganda Koy* could have produced a civil war: although how long this MPGK sedentary movement would really have held together is a moot point. But its creation very quickly transformed the political situation. The MFUA leaders meeting in Tamanrasset realized that they were losing the initiative. They were told to leave the MPGK to the Government to handle. The FIAA thought it knew better. When the MPGK pursued some supposed cattle thieves and killed nineteen nomads near Tacharane, the authorities were slow to react and Zahaby led an attack against the MPGK river base at Fafa. The firing was heard by the garrison in Ansongo, and the army sent out a patrol. As Zahaby returned from the battle, his vehicles ran up against the Malian army patrol which opened fire. Zahaby escaped to Algeria, but the Chief of Staff of FIAA died in the incident, shortly before he was supposed to integrate the Malian army as an officer. Zahaby had believed that the army would stand aside, as it did in fights between FIAA and FPLA. He failed to realize that the army was not fully controlled by the political authorities, and that it was sympathetic to *Ganda Koy*.

It can be argued that the Zahaby affair provided the impetus that was needed to galvanise the peace movement. The removal of the MFUA spokesman from the scene forced other MFUA leaders to take initiatives. The Commissions described in the Algiers agreements started work on the demobilization of the rebels: planning the cantonment policy, Training policy, and redeployment into the public services. Zahaby’s wild statements on French radio made him the Man-to-Hate in Mali’s xenophobic fringe press, and changed Western perceptions concerning the threat of genocide. The Government’s lack of any coherent information system had been losing the propaganda battle, but international media coverage became more balanced from late 1994 onwards, and a rather clumsy pro-Touareg motion in the European Parliament gave the GRM the opportunity to launch a communication

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<sup>18</sup> Further irony lies in the fact that while *ganda koy* means “masters of the land”, the expression was used in the 15th century by conquering Moroccans (the *Arma*) to describe themselves as compared to the defeated Songhoy... whose culture they now share.

campaign to discredit the rebellion, playing on Westerners' sense of guilt (racism) and fear of militant Islam. Zahaby's extremism represented, in part, his continuing need to talk tough in order to maintain a level of credibility with Arab donor countries and with the FIAA military wing.

There was now open fighting between the constituent movements of the MFUA. The most spectacular concerned the ambush by an ARLA commando unit, of the MFUA's most respected soldier, Colonel Bilal Saloum of the MPA, who was killed. A black Targui who spoke no French, his calm bearing and his military reputation in the Libyan Islamic Legion had made him the most important element (and symbol) in the Cease-fire Commission. Bilal was a fine officer, and a man of peace (although some claim that he was training ex-Touareg and Bella slaves, with the complicity of the army and state security, they do not say for what purpose). The military situation had been calm in Kidal. After Bilal's death, the MPA re-organized: inflicting a decisive military defeat on the ARLA forces at the end of the year. A face-saving treaty was brokered by the FPLA, and signed at Taikaren in December 1994. The ARLA's mistake had been to present itself too strongly as a movement of *imghad* seeking not only to end domination by the Iforas of Kidal, but to rewrite history so the *imghad* appear as the only genuine (slightly anti-Muslim) Berbers. Defeated by the MPA, ARLA split: the majority accepted MPA dominance and the National Pact, while a minority moved southwards into the Gourma where they made an alliance with the FPLA.

Faced with the turbulence, the Malian army overreacted. This was unfortunate, but understandable in the face of mounting public opinion against the rebels, and the increased threat which violence poses to the security forces themselves. Poorly led and poorly equipped, these soldiers from the south of Mali were in no way trained to fight a desert guerrilla war. No Malian political leader has ever seriously believed that a military solution was possible. The wisest army commanders argued discreetly that "victory" was impossible. Faced with night attacks and an invisible enemy, it is easy to see how ordinary soldiers became convinced—quite wrongly—that the rebel groups were supported and aided by foreigners, by NGOs, by development projects, by red-skinned civil servants, by the ethnic Touareg population, by anybody wearing a turban or riding a camel or travelling in an unmarked 4-WD vehicle. In their fear and frustration, they killed many innocent civilians, though it is impossible to know how many.

As violence took the place of dialogue, the army rounded up 17 Arabs in Gossi and shot them. They were mainly from the Rgagda clan. Rumour said they had been helped by informants from Bamba, with whom the Rgagda normally had excellent relations. On July 2, armed FIAA rebels drove into Bamba and opened fire with automatic weapons on the crowd gathered in the market square. There

were dozens of victims. In the most notorious of many incidents, in October 1994, an army unit assassinated in Niafunké the Swiss Consul, Jean-Claude Berberat, and his two colleagues, Amadou Gouro Sidibé and Almoubarek ag Alleyda (who were both very black). We shall know one day the true story of this assassination. Was it misunderstanding about what a development project does? Were the soldiers wrongly informed about the spread of Swiss activities between pastoral and agricultural activities? Was it greed because the Swiss were rumoured to be carrying a lot of money? Although one was a diplomat and all three victims were our friends, this incident has to be seen as just one among very many incidents of unjustified violence, undermining the installation of the Rule of Law. The same month there was the massacre at Gao of 60 Kel Essouk in the camp of the famous *Marabout* Anara, and the subsequent departure of the clan to Niger. The death of Berberat hit the international headlines; the death of Anara sent shock waves through the Sahara.

The Head of State and the Prime Minister maintained a common position of reasonable firmness, despite their extreme weakness vis-à-vis the army. They were no more in a position to control the rebels, than they were to impose discipline on the army.<sup>19</sup> Powerless to take dramatic action to stop the violence, they repeated tirelessly their conviction that the solution was in the National Pact. The Prime Minister visited Bamba immediately after the July massacre and his visit was widely covered in the media, showing solidarity with the victims of violence. But he and the President, and the President of the National Assembly (a northern Fulani), set their faces bravely against Malian public opinion and the temptation to arm civilian vigilante groups. Married to a Maiga from Bourem right next to Bamba, Prime Minister Keita showed especial courage and tact when confronting his in-laws after the Bamba massacre. *Ganda Koy*, he insisted, was acceptable only as a movement for the promotion of Songhoy culture. No armed movements could be tolerated under the Rule of Law.

Above all Mali's leaders broadened the democratic debate and sought to lead public opinion. In July-September the Regional Concertations took place (described in 5.1). The firm lead of the Government avoided an outright rejection of the National Pact by Malian public opinion. There emerged from the 17 meetings of the Concertations, a national consensus in favour of equal treatment

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<sup>19</sup> The Minister of Foreign Affairs told Swiss journalist Keller of *Tages Anzeiger Magazine* two months later that if the democratic Government tried to arrest Berberat's assassins, there could be a military take-over. A "trade union" of NCOs had been allowed to flourish during the transition, which had replaced normal army discipline with potentially disastrous effects. It was officially disbanded at the end of 1994.

for all the populations of the North, which reinforced the Government's position and opened the way for northern peacemakers to begin the process of consulting, and then of mobilizing civil society. Among the first to take the initiative was an elder of Bourem, the late Alhero Touré who called together all the local nomad chiefs including those involved in the MFUA and MPKG. Similar credit must go to Aroudeyni ag Hamatou of Menaka. Each local chief accepted responsibility for establishing peace in his own country. As we shall discuss in Chapter 4, civil society was beginning to take the lead.

### 3.6 1995: Peacemaking through Civil Society

In late 1994, the Government felt strong enough to make changes in the army High Command: notably bringing in Colonel Siraman Keita as Chief of the General Staff, and promoting the Commissioner for the North to Inspector-General of the Armed Forces (and later to the rank of Brigadier-General). Little by little, all the military units which had been associated with bad discipline or excessive use of force, were withdrawn to other regions. At the same time, Police Commissioner Mahamadou Diagouraga replaced Bréhima Siré Traore as *Commissaire au Nord*. As the latter observed wisely: "He who leads the peacemaking, should not be the one to consolidate the peace. My departure was a good thing. It liberated the minds of the rebels." Most crucial of all was the nomination of the late Boubacar Sada Sy as Minister of Defence. He had the courage and the personality to restore some discipline to the army and make it respect civilian authority. The democratic institutions of Mali owe him a debt of gratitude. So 1995 began with a new team and a new atmosphere of open debate. An informal group emerged around the new Commissioner, supported by the new Resident Coordinator of the United Nations, Tore Rose (of Norway) who arrived from Algeria with a clear understanding of the geo-political implications of peace in northern Mali, and which he was able to impart to other donors.

The violence died down during 1995. The FPLA remained committed to finding a solution. After the MPA victory over ARLA, only the FIAA remained recalcitrant. The FIAA leadership was forced to reconsider how to control the divisions in their armed ranks, and how to react to Zahaby's media pronouncements. Eventually Zahaby went off to United Nations service in Haiti, and other dissidents disappeared into the refugee camps in Mauritania where they have remained disaffected but marginal. Meanwhile the main FIAA leadership issued a press release in Libya, dated 8 June 1995, which declared its intention to support the peace process.

There remained the problem of dialogue with the MPGK. Captain Maiga recorded a television interview in which he stated that he had formed *Ganda Koy* with no racist vision. Among other things, the interview had visual proof that Touaregs had also joined the MPGK, which was nothing less than the revolt of the riverine northern populations against the constant thieving and looting and killing and general insecurity perpetrated by the MFUA. The Government would not allow the journalists to show this interview on Malian television because they considered (although few soldiers perceive it thus) that Maiga was an army deserter. It was however shown privately to the Press Corps and gave rise to articles which showed a new understanding of what was really happening in the North. When certain UN officials in Bamako saw the video cassette, and realised that it provided an opening for dialogue and negotiation, the UN discreetly funded its diffusion. This was another drop of oil in the machinery of peacemaking: for it was thanks to this video that Zeidane ag Sidalamine of FPLA and the *Commissaire au Nord* decided to make personal contact with Captain Maiga. As a member of the Chamanammas clan, Zeidane was much closer to the Songhoy than the MPA leaders of Kidal. The FPLA resented the feeling that the Government “preferred” the MPA: understandable in view of Rhissa’s earlier “*refusenik*” attitude to the National Pact. Zeidane’s approach to Captain Maiga put the FPLA back in centre-stage.

Their discussions led to a broader interpretation of that paragraph of the Pact which called for the GRM to recruit the widest number possible of northerners into government service. Later President Konaré would decide to “integrate” MPGK members as well as those from the MFUA who were signatories of the Pact and of the Algiers agreements (although the statistics do not suggest that the Songhoy are under-represented in either the civilian or military arms of government). *Ganda Koy* presented the President with the two-fold difficulty, that it aspired to equal recognition and privileges as a movement, and that it had now become a far-from-negligible card in the hands of certain political parties with an audience in the North.

The reasons for the armed revolt were disappearing. Poverty had not disappeared, but the North was no longer marginalized. Peace can never be exactly the same as it was before, of course: there has grown up in West Africa a familiarity with automatic rifles and their use, which may long remain. But a new level of peaceful stability arrived as *Ganda Koy* and the FPLA in partnership, joined forces with Government and NGOs, and above all with the elders who guide the organs of Mali’s traditional civil society, in the search for peace. The very important *Accords de Bourem* signed 11 January 1995 by FPLA and MPGK came about partly as a result of the UN-video-stimulated discussions between the

leaders and partly thanks to the afore-mentioned peace dynamic initiated by the Elders of Bourem. Other such meetings took place, such as the reconciliation in Inekar initiated by the *Commandant de Cercle* of Menaka and the FPLA between the nomadic communities Imajarem and Dawsahak (some of whom have allied with the MPGK). Many more followed, as we describe in section 4.5.

The authorities were not inactive. While the President wanted to leave space in the field for civil society to practice peacemaking, the GRM sought UNDP and donor support for peace diplomacy. The Geneva donors' Round Table in November 1994 was followed by the Timbuktu Round-Table of July 1995. Both were aimed at convincing Mali's development partners that the GRM was following a coherent strategy for peacemaking: not seeking donor funds, but asking for their support for the subsequent peace-building and development phase. This *Rencontre de Tombouctou* had especial symbolic significance, for it proved that violence had abated sufficiently to allow donors to meet *in situ*.

After the Timbuktu meeting, the UN Resident Coordinator (in conjunction with the UN Department for Political Affairs: a partnership which has had considerable impact on the donor community) set up a Trust Fund for peace-building in the North, especially for the resettlement of ex-combatants which we describe in Chapter 5. By the end of 1995, the cumulative effect of half-a-hundred community meetings had placed civil society firmly in the driving seat towards peace. The armed combatants had, for the most part, presented themselves and surrendered a weapon in one of the four cantonment sites. These are the weapons which were burned on 27 March 1996 in the Flame of Peace.

### 3.7 1996-1997: Peace-building Begins

By early 1996 the armed ex-combatants were out of the cantonment sites and in military training, as we describe in Chapter 4.6. Meanwhile thousands more young men without arms ("potential rebels" as one UN official dubbed them) were registering for assistance with "re-insertion" into society in accordance with the quotas negotiated for each movement. Collaboration between the FPLA and MPGK was now so good, that the FPLA—never large in numbers—is rumoured to have filled up its quota with names provided by the MPGK. There are even a few women on the lists, which is helpful: for what we are talking about is really some investment in the North, some sort of compensation for years of economic marginalization. Nobody needs this more than the women of the North, many of whom are widows with children to feed. Experience has proved time and again,

that women make better use of investment funds than their menfolk. And we have observed earlier that women are society's peacemakers.

In late 1995, the UN Trust Fund began to receive donations, pushing money and training out through the PAREM<sup>20</sup> programme in the direction of the ex-combatants. These processes are discussed in detail in later chapters; by mid-1997 the PAREM appears to have been surprisingly successful in getting ex-combatants' economic projects funded and functioning. Time alone will show how many of the projects supply long-term prosperity (or a minimum living) to their promoters, and how many young men find it difficult to settle down to a stable civilian life.

During the early part of 1996 the UNHCR initiated a dynamic policy for resettling refugees. Their previous concentration on the population of the camps, gave way to a new emphasis on the resettlement zones. It was realized that semi-nomadic refugees and their herds have more need of water than of transport facilities. Contracts were given out to experienced field-based NGOs to sink or repair wells in the areas to which refugees were intending to return, and UNHCR became the principal coordinator of actions to relaunch the social economy of northern Mali. The main donors have continued to prove slow movers. There are said to be \$200 million pledged to development in the North, but 1997 began with barely a dribble (from the Dutch in Menaka, the Germans in Timbuktu.... and with contributions to the Trust Fund less than \$10 million of the \$12 million needed). The United Nations has set itself an urgent objective of helping the GRM to get security established in the region, in order to encourage donors to release their promised funds.

1996 was also the year when peace-building really got underway on the political front. On the initiative of the Malian President, the United Nations organized and sponsored a whole series of sub-regional activities, which are helping to create an atmosphere of peace and collaboration around, and on both sides of, Mali's borders. In October 1995, the Mali Peace Process was presented at a High-Level Consultation in New York, which was presided by Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali in person, and attended by ambassadors from most of the West African and donor nations. In June 1996 there was a conference in Bamako on civilian-military relations, which produced the preliminary version of a Code

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<sup>20</sup> The PAREM *Programme d'Appui à la Réinsertion socio-économique des Ex-combattants du nord Mali* is responsible for funding the re-insertion into society and into the northern economy of 9,423 ex-members of the combatant movements, according to the project's Report for 1996, dated February 1997. We discuss the PAREM in Chapter 5.

of Conduct (which we reproduce in Annex 2). The leaders of Mali's military forces appear to understand that a new role is needed for the armed forces, that safe frontiers are best protected through good-neighbour relations, and that the fundamental requirements for internal security (and for strong, well-equipped uniformed forces) are a sound economy and good governance.

Mali's leaders—political and military—have also realized that they can become the leaders in peacemaking throughout the sub-region. On 27 March 1996 in Timbuktu, the small arms surrendered in the cantonments were consumed by a Flame of Peace which has burned itself into the consciousness of all Africa. This Flame burning in the historic university and religious city of Timbuktu, illuminated the Malian peacemaking model which is now cited across the world. The model responds to African culture, based as it is on community reconciliation leading to disarmament and cantonment, the joint civilian-military Transition from dictatorship to democracy, and a new model for society based on decentralisation and a return to cultural values of political consensus (highlighted by the National Pact, the National Conference of 1992 and the Regional Concertations of 1994). The Mali model also reaches across frontiers to establish new partnerships for cooperation, micro-disarmament, and the control of illegal small arms. As the global economy forces everybody to reassess their economic relations, and in the wake of the 1994 Fcfa devaluation, sub-regional economic integration is emerging as the realistic way to pursue the Pan-African ideal. While Nigeria, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire may possess an economic weight which Mali cannot match, the Malian example can supply the moral leadership for which Mali's history and social capital provide the foundations.

This peace leadership role began to take form during 1996 and 1997, through discussions on West African small arms control and the proposal of a moratorium on the import, sale and manufacture of small arms. Bamako hosted discussions on this subject in November 1996 and again in March 1997, and Malian diplomats are pursuing the matter with their neighbours, and with United Nations encouragement. The United Nations has even brought the issue to the recent attention of the consortium of arms-exporting countries, known as the Wassenaar Arrangement, where the idea will be discussed. We argue in Chapter 7 that it would be in the best interests of everybody except the arms salesmen (and maybe even theirs). An army has greater need of economic progress and social peace, that it has of guns: for when the security forces have guns, the bandits are encouraged to bring in more guns. Violence breeds violence. The great challenge is for West African societies to avoid the unending cycle of violence which exists in Liberia, which has already been exported to Sierra Leone, and which may spread throughout the region. If community leaders and customs officers are collaborating

across frontiers, the spread of weapons may be slowed. To be effective, the security forces need vehicles and fuel and radios more urgently than they need firearms, and they need good salaries and good training and good support from the communities they are trying to protect. You need guns to keep order only if the normal patterns of society have failed. This is a message which not all of West Africa's military have understood.

There is yet another Malian initiative during the Year of Peace-building 1996-97, which may have regional impact, and this is the political and social leadership which will help Africa's armies to redefine their roles under a system of democratic governance. The Code of Conduct for civilian-military relations is still in preliminary form,<sup>21</sup> but it is likely to provide the springboard for new initiatives in training both military and civil society organizations in peacemaking and peace-building across West Africa. The whole culture of education and schooling in the region will receive an injection of new ideas, which will give greater value to African traditions of governance and conflict resolution (such as we explore in Chapter 6), to community cultural values, and to the wider community whose shared frontiers may become links and not barriers.

All of these elements received full discussion during the 1997 Week of Peace, which celebrated from 24th to 28th March the anniversary of the Timbuktu Flame of Peace. These activities of peace-building are spreading the influence of the Malian example. International personalities have sanctioned the peace process: President JJ Rawlings of Ghana lit the flame in Timbuktu in March 1996; President Henri Konan Bédié co-presided the ceremonies of March 1997, where UNESCO's Director-General, Frederico Mayor gave a memorable key-note address. Meanwhile the message has been taken abroad: notably by President Konaré in his distinguished contribution in November 1996 in Paris to Leopold Senghor's 90th birthday party; by Foreign Minister Dioncounda Traore to the OAU summit in Harare in June 1997; and by Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT), who travels the world explaining how the peace process in Mali worked, how a peaceful transition to democracy can take place, and bringing his mediation skills to difficult problems such as the Central African mutiny in late 1996.

At the time of writing, Mali is the United Nations' favourite Partner for Peace. The question we are all asking is: "Will the peace hold firm?" The answer to this question is largely economic, depending partly on decentralization and good

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<sup>21</sup> We produce an early draft in annexe 2. Further refinement will take place at a Bamako meeting in late 1997 and then each country must adopt -- and adapt -- the Code and conduct an intensive training programme to make it widely known and to ensure that it is followed.

governance, partly on the annual rainfall and the river levels, and partly on the strategies which donors will adopt to support Malian civil society, the social economy, and the relaunch of the North. Despite Mali's international renown, 1997 did not start particularly well. During the whole of 1996 there were about 30 vehicle thefts in the North; there were nine during the first two months of 1997. Then on 25 May 1997, the UNHCR Delegate in Kidal, Martin Buccumi of Burundi, was kidnapped and beaten up. An elderly Touareg woman found him, and she walked 60 kilometres to Kidal, to call a vehicle to collect Martin and to get him medical treatment. The following morning, a Care Mali vehicle was stolen in Kidal. This type of lawlessness poses a direct challenge not only to the security forces, but also to the government's PAREM programme for ex-combatants, and to its UN sponsors. Actually the 1997 hijackings are highly symbolic, emphasising the need to relaunch the economy of the North. Here is the old story of the chicken and the egg: for economic development will not be able to take off, unless the GRM and its supporters are able to achieve "security first". As we explore in Chapter 6, this requires reinforcing and equipping the security forces, as well as the mobilization of the leaders of civil society to create a climate of peace.

The key to success may well be the organization and mobilization of women and women's associations in favour of peace. Women are the wives and the sisters, and above all the mothers of those who handle weapons. Women can bring reason to the ex-combatants on the rebel side, and women should participate in education and training of the security forces, who must be the guardians of Mali's democratic governance. Although we, the authors, are men, we believe that political institutions in every country suffer from the defects of male domination, and that it is the mobilization of women's energies which holds the secret to achieving peace.

Additional opportunities for instability are provided by the 1997 elections for the National Assembly and for the Presidency, and those of 1998 for local councils. On 11 May 1997, President Konaré was reelected for a second (and final) five-year term, receiving 85 per cent of the votes cast. But will Mali's political opposition support the continuing democratic process and allow the government's strategy for decentralization to go ahead? Are Malian political leaders mature enough to promote national reconciliation ahead of narrow personal ambition? African oppositions have always shown great reluctance to spend time working on policy alternatives and building up local electoral machines, while ruling elites seldom encourage reflective opposition and open debate.

There is no denying that Mali's 1997 elections were mismanaged. The April legislative elections were annulled by the Constitutional Court. The re-run in July received judicial approval despite the boycott of radical opposition parties: giving

Adema 130 of the 147 seats in the national Assembly. The 17 remaining were won by parties in alliance with Adema. Riven by internal dissent, it is doubtful if the radicals could have won more than a handful of seats. *Le Monde Diplomatique* observed<sup>22</sup> that Mali's principal opposition parties include two which have held power in the past: the USRDA of Modibo Keita (whose 1997 declared presidential candidate Seydou Badian Kouyaté, elderly author and poet, was one of Modibo Keita's Ministers in the 1960s) and the MPR of Choguel Maiga, who claims political descentance from the UDPM of General Moussa Traore. Neither has a democratic past, but Mali's electorate could at least compare their track records to that of the recent Adema government, and might have made an informed choice if the USRDA and MPR had not supported the boycott.

While bad politics and disruption in Bamako encourage instability,<sup>23</sup> it is banditry which remains the biggest problem. The culture of the gun has not vanished. Peace-building has only just started in the North. Much depends on Mali's development partners, and the enthusiasm with which they are prepared to invest in community programmes which back up the positive results achieved by the PAREM project: by which the GRM and United Nations have funded the socio-economic reinsertion of individual ex-combatants. If the donors are too slow, or if they fund only prestige projects which do not promote long-term growth, then the rest of the painstaking work will be wasted.

Peace does not seem to occupy much space in the opposition tirades which dominate political life in the capital. Consensus may yet be achieved through the President's consistent and repeated appeals to that majority of the population who are neither lawyers nor politicians, and who do not even speak French. When Mali's politicians stare into the abyss of the civil wars and failed states which surround them in Africa, they may decide to step back from confrontation and return to the "palaver tree". The process of discussion and negotiation has already succeeded in the north of Mali. Final peace has to be won during 1997 and 1998 and beyond through consensus-building, but above all through the relaunching of the neglected, drought-damaged northern economy.

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<sup>22</sup> See Ramaro's article in the 4-page supplement on Mali of May 1997.

<sup>23</sup> More than one opposition leader has made noises in favour of military intervention and at least three attempted coups against democratic governance have been averted since 1991: the latest being in August 1997 at the instigation of a group of non-commissioned officers.

This chapter has followed the chronological story of the years of violence in northern Mali. We have described how the original revolt against a despotic regime turned into a series of internecine squabbles among Touareg and Arab factions whose violence lost them the support of the northern populations. Patient negotiation brought about the National Pact of 1992, but not peace. Mali's young democratic Third Republic was almost destroyed by the continuing violence, as the armed movements and the armed forces perpetrated massacres across the North. Malians' powers of negotiation and reconciliation proved stronger than those of violence, although acts of banditry continue to show how fragile are the beginnings of peace-building. We shall now describe how disarmament and peacemaking came about, before returning to the theme of peace-building and development in the longer-term.



Soldiers douse the pyramid with gasoline, in the presence of UN weapons certifiers General Henny van der Graaf of UNIDIR, Geneva, and Prvoslav Davinic, Director of the UN Centre for Disarmament Affairs in New York.



Mali's President Alpha Oumar Konaré, in the presence of Guest-of-Honour John J. Rawlings, President of Ghana and of ECOWAS, receives from the UN's General Henny van der Graaf a signed Certificate guaranteeing the safety of all the weapons which are about to burn.

## Chapter 4

# Peacemaking and the Process of Disarmament

**If your neighbour's beard is burning, fetch water to soak your own beard.  
Songhoy-Djerma-Haoussa proverb**

We earlier identified centralized government as one of the causes for the feeling of marginalization in northern Mali: it is therefore salutary to find decentralization among the building blocks for peace. Peacemaking has been carried out at many different levels. The peacemakers have included the Malian authorities, their partners, and the leaders of civil society, to whom we shall return. The present chapter describes a variety of mechanisms which were used to promote a peaceful resolution of the Malian conflict. Peacemaking is how we describe the process which “takes the sting out of a problem”, and peace-building is what happens immediately afterwards, as people begin to recreate the conditions for living together. Our proverb emphasizes that the problems of neighbours are shared: what concerns one, is the concern of both. Peacemaking requires dialogue between communities, between civilian and military institutions and with development partners, and it depends on the reintegration into every community of those who have taken up arms.

We have identified six essential aspects of the peace process in Mali: six different courses of action which together prevented the outbreak of civil war. These were (1) the building of civilian-military relations, (2) discreet mediation by both national and international figures, (3) the decentralization of governance, (4) the promotion of reconciliation through civil society, (5) the process of disarmament and demobilization, and (6) assistance for the reintegration of former rebel combatants. These aspects of the Malian peace process provide a model which may inspire peacemaking elsewhere. The present chapter describes how these various actions were complementary in bringing stability to the North.

## 4.1 Building Civilian-military Bridges in a Democracy

One key to the peace process in Mali was the importance that the Government placed on re-building civilian-military relations. This is a process which began during the 1991-92 transition and continues today. Unlike some of the other aspects of the peace process described below, such as cantonment or community meetings, the building of civil-military relations is an ongoing process rather than an event or series of events. It is vital for reconciliation within Malian society, to restore the people's confidence in the military, and to repair the morale of the uniformed forces.

In 1968, President Modibo Keita was arrested by a group of young military officers. Among them was Moussa Traore, who became president of a military regime. If it is true that Modibo Keita's government was discredited and unpopular, the military brought change without improvement. It took 23 years for Mali to get rid of Moussa Traore, and another 15 months to reach the inauguration on 8 June 1992 of Mali's first democratically elected president. To understand the bitterness against the military which existed in the hearts of some Malians, we must add to the 23 years of misrule and occasional repression, the 300-odd victims of the popular revolution in Bamako during the January-March 1991 period, and the hundreds of civilian victims of military repression during the 1990-1994 northern troubles.<sup>1</sup>

Young Malians see their revolution as throwing off the yoke of military repression. The soldiers don't see it that way. One serving non-commissioned officer told us that conditions for soldiers were so appalling in the North that there might have been a mutiny if the *Pacte National* had not intervened in 1992. With inadequate food, uniforms and supplies, and with salaries so small and so late that the garrison in Tessalit sometimes went three months together without money, the army was in a terrible state. Some soldiers were ready to join the rebels in their demand for better Government. Senior military officers responsible for the North lived in Bamako and were content simply to receive reports. The poor leadership, poor training and poor morale of Mali's army at the end of the dictatorship explain many of the excesses for which the army has been blamed.

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<sup>1</sup> Kare Lode (1997) suggests that between 6,000 and 8,000 people died during the northern conflict. His estimate (on which we have no basis for comment) includes both military and civilian casualties.

Within a few days of the fall of Moussa Traore, the eyes of Bamako's citizens were opened to the disgusting state of barrack life. ATT took the television cameras around the various military camps, where everybody could see that, if some senior officers of the old regime had become extremely rich, the ordinary soldiers were equally victims with the rest of Mali. Soldiers too are Malian citizens; they have mothers and sisters and brothers who were also marching in the streets and calling for democratic elections. It is this which drove the army to arrest the Head of State when his repression went beyond the bounds of reason.

To quote a senior military source:

The Institution of the Army had been used by one man—or by a system. But the army cannot be opposed to the nation. At some stage it was necessary to “stop blaming the army”—as ATT said when he was President of the CTSP and Head of State.

The collective presidency of the CTSP was in itself symbolic of national reconciliation, being composed of representatives of all the armed forces and all the major components of the pro-democracy movement (including two seats for the movements in the North). The need for further efforts was clear, however, and it is entirely to its credit that the army took the initiative to heal the wounds of the nation. At the start of the National Conference in August 1992, a junior officer “who had commanded no one and wounded nobody” took the floor, and in the name of all the armed forces, read a statement of regret, asking forgiveness for the loss of life which had taken place under Moussa Traore. This was the second major bridge built between civilians and the military.

At his trial “for crimes of blood” 18 months later, it was widely expected that the ex-dictator would do the same: apologise and ask for forgiveness. That would have been the correct procedure in Malian social culture. But he did not. Moussa Traore and three other military leaders were sentenced to death for their repression (the sentence has not been and will never be carried out). The political and judicial decision was to set responsibility on the shoulders of those who gave the orders: the Ministers of Interior and Defence, and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. No specific force nor individual would be held responsible. This was a contribution to national healing. Not that minority groups did not fight and lobby for a wider attribution of responsibility. These groups succeeded in getting lots of symbols (for example, Bamako's first bridge across the Niger was re-named *Pont des Martyrs*, the Bridge of the Martyrs), but they were not allowed to spoil the bridges of reconciliation between civilians and the military.

Under the CTSP, the civilian government of Prime Minister Soumana Sacko<sup>2</sup> proceeded to put the country back together. A number of military men held ministerial portfolios. After the elections of 1992, Alpha Oumar Konaré's government was entirely civilian: with the single exception of Modibo Sidibé, a police lawyer who became the Minister of Health.<sup>3</sup> While the decision to appoint a civilian Minister of Defence led to difficulties in communication and trust between the political and military establishments, it can be argued that it was a necessary step towards bringing the military inside the new democratic fabric of Mali.

Mistrust was reinforced by the existence of a sort of NCO trade union, the *Coordination des sous-officiers et des hommes de rang*, which seriously undermined that discipline and hierarchy without which a professional army cannot truly exist. The late Boubacar Sada Sy was the civilian Minister who finally put his foot down in late 1994, disbanding the *Coordination* for reasons of discipline. It was also Sada Sy who, faced with a strike in the Gendarmerie Training School, sacked every cadet involved. In this case, while dismayed civilian parents pleaded for the re-instatement of their children, the military establishment applauded his decision (although the subsequent riot might have been avoided if the Minister had taken a few more hours to plan his move). Looking back, we can see that the *Institution militaire* has been putting its house in order, after years of neglect by the previous regime.

The Government has also been making efforts to improve conditions for the military. Mali has become a modest contributor to international peace supervision missions (notably with the United Nations in Rwanda and with ECOMOG in Liberia). We applaud the initiative. For reasons which we have never understood, the Government has given little publicity to the achievements of the military in this Malian contribution to African peacemaking and at the beginning the Government actively sought to keep the whole enterprise quiet. It provides good training and prestigious experience for the officers and NCOs involved. For most of them, it is the first time they have been able to meet and work with the soldiers of other nations, to compare their levels of knowledge and discipline. The whole concept of peace operations is a generous one, which

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<sup>2</sup> Sacko is known as to the Malians as "Zou". After the transition he resumed his career as an economist with UNDP in other African countries, returning to Mali's political fray in time to become a candidate in the 1997 presidential elections.

<sup>3</sup> In later governments a second police officer, Sada Samaké, was appointed Minister of Territorial Administration and Internal Security. In September 1997 Minister Sidibé moved from Health to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

brings new purpose to those who are involved and which should serve to bring new perspectives to the Malian armed forces concerning their role in a democratic society.

There is also a great deal of investment which has been approved by the Malian Government, including the construction of a new military complex at Sénou, near Bamako's international airport. Decent lodgings and training facilities are certainly far more important for efficiency and morale than the purchase of arms. An *Etat de droit* and the Rule of Law require that the State should have a well-trained police force, an effective customs service, and an efficient, well-trained and well-disciplined army. The advent of decentralization will make their training and discipline even more important, for the role of the security forces will have to expand to supporting the Rule of Law in the many newly created *Communes*. As the uniformed forces are regaining their self-respect and becoming reconciled with themselves, so they are finding their place in a country ruled through democratic governance.

Of all the mechanisms for building bridges of integration, the most important is surely the sharing of information. After the tragic death of Sada Sy in a car accident, his successor Mamadou Ba told us that the military "needed to be better informed about the great issues of the Nation State". This started with the revamping of the Ministry's press department, which became—for the first time—an active disseminator of information to and within the armed forces, instead of being simply a receiver of information (which it then used to withhold from the press).

The press department went out to visit all the regional garrisons, telling them about the National Pact and its constituent parts (notably the question of integrating the ex-rebels), but also collecting information to be published in the Ministry's journal *Frères d'Armes* which had been initiated by the democratic government. This journal is extremely well-produced by some of the most professional journalists in Mali. Its publication is unfortunately irregular, for reasons of budget priorities within the cash-strapped Ministry for the Armed Forces and Veterans (MFAAC, formerly the Ministry of Defence). It is sold to the general public, but of course it is distributed free to the uniformed forces which constitute its principal target audience.

Issue No. 5 of *Frères d'Armes* published an interview with the then Secretary-General of the FPLA, Zeidane ag Sidalamine, under the title "Peace is my credo". In his interview, Zeidane goes on to insist that "I am black, a real black man. Indeed who in Mali is not black? I am certainly black. I know that we are all Malians, and we all want to raise the standard of living of our population. The idea of hatred between blacks and whites is a thing of the

distant past” (Zeidane 1994, p. 15). This is good stuff for “building bridges”, and it is really radical in the context of Mali’s military tradition of silence. The same issue No. 5, dated August 1994, contains a profile of the late Col Mohamed Ould Issa of the Malian army, and a report of the June negotiations in Tamanrasset where the then Minister of Defence (later Foreign Minister), Dioncounda Traore had led the Malian delegation to meet with MFUA leaders and the Algerian Minister for the Interior: such sharing of information is a quite new departure for the Malian military.

Minister Mamadou Ba also decided to bring in civilians to meet the military, by instituting a series of meetings where one of his colleagues addressed the whole officer corps on a burning issue of the day. “Structural Adjustment” is an expression which everyone has heard, but few understand. Soumaila Cissé, Minister of Finance and Commerce presented the Government’s views and plans, and explained to the assembled officers how negotiations take place with the IMF and World Bank. Ousmane Sy, Chief of the Decentralization Mission at the Presidency, explained the philosophy and application of decentralization (not a subject to which military structures can easily relate). Adama Samassekou, Minister of Basic Education, presented the *new primary school* (NEF which we describe in Chapter 6.2), and the list could continue with other non-military discussions from which the officers of “the great silent one” were previously excluded. The Minister describes this process as *interpénétration*. By receiving information and becoming involved in the democratic process, the military will feel less separate, will become part of the civilian debate, and will feel less threatened when civilians feel entitled, in their turn, to discuss affairs which concern the military.

The United Nations has oiled the machinery of interpenetration by adding an international dimension. The concept of micro-disarmament has had a small influence in this regard, as we shall discuss the next chapter. But the original contribution of the United Nations was the organization in July 1996 of a sub-regional seminar specifically on civilian-military relations. One Malian participant dressed in battle fatigues carrying Sergeant stripes, told us enthusiastically that she had learned a lot. She had met people from neighbouring countries and from civil society. For the first time, she had thought coherently about civilian life and military responsibilities, “but above all it gave us a chance to meet and discuss among ourselves!” Apparently the advent of democratic governance is facilitating communications even inside *the great silent one*. Certainly the Minister Mamadou Ba believes so. He sends officers to every training course that is offered abroad, in the belief that the

opening of minds from such experience is beneficial to the whole of the Malian uniformed forces. The bridges are being built.

The United Nations seminar produced a draft Code of Conduct for Civilian-Military Relations which could prove seminal in terms of military conduct. We reproduce the text in Annex 2. This Code emerged from discussions, which included foreign experiences (notably from South Africa) and focused on the need for West African armed forces to “win the hearts and minds” of the civilian populations whom they serve and with whom they live. General Henny van der Graaf observes:

The elaboration of military/civilian relations is an integral part of the Malian peace process initiated by the 1992 Pacte National but is also part of the “security first” assistance approach.... During the seminar there was broad agreement that a code of conduct on civil-military relations should not only ensure that the armed forces will not endanger the basic liberties that they are meant to protect, but also that the civil government is not unduly interfering in military matters which are the professional property of the military. On the other hand it was stressed that civilian control over the military presupposes a sufficient degree of civilian expertise on defence and security matters (1996, p. 23).

The seminar discussed mainly relations with the Executive: the administrative and ministerial arms of government. There is of course a long way to go in most West African countries before the legislative arm is able to exert significant influence over defence and security matters. A clear legal and constitutional framework is needed, which should evolve through time and experience, and which will establish the framework for an overall code of conduct. The text present by the seminar is only a first effort, but it may provide a basis for future civilian-military relations throughout the region, and for further regional collaboration during 1997 and 1998.

This is an area in which the French and Americans have also tried to contribute. The French have a significant military mission in Mali, which is helping to improve discipline in specific areas such as the police and the fire services and moving the Malians away from the rigidity of their Soviet training. The Americans have tried to make an impact using a prestigious television format: with 5-Star Generals in Washington answering questions from officers sitting in a Malian cinema. The simultaneous translation adds to the unreality of the situation, but the theme of “an army in a democratic regime” contributes to the internal debate within the *Grande Muette*. Asked whether the information filters down to the NCOs and to the ordinary soldiers, senior officers reply in terms of memos and orders and regular briefings: all of which tends to confirm our feeling

is that the military concept of transmitting information is not necessarily conducive to greater understanding of the democratic debate. Orders or no orders, when civil rights are abused, experience shows that it is the young women and children who are most at risk. Madam Graça Machel's 1996 report to the Secretary-General confirms this in frightening detail. We believe that training on civilian-military relations needs to be taken into the barracks, and that it should include the wives and mothers of today's soldiers, and of those who will be recruited tomorrow.

Integrating the military into the democratic system has been slow and arduous in the North. Fighting only stopped at the end of 1994, and banditry has continued since. The sack of the market place of Gao, and the death in Niafunké of the Swiss Consul with two Malian colleagues, brought the country close to the breaking point in 1994: for while these were not the first acts of army indiscipline, they represented an inability of the army to accept democratic political authority. At the same time, the creation of *Ganda koy* by infuriated Songhoys and the desertion from the army of Captain Abdrahmane Maiga to become head of *Ganda koy's* armed wing, seemed to be further steps away from political control of the armed forces. 1994 was the year of "make or break", the year when the President managed to regain the initiative by promoting greater democratic debate and *Concertation* between the diverse parts of the Malian Nation, including the military.

The bridges of peace and reconciliation are still fragile. Does Mali need to push ahead with the Commission of enquiry which is mentioned in the National Pact? Would this help reconciliation in Mali, in the same way that the Truth Commission appears to be helping the healing process in South Africa? Or would it reopen the wounds, and lead inevitably to acrimonious exchanges around demands for subsequent compensation? Should Malians be recording these details of their recent history as part of the peace-building process, or is it too soon to achieve historical perspective? Opinions are divided on the advisability of allowing the wounds to bleed again too soon. In the absence of judicial enquiry or accusation, the authorities have been able to restore discipline and morale in the armed forces, to integrate the ex-combatants into these forces, and to begin to help the uniformed forces to identify their role within the new framework of democratic governance. These successes at least are precious.

Curiously enough, it is the banditry which has become the greatest source of solidarity between civilians and the military in the North. Everybody wants an end to lawlessness. For the permanent return of peace, Mali requires a reasonable capacity for disciplining those who would break it: which means stronger security forces as we explain in 6.5. Without this capacity for reasonable force, there can be no rule of law. Without effective security forces, the leaders of civil society are

reduced to impotence. Throughout the North, the populations are calling for the return of the authority of the state: which includes administrative authority, moral authority, health and education services, and a strengthening of the security forces.

## 4.2 Mediators Official and Unofficial

This is certainly the most complicated part of the Malian peacemaking story. “Mediation” is a strange function, which may involve many people at different times. The success of mediators often depends on their invisibility, yet the mediation function may be vital for resolving conflict as we show below. Alongside the successful efforts of Algeria, the Official Mediator, many people and institutions have tried, each in a different way, to smooth the troubled waters of the North.

### National Mediators

The first mediators were the Touareg chiefs, many of whom were part of the one-party *nomenklatura* and who therefore found themselves in an uncomfortable position “between the hammer and the anvil”. In July and August 1990 (immediately after the initial June attack on Menaka) several of them actually led Malian army patrols against the “rebel bandits”. Attaher ag Bisada, Chief of the Idnane, had installed his camp in the Oued Alkit, some 20 km from Kidal. While he was away guiding the army patrols, another group of soldiers arrived and accused his family of being “rebels”. Eight of them were forced to dig a common tomb and to climb down into it. Grenades were thrown inside and the Idnane were killed. When later Attaher met the Malian President, Moussa Traore, he took the initiative of asking the head of State not to mention the incident: “We shall draw a line under it. If I am joining you in the negotiations, it means that we must look forwards and not backwards.”

We cannot name all those of good will. We do not know them all. We shall just take a few examples. One of those who organized civil society to create the peace, Zeidane ag Sidalamine was also the man who spoke on behalf of the movements at the 1996 Flame of Peace ceremony in Timbuktu, and who announced their dissolution. As Secretary-General of the FPLA, uninformed observers might think of Zeidane as a “rebel combatant” (certain xenophobic private newspapers certainly took this view). Well, what was a rebel? Zeidane’s contribution to the problems of northern Mali provides a helpful illustration not

only of the peacemakers, but also of how the “rebellion” really grew and of what it was composed.

Zeidane was interviewed in November 1994 by the very interesting Armed Forces’ journal *Frères d’Armes*. Describing himself as a Man of Peace, Zeidane explains that he left his post with the AEN project in Gossi only in 1994. In June 1991, three months after the fall of the dictatorship, Zeidane decided to take a trip into the desert to see the state of the population, and to find out why the cycle of attacks and reprisals was still continuing. This was a brave move, for it was dangerous to approach armed and unpredictable rebels, many of whom were discharged mercenaries from other wars. While many Touaregs had no family links to the rebels, others had clan or class affinity which made it difficult for them to disassociate themselves entirely. Zeidane recognized his links with cousins in the FPLA, but continued to work in the AEN development programme. Early in 1992, he persuaded Rhissa ag Sidi Mohamed, leader of the FPLA to meet the Malian government delegation. Zeidane explains that he and Rhissa disagreed over the 1992 *Pacte National*. Zeidane travelled to Bamako and signed it on behalf of the FPLA. Rhissa only came around to supporting the Pact in 1994, but “since 1992 I have consistently worked for the application of the Pact, which provides a good framework for integration,” says Zeidane (1994, p. 13)

While he himself was working for peace as adviser to certain UN agencies, some of Ibrahim ag Youssouf’s neighbours living in the Niger valley felt obliged to obtain arms in order to defend themselves against the bandits among the rebels (unfortunately the southerners in the army often did not make a difference between rebels from Kidal and peaceful farmers wearing similar turbans). The peacemakers included most of the professionally qualified French speakers like Ibrahim, many of whom worked in government technical services, NGOs and other development programmes. Ibrahim and Zeidane were among those who obtained as their spokesman, the senior and respected Baba Akhib Haidara, named Delegate for the North in 1991, who was one of many exiled Malians who returned to help rebuild a democratic Mali. Baba Akhib travelled to the North, and prepared a submission on the problems of the North for the National Conference. It was presented to the President of the Conference, Lt Col (now General) Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT), but the Conference itself refused to discuss the North: partly because the nascent political parties were reluctant to make statements on such a difficult issue. This explains why the Transition Government decided to seek an alternative to national mediation. Not wishing to “internationalize” the issue, they hit upon the idea of individual mediators.

### International Personalities in the Mediation

One tangible way in which the international community assisted the process of peacemaking was in mediation between the rebel movements and the Malian Government. Mali's Transition Government needed people who could change the debate and create a new dialogue. They invited a tandem composed of the Mauritanian political philosopher (in exile) Ahmed Baba Miské, whose links with the Polisario made him especially valuable as an intermediary with certain Arab rebels, and his colleague Edgar Pisani. This was a shrewd political combination. Algeria's long northern frontier with Mali, and its particular trading proximity to the population of Kidal (where the rebel MPA was based) made it essential to choose a mediator with close ties to Algeria. Baba Miské fitted the description perfectly, without actually being a part of the Algerian political establishment himself.

The advantage of Edgar Pisani was his membership of the French establishment. Having been a French Minister, and later a European Commissioner, his work as Director of the *Institut du Monde Arabe* in Paris provided additional insights into the motivations of those elements of the rebellion (mainly in the FIIA) claiming an Islamic motivation. Pisani's pedigree was especially valuable in terms of his access to the media. The Malian Government was looking for peace, but was also searching for a way to counteract the appallingly bad media coverage which Mali was getting in the French press and radio. It must be said that the Malian military was largely to blame: not only because indiscipline led to civilians being killed by soldiers, but also because the Ministry of Defence was simply terrible at releasing information from the field. Never has the army been more guilty of its nickname *La Grande Muette*, meaning something like "the great silent one" or "a big deaf mute".

In the absence of information, rumours abounded. *Radio France Internationale* was consistently the first on the air with information about trouble in the North: so that the Government was constantly reacting to press reports, pushed onto the defensive. The Transition Government was trapped by its fragility vis-à-vis the army: neither daring to admit military setbacks, nor being able to sanction acts of indiscipline and repression. The movements were not well organized in Europe, but Niger's rebel spokesman Mano Dayak obtained publicity for the Touareg cause through his connections with show business and the Paris-Dakar Rally (he even ran a poster campaign in the Paris Metro). There were also a few French journalists whose love affair with the "blue men of the desert" led them to disseminate rumours of "ethnic discrimination", and even "genocide". French press and radio therefore became, for a while, a source of aggravation, not

of mediation. It is sadly true that terrorism and murder were perpetrated by all parties in the Malian conflict. It is happily true that the conflict never turned into an ethnic war.

Edgar Pisani and Ahmed Baba Miské duly arrived in Mali in 1991, at the end of the rains. They had talks with the authorities, who then deposited them on the summit of a pre-arranged sand dune north of Timbuktu. From there they were collected by rebel units, and taken off for 10 days of negotiations and explanations, before being re-deposited on the same sand dune for collection. Pisani and Miské were instrumental in encouraging the President of the CTSP to make his conciliatory speech of 9 November 1991 in which he made clear that he recognized the necessity of a political solution, and the impossibility of a military solution. This speech and accompanying political pressure from all sides, definitely helped push the movements into signing the *Pacte National* on 11 April 1992.

Ahmed Baba Miské still believes that the 1992 agreement could have worked at that time, if Mali's partners had provided the money and support necessary for the Government to fulfil its side of the Pact. Because the donors were not ready to invest in peace, we had to wait another three years to get the peace that Malians deserved, while several hundred people died or were wounded and tens of thousands remained refugees.

Much of the mediation credit, however, belongs to the amiable General Brehima Siré Traore, who, as a Colonel and Minister of the Interior, signed the Pact on behalf of the Malian Government. Before becoming Minister, Traore had made a number of unofficial missions to meet the rebels and to understand what their problems were. As an airforce officer, he was unconnected with the military losses and excesses on the ground. And his access to aircraft meant that he could move about more freely than most senior people. Traore was a member of the CTSP, the collective presidency of the 1991-92 Transition: as such his informal contacts with the rebels were especially precious, for this was the first time since the fall of the dictatorship that they had been able to air their views to someone "in authority". The exchange of views showed each side that a dialogue was possible: and this was the beginning of the negotiations which led to the signing of the National Pact. His personal contribution and success led to Brehima Siré Traore being named as the first *Commissaire au Nord* in the office of the President, keeping him in the position of principal Malian mediator.

Col Traore's replacement in late 1994 by Police Commissioner (since promoted Police Controller) Mahamadou Diagouraga from Nioro, brought a helpful change of personnel at a moment of extreme tension in the North. Having been Mali's Consul in Tamanrasset, then Ambassador in Algiers, the new *Commissaire au Nord* was one of the few in the military who knew the rebel

leaders individually, and who dared to argue that Mali's rebellion could only be solved through political negotiation.<sup>4</sup> Diagouraga's special skill has been to create the space which has allowed civil society to operate, even though this is a domain with which military officers are not generally familiar. In the words of a United Nations official who has been active in the North: "He has been successful on each occasion, in removing administrative or political obstacles, so as to give each and every idea a chance to succeed..." That is skill indeed, which Diagouraga was able to exert thanks to his political access and to the support he has received from above. We shall meet Mahamadou Diagouraga again below; meanwhile, this is a good moment to consider the role of Algeria as Official Mediator.

### **Bilateral Mediators**

In times of hardship, each pastoral clan has one or two traditional refuge points. Before colonial times, these were open nomadic spaces without fixed frontiers. People from Kidal have always moved northwards. The migrations from Mali after the 1966 repression and the 1974 drought created a Malian refugee population inside Algeria's southern border, many of whom were easily integrated into local Algerian society. Others moved on to Libya and elsewhere. There were said to be more than 10,000 Malians who had stayed more or less permanently in the southern zones of Algeria since the 1970s and their numbers swelled in 1983-84, creating the beginnings of a refugee problem. Apart from the natural bureaucratic desire to control movements of people, goods and arms, Algeria had a growing (and increasingly expensive) problem with smuggling across the frontier into Kidal and Gao of subsidised food and petroleum products. "Refugees from Mali and Niger had become leeches on the Algerian economy," says the leader of one northern Malian NGO, "They needed to encourage the migrants to return home, which explains why Algeria was responsible for creating around 1986 the IFAD programme in Kidal. However, the failures of this project have actually contributed to instability in Kidal." Malian refugees were seen by the Algerian authorities as a potential source of political problems as well as a drain on their national economy and ecology. When armed rebellion swelled the numbers of refugees, the search for a peaceful solution became an Algerian priority.

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<sup>4</sup> The police force was under military control. It was the democratic government which "de-militarized" the police in 1994 and brought it under an Interior Ministry which has had various appellations, but is most commonly known as *Ministère de l'Administration Territoriale*.

In the earliest days of negotiations a cease-fire was agreed, and the Transition Government set up a tripartite *Cease-fire Commission* (CCF). Officers from Algeria, from the Malian military and from the rebel movements patrolled together to ensure that banditry was kept down. In these days of 1991, immediately after the fall of the dictatorship, the Malian authorities had almost no resources available with which to support the CCF. They housed and fed the officers in Gao, but that was all they could manage. Unable to obtain enough fuel to scour the vast countryside for bandits, the officers of the CCF were frustrated. Donors were not prepared to put money into peace-keeping. Of the ten CCF units planned, only four became operational. The principal support for the CCF (vehicles and some fuel) was provided by Algeria, showing its commitment to brokering the peace. The presence of Algerian officers also contributed to restoring a sense of dignity and discipline in the Malian army. Despite their limited resources, the CCF arrested some trouble-makers and did buy a year of peace for Mali.

The military wings of the movements were frequently reluctant to leave the security of their northern bases. Algeria therefore provided convenient neutral territory for contact although negotiations also took place at various times in Mauritania, Niger and Burkina Faso. Many of the secret negotiations took place in Tamanrasset, others in Algiers. The Algerian authorities did plenty of discreet arm-twisting during 1991, bringing the rebels into a joint *Mouvement des Fronts unifiés de l'Azaouad*. As we described in Chapter 3, the MFUA leaders were finally persuaded to agree terms with each other and with Mali's transitional government, and to sign the *Accords d'Alger* and the *Pacte National*.

Given the historical involvement in the Sahara of France, no solution could be envisaged which did not include French advice and support. The French were helpful in unofficial mediation. Although Pisani had no official position, he received comprehensive government briefings in Paris, and again in Bamako from the French diplomatic machine, notably through the experience of Yves Gueymard who had joined the French mission after many years working with NGOs in the north. The French position remained one of counselling constant prudence, advising Mali's political and military authorities to seek a political and not a military solution. Indeed the view was general that a regular army could not "win" against irregular guerrilla fighters. The French later accepted to commit a certain amount of funding to strengthen the security forces, including some desert-specialized *méhariste* camel patrols to cut out the theft of livestock by cross-border raiders (a particular problem in the western parts of Timbuktu Region).

Missions funded by the French Government have been instrumental in the conception of a number of helpful initiatives which have contributed to peacemaking: for example, the initial moves towards decentralization in the North

were based on the *Colléges transitoires d'arrondissement*, or CTA, which emerged from the 1992 French-sponsored consultation mission. The French and the Algerians have been the primary actors in promoting with the United Nations the doctrine of "security first", which argues that, in order to get economic development programmes going again, funds need to be spent on ensuring a stable security environment.

### **Multilateral Mediation Efforts**

The United Nations agencies also played a discreet role as mediators. The United Nations inter-agency mission of November 1992 took a fleet of nine vehicles across the North, at a time when virtually no other vehicle was circulating and when talk was more of fear, than of peace and the relaunching of the Northern economy. This was followed in January 1993 by a French Government mission. The two missions became linked in the minds of the farmers and nomads of the North, who saw them as glimmering lights at the end of the tunnel of violence, drops of oil in the machinery of negotiation.

The subsequent *Journées de Concertation sur les Régions du Nord* in February 1993 were also sponsored by the United Nations family (with FAO taking a leading role): so we cannot say that the United Nations was absent from the mediation process, although it was not at this stage taking a lead. The creation of the *Commission Paritaire* with joint-chairmanship of donors and GRM, emerged from the *Journées de Concertation* and provided the first forum for donor coordination and planning for the North. Perhaps the personalities of the Malian and United Nations leadership did not permit then, the emergence of synergies which we shall see from 1995 onwards (we discuss United Nations leadership and coordination in the next chapter), but there is already in 1992-93 a useful behind-the-scenes influence from the United Nations. Other multilateral sources were fairly mute. The OAU had few resources with which to influence peacemaking, and it is fair to say that Africa's peace-builders had their hands full with the Liberian catastrophe and the brave ECOMOG intervention. Later came the crises in Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire... but these take us too far from Timbuktu.

### The Red Cross and other NGOs

Among negotiators and among NGOs, the ICRC occupies a place which deserves special analysis. Where no one else dares to go, the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies drives in with the Red Cross flag flying high. Their operatives risk their lives. In Mali there were several occasions when ICRC Representatives were detained by rebel groups linked to the FIAA: although no one heard about it because the ICRC likes to keep quiet about such things, the danger was no less real.

For the development agencies, the Red Cross was often a principal source of field information. At the Bamako monthly meetings of “development organizations working in the North”—mainly NGOs whose work was seriously curtailed by the rampant insecurity—the news report that everybody was waiting to hear was the one from the ICRC. At a time when the Government was giving out no information, when everybody was seeking to distil fact from rumour, ICRC representatives were the eyes and the ears of the development community. Sometimes they provided the same service for the *Commissariat au Nord*.

The ICRC worked in the vast band of desert across the north of Timbuktu where few government administrators dared to go. The Red Cross flag on a white Landrover became a symbol of hope and neutrality for nomadic camps surviving at the margins of starvation. The amounts of food and medicine distributed by the Red Cross are minute in donor terms, but arriving in places of dire extremity, these gifts often have greater impact than larger donor food distributions.

“We have to realize that the Flame of Peace is only the start of the peace process”, ICRC Representative Suzanne Hofstetter told us in March 1996, “If the refugees return to poverty and destitution, they may want to take up arms again to steal what they cannot earn. So we must stay and support Malian civil society, strengthen the structures of negotiation, and provide advice and assistance to the development agencies helping the Malian people to relaunch pastoralism and agriculture and create jobs. It would be a great mistake to believe that peace is permanent just because people have stopped shooting.”

This is a variation on the usual theme of ICRC activity. Suzanne has moved beyond the usual Red Cross mandate of negotiation and peacemaking, into the medium-term process of peace-building. We are strong supporters of this innovation: for the work of “relief” must move smoothly into the process of “development”, if we are to avoid the slide backwards into disorder. Therein lies a tale. After the signature of the *Pacte National* in 1992, many people felt that Peace had arrived. One of the major signs for optimism was that the ICRC closed its Malian office. One year later, a new wave of violence flared up and the ICRC

came back. This time they are determined to help Malians build their peace, and we salute their decision to stay on.

Other NGOs have contributed to the unofficial mediation process: both as institutions, and through the individual efforts of their staff members whose families were often at risk, or indeed victims of the violence. These were both Malian and international NGOs and we shall meet them again in Chapter 5. Once the civil society initiative was clearly producing results in 1995, and with coherent leadership from both the GRM and the UNDP, French, Dutch, Swiss, Canadian, American and Norwegian support for the peace process—which had been lacking in 1992—became available. The peace negotiations were long and tricky, but the patience of the Malian people, and the Malian and Algerian authorities won through. On 27 March 1996 at the Flame of Peace ceremony, they were all present to hear the representative of Algeria, the Official Mediator, accept the honour of making the opening speech to celebrate peace.

### **4.3 The *Commissariat au Nord* and the Decentralization of Governance**

The promise, in the 1992 National Pact, of a significant degree of autonomy for the North, a “special status”, caused a good deal of unease in Mali mainly because its meaning had not been defined. No one denied the need to reform the socio-political structures of governance, but the creation of the Region of Kidal with such a tiny population, and satisfaction of demands for greater autonomy for the three northern Regions, were difficult to sell in the south. The re-organization of the North was made politically acceptable in the rest of Mali by the commitment of the elected democratic government to decentralize the whole of Mali. For northerners, the reorganization of governance and the good faith of the Malian Government with regard to the National Pact, were given substance by the creation under the President, of a Commissariat with responsibility for implementing the Pact.

The concept of decentralization is of great importance as a background framework for the Malian peace process. The political innovation of Mali’s Third Republic is that President Konaré is seeking to build not just a strong State, but an open State. Decentralization is a mechanism which will allow people to take part in decision-making, and oblige them to take responsibility for conflict-management practice, strategy and theory. No one knows quite how it will work out, but people must make it work themselves, no longer remaining dependent on

administrative or military institutions. This is the contrary of the one party State: in an open State, the people are no longer powerless to act. The content of decentralization is explained in the following paragraphs taken from the official government documents prepared for the Timbuktu Round Table:

The general objective of decentralization implies, at the political level, the transfer of power to institutions elected by the people, so that local affairs may be taken over and run by the population itself. On the economic level, decentralization will multiply the number of decision centres for economic management: which naturally implies independent access to resources. As a result, new approaches will evolve in relationships with development partners. At the sociocultural level, decentralization will create a new relationship between the citizens and the administration (GRM 1995, vol. 1, p. 51).

Decentralization should play an important role in ensuring that northern Malians feel more involved in the democratic process, and less dependent on the centralized administration. During the period of transition (which lasted precisely from 26 March 1991 until 8 June 1992), people were already preparing the concepts and legal instruments for decentralization, perceived as the best route for obtaining the political participation of the people. African experience of the one-party State has instilled doubts, even cynicism about political leaders. Mali's ruling party, Adema is regularly accused in the opposition press of behaving like a *Parti unique*. Every new appointment is assumed to be nepotistic or benefitting Adema supporters; and even where the accusation is obviously untrue, the atmosphere of permanent suspicion means that there is enormous pressure on the Government not to make changes. The result is that many corrupt administrators continue an untroubled existence. And then there is the enormous weight of "social capital": the conservative strength of Mali's inter-cultural linkages which has promoted peace, also provides disincentives to make people unhappy by disciplining them. Once there are significant numbers of local government posts which depend on decentralized elected bodies, nepotism will be decentralized. Electors will have a greater chance of being the judges (and the beneficiaries) of the accusations and of the accused.

Decentralization is the strategy chosen by the Konaré regime for promoting human development and self-sustaining growth. It is an ambitious policy. Even visionary. Years of centralized planning led nowhere, the culture of the *patron state* and the *providential state*, added to the effects of drought, reduced people to feeling powerless to take decisions. In any case there are no longer the resources available to maintain the debt-based fiction of the "Cold War post-colonial State", except in countries which have oil resources to squander. Most of Africa's States will flourish in the 21st century only if they are able to reconcile the need for

broader economic or monetary unions with the pressure from local groups to assume their cultural identities. Decentralization is the new framework which will make people responsible for their own lives, for mobilizing national resources and using them locally for productive investment.

Unlike the tentative measures seen in some countries—which resemble rather the “deconcentration” of administrative power—the Malian government appears to be serious about the transfer of power in 1998 to 682 locally elected rural *Communes* and 19 urban *Communes*, as well as *Conseils* for the Cercle and Region.<sup>5</sup> The intention is that local authorities will have powers over land-use and investment policies in their area (although the raising and sharing of taxation is still an important area of argument). “Decentralization” as a concept for Mali dates back to 1976, but the one-party State lost sight of the democratic element crucial for a decentralization experiment, and allowed the centralized administration to take control of Party appointments at the local level. The 1991 National Conference can be seen as a “second step” in Mali’s approach towards decentralization, and the National Pact was step number three. It remains to be seen whether the maintenance of administrative power centres after 1997 will actually stifle the final step, and kill off decentralized decision-making before local elected officials can take power. Given the history of the Malian administration (see Chapter 2.1), we may wonder if the political authorities have taken sufficiently radical action to ensure the success of decentralization. This does not mean that we doubt the sincerity of those who have conceived the policy, and there is no doubt whatever that decentralization has already changed the dynamics of political ownership in the North.

The creation in the President’s office of the *Commissariat au Nord* was a gesture in the direction of the special status of the North, and at the same time a half-step towards decentralization. The success of the Commissariat has been its facilitating, negotiating role. The nomination in 1992 of Colonel Brehima Siré Traore (who had been Minister of the Interior and of Internal Security) as the first *Commissaire* brought seniority and negotiating experience to the post and reassured the army. But Mali’s partners remained distant. The resources were not available for Commissioner Traore to bring about the successful integration into the army of the ex-combatants. It is a statistical fact that donors were very slow to provide financial proof of their presumed support of Mali’s democratic

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<sup>5</sup> The text of the National Pact (printed in Annex 2) contains a blueprint for decentralization in the North. Since it is so important for winning the peace, we shall return to implementation of the decentralization policy in several sections of Chapter 6.

government. Traore was replaced in 1994 by Police Controller Diagouraga whom we shall meet throughout the peacemaking process.

#### 4.4 Making Space for Civil Society

While the United Nations' support for the *Commissariat au Nord* was valuable, the most important lesson of the Malian peace process is precisely that it was Malian. It was never a United Nations peace operation, nor was it intended to be. There was a moment in early 1995 when a slightly increased United Nations activity was proposed. After the failure of the first attempt to integrate ex-combatants into the national army, some actors perceived a need to improve incentives for the "integrated units". The idea was to provide prestigious specialist training in desert peace-keeping: the units could then be valuable to the United Nations or the Organization of African Unity (the French government was initiating discussions at that time about a permanent African peace-keeping force). Informal contacts indicated that the Canadians and Moroccans might be interested in providing experienced United Nations blue beret officers to provide peace-keeping training to selected Malian army units in Timbuktu and Gao. The United Nations Secretariat in New York expressed reservations of a political and financial nature, but the idea was making headway.

President Konaré, however, was convinced that there should be no new government initiatives "until we have given time for civil society to work out a solution". To provide both time and space for this, the Malian Government redeployed its uniformed forces, withdrawing to the South all those units which had been involved in aggression or repression. This was accepted by the movements as a positive response to the National Pact demands for the demilitarization of the North, and led directly to the process of negotiation through civil society which we shall describe in the next section.

The hallmark of Mali's democratic Third Republic has been the constant desire to consult with civil society. We have described the bridges which were built to restore confidence and dialogue between the civilian and military parts of the Malian nation, and this is the place to describe the bridges which have been used to promote confidence between Government and the people (as represented by the multifarious components of civil society). The repeated return to popular debate is not simply a political gambit used by the democratic government to demonstrate that the one-party State is a thing of the past. There is a clear undercurrent of belief among ministers and opinion leaders that West African

democratic governance consists of more than western-style confrontational elections.

Debate and discussion are the very essence of West African governance. The power of the Word, *kuma*, in Manding culture is of great importance: in the village council, under the palaver tree, the Word passes to every person in turn, starting with the eldest. Meetings may take a long time. Repetition of the Word is stylistically admired in West Africa. Repetition strengthens the message, reinforces consensus-building within the community. Everybody may not agree, but everybody will be heard before a decision is taken. This irritates a lot of western visitors to Africa, yet it is fundamental to understanding the nature of democratic governance and the Malian Model of Democracy.

The August 1991 National Conference was the first and most important demonstration that the palaver tree tradition can be rendered democratic and modern. It was well-organized, lasting exactly the planned two weeks (some neighbouring countries allowed their National Conference to drag on for months, and one country never finished it at all). Mali's National Conference gave instructions that a series of sectoral consultations, or *Journées nationales*, should be held: for the rural population, for women, for education, etc. They were open to all citizens, and we attended several of them. Although all were held in Bamako, every region was represented by delegations composed of civil society leaders and administrative authorities funded (transport, food and lodging) by the central government. This series of conferences did constitute a real process of democratic consultation between the authorities of the new regime and the people of Mali.

By the start of 1994, however, Mali's democratic experiment was in dire straits. The security situation in the North was looking terrible, and the movements criticized the authorities over the slow application of the terms of the National Pact of April 1992. In Bamako, the Government was having to face up to unrealistic hopes raised by the euphoria of 1991, when every pressure group believed it could demand the moon and receive the stars as well. Student and youth leaders were being manipulated (some were even being paid) by political opposition factions, while the soldiers' union (described earlier) was a menace to discipline within the armed forces. Student strikes and arson were weekly occurrences. The Government could not control the political debate: the agenda was set by Bamako-based groups using organs of the free press and local radio which were far from "free" in terms of funding, ideas and objectives. It is an irony of "multi-party democracy" in Africa that the proportion of votes received in national elections does not seem to bear any relationship to the influence a party may wield in the subsequent political debate.

In February 1994, President Alpha Oumar Konaré appointed his third Prime Minister in 20 months. It is no exaggeration to say that, had he failed to stop the rot, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita would probably have been the last.<sup>6</sup> AOK and IBK succeeded in regaining the initiative through an astute combination of firm leadership and broader consultation, by taking the debate back to the people who had elected Alpha as President. “By appealing to civil society, (the Prime Minister) changed the terms of the political debate, getting away from a sterile confrontation between political parties whose members were motivated solely by personal ambition” (Diarrah 1996, p. 286). Through the Regional Concertations of August 1994, they side-stepped the Bamako-based cliques, mobilizing in their place the voice and wisdom of civil society in every region: “local representatives of political parties, the public administration, traditional and religious leaders, rural and urban associations, social partners and professional organizations” (to quote the Government’s list of invitees). In his message of 8 June 1994 (the second anniversary of his swearing-in as the first President of Mali’s Third Republic), the President emphasized his commitment to traditional forms of consultation:

On June 8th, 1992, I said that the word “concertation” would guide our policies. Faced with the numerous disturbances and the violence, both physical and verbal, which have characterized the past two years, I could have chosen alternative policies to those of dialogue and consensus. If I had done so, the Third Republic would not have built up that comparative peace of mind and heart, which now enable Malian citizens to consider the future with greater serenity than was possible two years ago.

Let me repeat again today, the pride that I feel to be at the head of a Nation which has made tolerance and dialogue its cardinal virtues. As a modern State, Mali needs to add to its ancestral heritage of dialogue, a modern institutional infrastructure which demonstrates that there is a real democratic process taking place....

With this in mind, I shall ask my government to organize a series of regional “Concertations” in which every current of opinion will be able to express its views. Each participant will be invited to contribute to the debate, seeking to define solutions for tomorrow’s problems. Our purpose will exclude systematic opposition to the ideas of others; nor will there be room for narrow sectoral demands. The government will bring to the discussion both its point of view, and its proposals for change: and together we shall seek the

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<sup>6</sup> The first Prime Minister, the banker Younoussi Touré was appointed on 8 June 1992 and resigned on 9 April 1993. He was succeeded by a lawyer, Abdoulaye Sékou Sow who resigned on 2 February 1994. For a lucid description of this period, and of the governments’ failures of vision, crisis management and policy communication see C.O.Diarrah 1996, pp. 276-85.

necessary consensus to achieve the transformations which we have started (GRM, Synthèse Nationale, 1994).

The *Concertations* lasted three days in every region and in each commune of Bamako, under the chairmanship of two or three ministers. It was a remarkable exercise in African popular democracy: a series of 17 conferences involving 2,786 people. This tipped the balance of political debate away from Bamako and the political parties, and back to the population and civil society. A national consensus emerged notably on the need to re-start schools and colleges, on the problems of the North and the indivisibility of Mali, and on the need to re-establish the authority of the State, allowing the Government to take a stronger line with the students, and opening the path for civil society to continue the process of dialogue in favour of peace in the North.

Before we describe the many dozens of meetings in favour of peace which took place during 1995 and 1996, it will be useful to define civil society, and its role in Mali's new system of democratic governance.

We define civil society as "those citizens who form themselves into associations to promote an interest which does not include seeking or exercising political power." The individual is part of society, but does not by himself form part of "civil society": to do so, he must join an organized group such as cooperatives, associations (including village associations, women's groups, youth groups, NGOs), mutualist insurance, savings or credit groups, social enterprises (such as economic partnerships like the *GIE*), religious associations (but not religion itself<sup>7</sup>), human rights associations, trade unions, professional associations. Private companies (including newspapers) may, like individual citizens, participate in civil society by joining a professional association such as the Chamber of

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<sup>7</sup> The composition of civil society is not the same in every culture. Commercial lobbyists in USA are usually excluded, whereas social pressure groups are included: in Mali such a distinction seems inappropriate. We argue below that village and clan leaders in Mali are leaders of traditional civil society, and this must include the Imam. Madson (1995) says that the churches cannot be part of civil society although de Tocqueville argued otherwise for USA. In Mali, we believe that religion cannot be part of civil society; but religious associations are recognized as so being. For example the CENI *Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante*, created by law on 8 January 1997, has 30 members of whom 8 are administrative, 14 political, 8 from civil society having 1 each from: the Islamic association (AMUPI), the Catholic Church, the Protestant association (AGEMPEN), the Malian Bar Association, two human rights associations, the magistrates' union, the coordination of women's organizations (CAFO).

Commerce, the Federation of Artisans, a union of journalists or a Press Association.

Civil society is especially important for expressing the voice of women, whose ideas are seldom heard as stridently as those of their husbands and brothers. We have argued (1.4) that women hold a pre-eminent place in the family and clan structure, within traditional civil society. But they tend to lose out in regional and national politics which occupy a different social and political space, and where their voice is often missing from the debate. The argument is advanced that women in West Africa occupy such a dominant role inside the family (which is the primary structure of Malian society), that they actually diminish their influence if they take the public platform. But changing times require changing habits. In the six short years since Malians gained the right of association (after the 1991 revolution), the country has been fortunate in the emergence of ever-stronger women's groups: ranging from well-organized urban groups such as the coordination of women's organizations (CAFO), the Bamako environment cooperative (COFEM), the women's peace movement (MFSPUN), professional associations like the association of women traders (AFC) and the association of women lawyers (AFJ), through numerous women's NGOs working particularly in education, health and family planning, to an increasingly wide network of mutualist health centres and savings banks reaching deep into rural communities where most women have never had the opportunity to learn to read.

The civil and uniformed administrations, like the government and the political parties, are excluded from our definition of civil society because they exercise (or in the case of opposition parties, they seek to exercise) power. In the particular case of West Africa, we consider village councils chaired by the chief, or *dugu tigi*, as part of civil society because their exercise of administrative power emerges from their place in the community: every head of family and each member of the senior age-group is automatically a part of the council. This creates an interesting dichotomy, a creative tension and synergy between "modern" civil society (largely, although not entirely, a product of the urban environment) and "traditional" civil society (composed of village councils, hunters' associations, ecological protection and environmental-management units, age-groups for both men and women which have important functions in education, initiation and mutual self-help).

This interpretation is supported by the eminent historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo (1996), interviewed on the subject of traditional chiefs, "Since they are not, in the strict sense, a part of the political classes, the Chiefs today are rather a part of civil society on the same level as trade unions, religious hierarchies and professional associations."

Mali's new decentralized structure, the rural commune, will be an elected body and therefore of a different nature entirely. The *Commune* will replace the lowest level of centralized government control, the *Arrondissement* (below the *Cercle*, of which there are about five in each of Mali's eight regions). Like the existing urban communes with their elected Mayor and Councillors, the elected rural commune will be exercising political power and cannot be considered as part of civil society.

In the North of Mali during 1995, the Government installed 31 intermediary bodies known as *Collèges transitoires d'arrondissement* (CTA). These are a sort of hybrid body, half civil society and half not: composed in each case of appointed worthies drawn from civil society, but not from the political parties as such. The 1995 document published by the *Commissariat au Nord* describing the role of the CTA states clearly that it is the "sole intermediary for development partners, in order that the populations' needs shall be better taken into account. The populations... shall meet freely to choose (and not to elect) between five and fifteen persons in whom they have confidence."

The CTAs had very little impact on the peace process. If anything it was the other way around: some of those who distinguished themselves as peacemakers were appointed to the *Collèges transitoires*. The peace negotiations that we are about to describe, truly emerged through civil society: a symbiosis between the community leaders of what we have called "traditional" civil society, and younger leaders in the "modern" civil society, including local and international NGOs well-established in the North.

#### 4.5 Half a Hundred Community Meetings

A meeting of 500 or 1,000 Songhoy and Touareg agro-pastoralists is a pretty spectacular event. The colours of their turbans range from traditional dark indigo (the "blue men of the desert") through luminous blues and greens, to bright turquoise and orange and yellow. The elders and the religious leaders tend to favour sober white turbans, and white robes embroidered with gold or grey designs, while younger men go for style and splash. Women in this Saharan culture stay with simple colours. Men dress up like peacocks! Women are usually present at the assemblies of the North, but they are women of the host locality, especially old women who have the status to speak for the group. Women run and control the family. Only men can afford the time to travel two days on the back of a camel to attend a meeting.

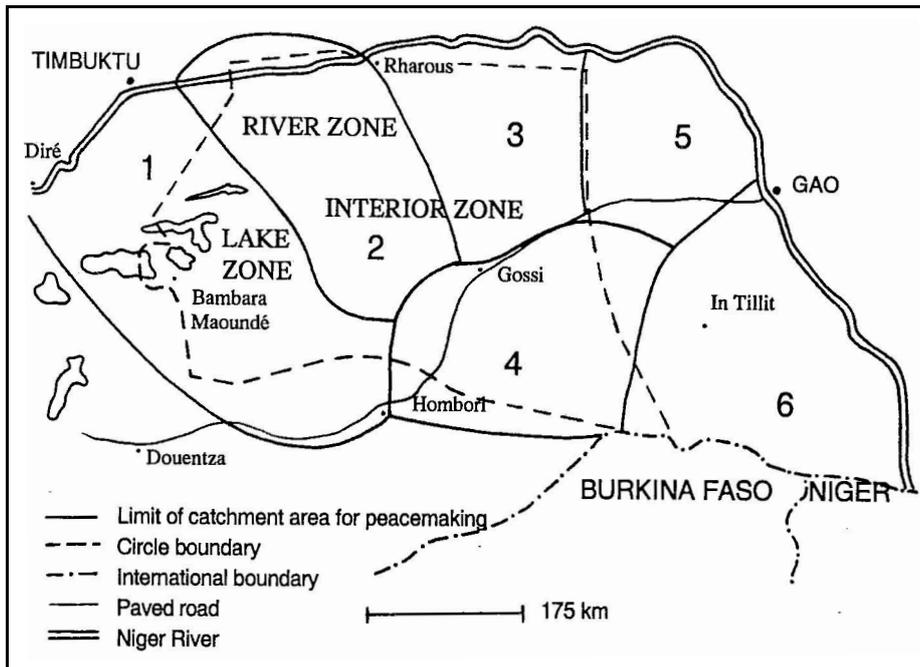
Many dozens of such gatherings, some smaller, some larger, prepared the return of order and peace in Mali's northern regions. These were not meetings organized by the Government. Instead, the impetus came from the leaders of civil society, and their initiatives became reality with the assistance of a number of NGOs. The armed rebellion was launched by men who had long been absent from Mali, who were not yet re-integrated in society (even in their own families). The slow and patient peace negotiations were part of the process of their re-integration into the community. They are described in two booklets written by one of the key facilitators of the process, Kare Lode (1996 and 1997), from which we have taken much of what follows in the present section.

Kare Lode's first book records 38 meetings organized with local community leaders of Malian civil society during 1995 and 1996 (see Annex 1). But many more were organized outside the "official" civil society programme. Some gatherings were sponsored on an *ad hoc* basis by other NGOs such as Oxfam, ACORD and World Vision or the *Fondation pour le Nord*. Other smaller groupings were stimulated by local initiative or by a local NGO such as GARI (in Menaka) or Tassaght (in Djebok), or women's groups like APIF in Gao, the women's cooperative of Tessalit or the sewing school of Pastor Nok Yattara in Timbuktu. The NGOs took, as their starting point, the weekly market where nomads and farmers meet and trade. The meetings brought together leaders of the armed movements with sedentary and nomadic community and religious elders to work out specific problems: such as how firearms might be controlled in each district, how goods might be assured safe conduct in order to restart commercial activities in the area, or how refugees could be integrated after five years of distrust and fear. Points which had been the exclusive domain of the one-party State were now debated as a part of the responsibility of the local community: such as mediation over the use of land and water and pastures, and interventions to reduce violence and armed robbery. Many participants said that this was the first time in history that they had met to discuss such issues without being manipulated.

We have mentioned that the meetings involved all the communities which trade together at the same weekly market. This is an important detail, and it is critical to understanding the success of the negotiation process. We insisted earlier on the integration of agro-pastoral activities in the northern economy, described in Chapter 2 and illustrated by the experiences of the FAO engineer Bathily when he worked on the Bend of the Niger with the twin communities of Hama Koulagi and Tin Aouker. The borders of the administrative units shown on our map of the Gourma (Map 4.1, see for example Rharous Cercle), tend to run parallel to the river: a legacy, as we described in Chapter 2.3, of the French naval conquest, with its denial of the essential complementarity which exists between the herding and

cropping economic systems. The Gourma map is taken from Kare Lode's book. It shows that the catchment areas for peacemaking meetings were quite different from administrative boundaries. The elected parliamentary deputies initially did not always support the NGO peacemaking initiative, for their political constituencies (and power-base) correspond to the colonial administrative Cercle. To take only the example of the Bambara Maoundé meeting (No 1 on the list in Annex 1): the organizers brought together communities from four or five Cercles. This meeting was organized by Nok ag Agtia of Diré (on the Timbuktu side of the river) but included the *Chef d'Arrondissement* of Boni near Hombori, which is not in Timbuktu Region at all, but under the administration of Mopti. The catchment areas were based only on communal and economic ties.

**Map 4.1: The Gourma (taken from Kare Lode 1996, Annex 6.6, from a sketch by Ibrahim ag Youssouf)**



An article in the Guardian observed:

By 1994, the population was fed up with the “rebels”, wanting peace. No one knew this better than the armed movements themselves. They participated actively in a year of patient negotiations across the north, where village elders, religious and community leaders, the leaders of civil society held palavers on a dozen tricky issues such as how to control arms, how to welcome back the refugees, how to re-integrate fighters... (Lacville 1996).

It is some of these very leaders who took the initiative to invite Kare Lode to return to Mali. Lode had been Director of the Norwegian Church Aid (AEN) programme in Gossi, in the Gourma area south of the Bend of the Niger. He had personal knowledge of the problems and culture of the area (he is fluent in Fulfuldé), and had worked with some of the leaders, notably Zahaby (FIAA), Zeidane (FPLA) and ag Erlaf (Minister of Employment and of the Civil Service, and later Minister of Transport and Public Works during 1992-97). AEN paid for Lode to spend the better part of a year in Mali, where he became the coordinator of an informal group under the protection of the *Commissariat au Nord*.<sup>8</sup> This special unit included the two chief Assistants of the Commissioner (Aghatam ag Alhassane, and Abacar Sidibé who had by this time left the Commissariat) and two leading actors in the civil society of the North, Zeidane ag Sidalamine (once head of training of AEN, become Secretary-General of the FPLA) and Ibrahim ag Youssouf (a UNDP consultant for the North). It was the last two who designed the strategy which enabled this group to mobilize civil society for peace.

Organizing meetings costs money. Some of these community meetings had up to 1,000 participants, and although there is no hotel to pay for, even hardy nomads need to eat and drink. To help the process of negotiation, a “lubricating fund” of around \$90,000 was provided by donor governments and NGOs. Some Touaregs arrived on camels, others in Landrovers. Some needed diesel fuel. All needed to be fed. For a Sahelian conference you must at least kill some sheep, provide bread or rice, tobacco and lots of sweet green tea. Sometimes, in the cause of peace, the money paid for new tyres or a camel saddle. None of the meetings cost the NGOs more than \$5,000. Local civil society invested a lot more than the external NGOs. The first NGO-sponsored negotiation we have recorded was entirely funded by

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<sup>8</sup> AEN financed the group through a Norwegian government grant and internal resources, making it possible to hire Kare Lode as project coordinator. Before Lode’s arrival, AEN Director in Mali, Terje Eltervag had several times acted as an informal go-between in negotiations. The AEN Regional Director Njell Lofthus participated in a mediation role in the 19 December 1994 hearing at the European Parliament in Brussels on the conflict in northern Mali.

local people of Tinabao (Menaka) in June 1994, on the initiative of GARI. What is clear, is that preventive diplomacy can be inexpensive.

Lode's group tested their model in October 1995 with three meetings in the Gourma at Bambara Maoundé, Gossi and Mandiakoy. The cost was 4.5 million Fcfa for the three meetings (a mere \$9,000 US). The success of these three enabled AEN to persuade the Norwegian Government to put up an additional 14 million francs (\$28,000) to keep the momentum going. Further support was proposed by the German, Canadian and Swiss for a total of 38 million Fcfa (\$76,000), and to this end they created jointly FAR-Nord (*Fonds d'aide pour la réconciliation et la consolidation de la paix dans le Nord du Mali*).

The FAR-Nord shows how simple, flexible and effective "good aid" can be. It was agreed that Lode would supply monthly reports, and that proof of expenditure would consist of the following:

- a contract serving also as a receipt for the money signed by the organiser of the meeting and by Lode, witnessed by a local government official;
- a list of attendance;
- a signed report of all the decisions taken at the meeting; and
- any other interesting document (but not a financial account).

Organizers were chosen by Lode's group on the basis of personal reputation and independence. Several were teachers. One absconded with the money: the communities were so incensed that they sent people after the thief. Meanwhile they organised a collection to make up the sum of money themselves, to save their reputation and honour. Theirs was a very successful meeting. In several areas, additional cash sums were contributed by the agro-pastoralists to ensure the success of the negotiation. Many people contributed a goat or some millet to promote the spirit of reconciliation. By the end of March 1996, Lode was organizing "consolidation meetings". The essential task of discussion and reconciliation had been achieved in half a year, reintegrating the armed movements psychologically into their communities. All that remained was their physical integration (and disarming through the cantonment process), and the institutional disintegration of the rebel movements, elegantly arranged to take place in Timbuktu, spiritual centre of North Mali.

Ghana's president was the guest-of-honour in Timbuktu on 27 March 1996, when Mali's President Konaré and a distinguished international cast gathered in front of the pyramid of weapons handed in by the ex-combatants. A huge roar of applause echoed around the sand dunes as the spokesman for all the five armed movements, Zeidane ag Sidalamine (of the former FPLA), announced their formal

dissolution. He handed the signed document to President Alpha Konaré, shook hands with President Jerry Rawlings, and together they lit what became known as “the Flame of Peace”, turning the arms of destruction into a symbol of reconstruction. The cantonment process through which these weapons were collected is described in the following section.

It is the Presidency which had control of government policy for the North: it is therefore to the Presidency which we must give a large share of the credit for the success of the peacemaking. It was President Konaré who insisted on giving time and space to civil society to create dialogue and reconciliation. To this end, he organized the withdrawal from the North of the army units which had committed atrocities during 1994, and confined many of the rest to barracks. He insisted that regional authorities should support, but not interfere with the work of civil society. At the start, the meetings took place without government representatives. Later they joined the peace movement, and we had the pleasant spectacle of the Regional Governor sitting quietly in the audience, listening. A change from the military model of the previous regime when the Governor was either absent, or dominant. President Konaré’s support for the process allowed the relaunching of civil society, which had been paralysed by the months of insecurity. The result was a symbiotic partnership between NGOs and community leaders, and the dissident movements. It is on this continuing partnership, with support from Government and donors, that the future peace and development of the North depends.

We shall end this section with the words of Mahamadou Diagouraga, the *Commissaire au Nord* whose tact and diplomacy did so much to create the conditions for community peace-making:

Born of the spirit of national consensus in the regional *Concertations*, the inter-communal meetings in the regions of northern Mali, discussing reconciliation and the consolidation of peace, have generously illustrated the commitment to peace of civil society and of the other actors involved, and more specifically their commitment:

- to restoring confidence between the various communities
- to re-establishing dialogue on the basis of alliances and complementarities between ethnic groups
- to reinforcing the dynamics of peace and reconciliation
- to re-establishing trade and supply routes through the re-opening of markets
- to struggle against all forms of violence.

(Preface to Lode 1996)

## 4.6 The Cantonment Policy

While the community meetings were being held to promote and strengthen civil society, the process of cantonment for the ex-combatants had begun in November 1995. This was an activity for which not one single donor was willing to provide funding. Only the UNDP provided encouragement. Western donors had decided at the Timbuktu *Rencontre* of July 1995 to ask the Malian Government to fund the cantonment phase, as a concrete sign of their determination to see the demobilization process to its conclusion. “We had to scrape the bottom of the drawers containing counterpart funds, just to find the money to feed them”, says the *Commissaire au Nord*, Mahamadou Diagouraga, smiling wryly at his memories of hard debates with the harassed Minister of Finance. The Commissioner went visiting the cantonment sites with the UNDP Resident Representative and some of his colleagues: notably Oumar Sacko, “the pillar of the PAREM” and Djédi Sylla, architect of UNDP’s human development strategies for North Mali. They were distressed to discover the poor quality of the cantonment accommodation. There was barely enough food and green mint tea. Fortunately the cantonment candidates were used to a nomadic existence, often in the more difficult circumstances of foreign wars. Morale was surprisingly good, both among the ex-combatants and among the Malian military who were supervising and training them. The Armed Forces Minister had invested in a few televisions (and a video machine for the biggest camp at Léré), footballs, and basic training to prepare the recruits for integration into the Malian uniformed forces. Given the paucity of the resources available (and the lack of donor support for this critical action of Mali’s democracy), the success of the cantonment process is a tribute to the good will of all the Malians involved.

After the tragic death in a motor accident of the former Minister Boubacar Sada Sy, his successor as *Ministre des Forces Armées et des Anciens Combattants* (Minister of the Armed Forces and Veterans or MFAAC), Mamadou Ba, inherited the difficult cantonment dossier, with figures of 9,000 potential candidates and 5 billion Fcfa in costs. Without admitting that this might pose a problem, the new Minister asked if the candidates could actually be identified. A mission was sent out to find the candidates for demobilization from the armed movements, and it found fewer than 2,000. The movements protested that “the combatants are not here just now”. So a second mission went out and came back with similar figures. The authorities now had an idea of the real scale of the operation. The Minister had the costs recalculated on the basis of a maximum of 3,000, coming up with the figure of 900 million Fcfa. At this stage emerged the concept of identifying two

types of combatants: those with arms and those without arms. In the end, many more unarmed men (and even a few women) turned up to seek integration through the civilian programme, PAREM (see 4.8 below), an expression of the political ambitions of new leaders who have been birthed by the MFUA.

The cantonments were set up in Léré, Bourem, Menaka and Kidal, four well-spaced towns corresponding approximately to the clan and recruitment areas of the four MFUA movements. To be accepted in one of the four cantonments, each man had to surrender a firearm. This had the dual purpose of reducing insecurity by bringing in the small arms, and of making sure that most of the cantonment candidates really were combatants. Once the ex-combatants were in the cantonment areas, the rebel bases were closed. Now work could begin on integrating these young men into society, either by recruitment into the uniformed forces or by their return to socio-economic civilian activity. And the new Minister insisted on a first stage of social integration: unlike in 1992, all elements were to live and mix together in the cantonment, as they would be expected to do in the armed forces. There were to be no separate tents or lodgings for separate family, clan, language or movement affiliations. This rule turned out to be one of the biggest successes of the cantonment system, ensuring camaraderie and sharing, even in difficult circumstances.

The Government's main supporter was the United Nations. Though the cantonment operation was financed by the Government, the UN Trust Fund paid a demobilization premium: \$200 each to the 3,000 who had surrendered their arms, and \$100 each to the approximately 7,000 other ex-combatants without arms, later identified by the movements (to PAREM), but who had not passed through the cantonment process (Rose 1996, p. 4). The PAREM figures show in fact that, for political reasons, the GRM was persuaded to accept something close to the movements' original figure of 9,000 ex-combatants.<sup>9</sup> Some ex-combatants surrendered an elderly rifle, others produced an AK-47. Colonel Sadio Gassama, president of the demobilization commission and Chief of Staff of the Army, realized that a certain flexibility was needed to encourage a maximum of young men to come forward and to recuperate the widest possible range of arms. Not

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<sup>9</sup> In a communication to the United Nations dated 31 October 1996, for the *Conférence sur le Désarmement et la Prévention des Conflits* in Bamako in November 1996, the President of Mali's *National Commission on Light Weapons CNLPAL*, Lt Col Sirakoro Sangaré cited the following figures: "As of today, out of an initial figure of 9,000 combatants (figure given by the ex-MFUA) which became 11,000 including numbers from the ex-MPGK and ended up at 11,645 for all the five movements together: 2,078 of them have been integrated (or are in the process of integration) into the uniformed forces."

everyone had a personal weapon to give in, but for a machine gun with a tripod, he accepted three candidates for cantonment, a mortar was worth five.

The advantages of cantonment for the individual were free food and training, a bit of money (20,000 Fcfa per month during training), and the chance of a job with the Malian Government. In these times of IMF restrictions, there is no recruitment into the civilian or armed services and cantonment was therefore attractive. The days are past when a diploma led automatically to a government salary and pension. This is vivid proof of Africa's progress because at independence and for many years afterwards, the government services were understaffed. Later they were overstaffed. Today there is competition for places, while opportunities exist outside the Government for young African men and women to use their skills and initiative in the private sector or the social sector which, at least in Mali, are booming. But government service still appears attractive, and therefore cantonment had real appeal, notably to unemployed young men whose lifestyle suited them for a career in the uniformed forces.

Cantonment started on 15 November 1995 and was expected to last four weeks. The lists were actually closed on 10 January 1996, eight weeks later. At first there was barely a trickle of candidates, larger numbers arrived later as confidence was built. This is common to cantonment experiences elsewhere: levels of aggression and suspicion have often been much greater than in Mali (see for example the Zimbabwe cantonment experience described in UNIDIR 1995/41). Commanders send in a handful of volunteers to test out the sincerity of the authorities. Larger numbers arrive later. The Malian Government twice decided to extend the cantonment deadline, before moving the process on and into "integration".

In the case of Mali, the success of cantonment was linked to the success of civil society peacemaking. "The meetings favoured the disarmament of rebel soldiers," Kare Lode told us, "In the case of Talataye we know that a number of armed combatants were convinced at the meeting that the peace was real, with the result that 82 of them went to the cantonment camp to deliver their arms. Even the organizing of the meeting was a positive factor: in many cases armed robbery in the area had stopped completely by the time the meetings were held, and the local market reopened immediately afterwards."

In line with their suspected real manpower, the four movements sent in very different numbers of men with small arms.

**Table 4.1: Numbers in the Cantonments at 5 January 1996**

	Léré	Ménaka	Bourem	Kidal	Total
MPA	458	nil	nil	620	1,078
FPLA	26	270	66	50	412
FIAA	140	nil	70	nil	210
ARLA	32	95	101	nil	228
MPGK	405	163	185	nil	753
<b>Total</b>	1,061	528	422	670	2,681

*Source:* Ministère des Forces armées et des anciens combattants.

The selection process for integration into the uniformed forces began on 12 January 1996. For the previous two months, an Integration Commission under the chairmanship of Lt Colonel Seydou Traoré (formerly Governor of Timbuktu) had been working on the rules and selection criteria for integrating ex-combatants into either the uniformed forces or, in the case of those few qualified for a francophone administrative career, into the civilian public service. In 1992, it had been the movements who selected their people. That was a mistake. Although the Commission insisted that the movements should agree on the allocation between them of the numbers, criteria for acceptance were negotiated with the Malian authorities. Col Traoré's team included ministries and movements and the general staff of each of the armed forces, and they thrashed out together a common set of criteria: medical and physical, age and experience, education and aptitude, proof of Malian nationality, etc.

If there is a criticism of the cantonment process, it is that it was allowed to drag on effectively into February 1996. No one had really planned what to do with these young men, between their arrival with a weapon and their actual recruitment into a Malian service. In fact, Col Gassama put a sudden end to the cantonments when he sensed, during a visit to Ménaka, that the limits of frustration were near (this was expressed in various ways to reporters from the government newspaper ESSOR: see Konaté and Sissoko 1996). After four months of playing football and watching videos in the cantonments, some 1,500 men were selected for integration into the uniformed forces. They then received a further 6 months of basic military training, to turn them into Malian military men. Finally a group of 1,479 took their

oath of allegiance before the national flag on 22 September 1996, the 36th anniversary of Mali's independence.

A further 150 were approved for the civil service (although one was later refused when it was found that he had been dismissed some years previously for misuse of funds). The remainder were allowed to leave the cantonments after 4 months, with a demobilisation premium of 55,000 Fcfa and the promise that they would receive help from PAREM (described in section 4.8) to re-enter civilian life. Some of these men are disappointed, failed candidates for the army or the police. Ex-soldiers in any country cause difficult social problems. Some old soldiers never manage to settle down to a quiet domestic routine. If there is a threat to stability in the North, it is likely to come from this group of potential highway robbers who have been handed on to PAREM.

**Table 4.2: Numbers Integrated into the Public Services<sup>10</sup>**

Service	Number
Armed forces	1,199
Police	150
Customs	100
Forestry service	50
<b>Sub-total uniformed forces</b>	<b>1,479</b>
Civilian administration	149
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,648</b>

Source: MFAAC.

<sup>10</sup> There is a difference of 599 between these figures and those quoted in footnote 5 above, because Col Sirakoro includes in his figures certain ex-combatants who were integrated into *unités spéciales* back in April 1993. An additional 150 members of the sedentary MPGK were accepted for integration, mainly into the Gendarmerie, under a separate agreement with the GRM, outside the *Accords d'Alger* which fixed the numbers for the MFUA. These 150 *Ganda koy* recruits were trained in a separate camp at Kayes, while the MFUA group went for training at Banakara, near Markala (and conveniently close to medical services in Ségou). Subject to medical approval and aptitude tests, all the ex-combatants were able to state their preferred career destination. May they all succeed in promoting peace and socio-economic development through their new careers!

## 4.7 The Flame of Peace

Excellencies, the United Nations is proud to be associated with the Flame of Peace. We have of course checked, Mr President, before laying placing them on the bonfire, that not one of these 3,000 weapons contains any ammunition and that they can be burned without danger, to make a true "Flame of Peace".

With these words, General Henny van der Graaf of the Netherlands handed to President Alpha Oumar Konaré a signed certificate (the text is reproduced in annex 2). Ten thousand spectators gathered on the sand dunes burst into delighted laughter.<sup>11</sup> As dusk gathered over the medieval spires of Timbuktu, AOK and his guest-of-honour JJ Rawlings, together with Madame Adame Ba Konaré and Professor Ali Diallo, the President of the National Assembly of Mali, left the podium and led their guests to the pyramid of small arms on the plain between the sand dunes. There flaming torches were awaiting, and the 3,000 weapons disappeared in a vortex of heat flaming into the desert sky.

The initial military reaction to the idea of burning weapons was stunned disbelief. "But we need those weapons! Especially we need them, because we are going to have all the ex-combatants joining the army, and we have got to find them weapons from somewhere. Furthermore, many of these weapons were actually stolen from the army. We should get them back!"

Mali's President stood firm. "This is not a military matter, but a political matter," he explained, "These weapons have been soiled with the blood of Malians. Even if each and every one of these weapons has been stolen from the Malian army, they have been soiled and they shall be burned."

With hindsight, every Malian senior military officer agrees that the President's political judgement was correct. The Flame of Peace became a defining moment in Malian modern history. It has burned into the mythology of peace-making across Africa. Far more valuable than the financial cost of the weapons, is the symbol of national cleansing which the Flame represents. Not everyone agrees, of course. One opposition newspaper denounced the Flame as phoney: the author criticised the ceremony in Timbuktu because, he claimed, it is water which

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<sup>11</sup> It was not a joke: General van der Graaf had checked the pile of rifles. He had picked out at random a Garand rifle of US make, since he was familiar with this weapon. The breech was jammed, so the General rammed the butt of the rifle on the ground, pointed it into the sky and fired. The assembled army officers were stunned: all the weapons had been checked. They found three live rounds remaining inside the Garand. Every single weapon in the pyramid was rechecked: not another cartridge was discovered. No one knows how General van der Graaf's hand was guided to the only loaded weapon, but his professional reputation soared sky high.

cleanses in the Sahel whereas fire represents aggression, and other weapons remain which were not burned.

While nobody believes that we are rid of every illicit gun in Mali, making a start on disarmament mattered enormously. The number and quality of the weapons are unimportant: anyone can obtain another weapon, for guns are all too easily available from nearby flash-points like Chad and Liberia. The important thing is that the Flame of Peace symbolizes the end of ethnic violence in Mali, and the return of the Touaregs and Arabs into the Malian nation (although some of the refugees have yet to make the journey home).

The Flame of Peace is also a triumph for United Nations diplomacy. Encouraging the armed movements to surrender their weapons, the United Nations supervised their inspection and burning, adding neutrality and flair and international stature to the Malian government's efforts, to the Malian armed forces, and to the cantonment policy which Mali conceived and organized. The success was not due to the United Nations: our story has made clear that this was peace "Made in Mali", by the people and the institutions of Mali. But Mali could not have succeeded so well on its own. In a country with few resources, something exceptional was needed which would attract attention, and funds were needed for the long process of peace-building. And then there was another point: what to do with the collected weapons? Experience shows that it is best to destroy the arms.<sup>12</sup> Conclusion: Mali needed a cheap and spectacular method for arms destruction.

Professor Owen Greene, a British disarmament specialist, commented, "What Mali's partnership with the United Nations has achieved has been to make Mali bigger than it is." By which he means that the Flame of Peace has become a symbol beyond the frontiers of Mali. Here is an African success story, a island of peacemaking in the continent of civil disturbance. It is therefore not surprising that the United Nations delegation in Timbuktu was the biggest. The Secretary-General was unable to come himself, but he was represented by Ibrahima Fall, then Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in Geneva, who is now Assistant Secretary-General in the United Nations Department for Political Affairs in New York. The UNDP sent Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Director of the Africa Bureau. Prvoslav Davinic, Director of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs in New York, acted as an Official Weapons Certifier and with General Henny van der Graaf signed the Certificate

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<sup>12</sup> See for example, the World Bank publication of 1993 on demobilization and re-integration experience in Africa, and Lodgaard's article in the UNIDIR *NewsLetter* No. 32 of 1996.

which was presented to the President of Mali. He was supported by his colleague Ivor Richard Fung, an architect of the Flame of Peace, and by another senior disarmament specialist from the United Nations, Sverre Lodgaard, the Director of UNIDIR. Besides the external visitors representing the United Nations, there were the Malian Representatives of UN agencies working in the North of Mali: notably the United Nations Resident Coordinator Tore Rose of the UNDP, and UNICEF Representative André Roberfroid who later became the head of UNICEF's office in Geneva.

There has been some discussion in the diplomatic community as to whether or not the Flame of Peace Ceremony was well-attended. Should we be satisfied with ambassadors? Did Mali need a mass of ministers, or even a gaggle of heads of State? The presence of ministers from most of Mali's neighbours, and from the Netherlands (Jan Pronk, Minister of Overseas Development was present) makes the Timbuktu gathering both important, and practical in orientation. The Bamako rumour-mill was grinding out name after presidential name of political heavyweights, from Boutros Boutros-Ghali downwards! It was probably an illusion to believe that five or eight heads of State would come to Timbuktu. Not being very involved in protocol, we are inclined to wonder whether a crowd of big-wigs would even have been helpful? The guest-of-honour was President JJ Rawlings of Ghana, wearing a second symbolic hat as the current President of ECOWAS, and the importance of his presence and his speech was heightened by the absence of unnecessary protocol. We shall end this section with an extract from JJ Rawlings' speech, which was as significant as the Flame itself in its symbolism. It showed that Ghana's President has drawn the most important lesson from Mali's peacemaking experience: that successful peacemaking cannot be imposed by outsiders. Peace must come from below, from the people and from their communities and from their community leaders:

We are proud to be standing here on the soil of the ancient and most important Kingdom of Mali, father of our ancestors. We are proud to be standing here in Timbuktu, a citadel of great learning, a place of scholars who brought learning to Mali.... I wish to send a Message from Timbuktu to the brothers and sisters of Liberia. Ultimate peace in Liberia rests with the people themselves.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Protocol was not efficient enough to provide us with a copy of the text, so we quote from an article in *New African* magazine: "The gospel according to St Rawlings" (Tall 1996). Indeed the Flame of Peace experience showed the need to reform the outdated structures of "diplomacy and protocol": invitations were sent late, the international press corps was neglected, and none of the speeches were made available to anybody (nor did anyone know whom to ask, not even ministers, since no one admitted responsibility for anything).

## 4.8 The Re-integration of Ex-combatants

Once the ex-combatants had been disarmed and demobilized, there remained the challenge of re-integrating them into society. Left to his own devices, released from cantonment into the struggling economy of the North without a profession or any artisanal or agricultural skills, a young man may be tempted to resort to his old ways: to find a weapon and to take up a life of banditry. Demobilization, therefore, cannot be seen as the end of the peacemaking process. Instead, it is the beginning of the long and difficult process of re-integration. As we recounted in chapter 3, it is at this stage that the peace attempts which followed the National Pact of 1992 failed. There were no funds to help former rebels re-integrate into society, and those that were absorbed into the Malian military were segregated and denied proper military training. By 1994, the peace process was nearing collapse.

In 1996, the Malian Government had the will and found the resources it needed to incorporate the majority of the cantoned rebels into the Malian military. Meanwhile the United Nations stepped in to assist with the re-integration of former rebels into civilian society. For this the United Nations created PAREM as a mechanism: *Programme d'Appui à la Réinsertion socio-économique des Ex-combattants du nord Mali* (Support Programme for the Socio-economic Re-integration of Ex-combatants in Northern Mali). The programme is financed through a special international Trust Fund overseen by the UNDP. We shall consider the objectives and the target audience of this programme before looking at the strategy itself to see whether PAREM is likely to be successful in re-inserting the ex-combatants.

Everyone seems to agree that only the United Nations could launch and run PAREM, or the Trust Fund which supports PAREM. Only the United Nations is perceived to occupy a position of neutrality: neither the Government, nor any of the mediators or bilateral donors (nor the World Bank) is considered "neutral and objective" in the same way as the United Nations Development Programme. Seen from Bamako and Geneva, this is a feather in the UNDP cap. Here, we hope, is a success story in the making.

The PAREM model was taken from the United Nations' experience with demobilization in Mozambique. The transfer of a model from country A to culture B is always risky, although the administrative attractions are obvious enough. A joint UN-GRM mission travelled to Mozambique and developed the project design, but it is always the application in the field which holds the secret of success. UNDP provides the management, ILO the training, and the rest of the

team are from OIM (which has field experience in Mozambique) or from the ex-movements.

It is clear that PAREM is political more than economic. The Programme fulfils the political obligations of the Malian Government, solemnly undertaken in the National Pact, to support the ex-combatants of the armed movements. Mali's Transition Government accepted this to help the peace negotiators "sell" the Pact in 1992 to their armed militia, and its elected successors accepted the commitment for the same reason. Without an end to insecurity, the underlying problems of economics, ecology and marginalization cannot be addressed. Thus, PAREM is conceived as a strategy of "security first", which PAREM's manager, Paul Howard of the USA, describes succinctly as "buying time, so that those who are working on the long-term development side of things can get their programmes going again."

In view of the above we can sum up the objectives of the PAREM as follows:

- Political: getting the ex-combatants out of aggression and into society.
- Economic: creating jobs to occupy these angry young men.
- Security: first creating the conditions of security necessary for releasing the \$200 millions, which donors say are waiting to be invested in the North (see Annex 3). In any country, unhappy people walking around with guns are destabilizing.

How many people has PAREM helped? The PAREM start-up document of 16 May 1996 talks of 6,000 *non-cantonnés*: but the 1997 mid-year report shows that the figure had risen to 7,795, added to which are 1,659 from the cantonments who were not taken into government service. PAREM is therefore catering to 9,454 customers in the three regions: 2,423 in Kidal, 3,796 in Gao, and 3,235 in Timbuktu.

There are tricky political matters of judgement concerning "who is an ex-combatant" and how many had better be considered as potential future combatants if ever the integration process does not work out. The Government decided to be flexible (especially with the MPGK), as demands rose in concert with the post-conflict political ambitions of the negotiators. All the lists of ex-combatants were drawn up by the movements and were co-signed by them and by the National Commission. Each person on the list had to turn up to collect a card. This didn't eliminate complaints of the "My name was taken off the list, and I don't agree..." variety, and no doubt there has been a bit of deliberate confusion with similar names, which is easy to arrange when so many people are called Mohamed and Maiga and Cissé. Naturally the lists include plenty of brothers and cousins of leading members of the movements, and some of the ex-combatants are women.

A few returning refugees may be receiving help from both UNHCR and PAREM, not to mention the various NGO programmes, picking up free food or cheap credits or whatever is available in each programme or region. We are talking about Malians whose whole life is one of movement. "Of no fixed address" in Europe signifies someone who has lost out in society or who is in some way threatening or dishonest. But in northern Mali, only elderly farmers really have a fixed address.

In any case, who cares if they are getting a little bit extra? Songhoy, Fulani, Bozo, Arab or Tamacheq, they all deserve a better start in life than has been possible during the past 5 years of insecurity, following 25 years of drought and 100 years of repression. Military figures show that 65 per cent of the ex-fighters in the cantonments were under 25 years of age, and 15 per cent were under 20. How similar is the make-up of the civilian customers? PAREM's first task was to create a database to try to understand the nature and profile of its shifting (and maybe shiftless) population of potential customers. Most of them are under 30. There will never be enough salaried jobs for thousands of young men with small education and little knowledge of French. The difficulties of getting them to produce viable economic projects may be insurmountable. How can PAREM help them get the start in civilian and productive life that they need? Can a cash investment of 300,000 Fcfa really set each on his way through life?

Early evidence suggests that PAREM has been far more successful than we would have dared to hope. Most PAREM clients do have prior work experience, and clear ideas of what they want to do. Many groups have taken the initiative to move into irrigated vegetable growing; others, of pastoral origin, have decided to start herds of small ruminants (which will take advantage of the Malian export business which is thriving since the cfa Franc was devalued and European meat-dumping diminished); and a large number have taken up trading, now that the security situation allows safe travel. These are not sufficient activities to absorb all PAREM's clients of course. Not every one can be successful in commerce, any more than every one can make a living from livestock in the desert, but these are early days.

One surprising and unexpected element has been that most of the early projects have involved groups of clients: of the 866 funded projects, 374 involve 5,083 PAREM participants. This has meant that individual PAREM grants have been grouped to provide more substantial sums for investment. They have attracted additional money invested by neighbours, who have come forward to join the ex-combatants in creating a rice perimeter or in launching a livestock project. Group action is natural in Malian communities, and so it is proving for PAREM. Since these are turning into community projects, the average age and experience of the participants is higher than expected, and PAREM staff find the activities much less

vulnerable than they feared: they can leave groups to get on with their projects, assuming that people are competent. Once ex-combatants are actually working on their own projects, levels of frustration and aggression quickly decline, as in the Eleket rice perimeter near Timbuktu described by Saouti Haidara (1997) where 66 Arab ex-combatants are working together to farm 20 hectares. The atmosphere is so positive in Eleket, that it is now part of the itinerary for VIP visitors to Timbuktu.

Project staff are available for advice, and are responsible for following the progress of participants. Here again, PAREM's task is different from the design since it no longer appears necessary to train all 9,454 customers. Many already possess basic skills for their chosen project: "once a farmer, always a farmer". Training on a rice perimeter may involve only the manager, the accountant and the maintenance men for the irrigation pumps, from a group of 20 ex-combatants: the rest will benefit from ongoing government extension service advice. Training requirements were always difficult to predict. Coordinator Howard and ILO's training manager Léopold Ahounou from Benin adopted a flexible approach, subcontracting training needs to NGOs whose staff already had the required skills. Experience shows that this was a good strategy. Training focuses on management of micro-enterprises, and special skill areas as they are demanded, including agriculture, livestock management, transport and mechanics, and artisan skills such as leather curing, meat-drying, etc.

The concept of PAREM is controversial in Mali. One Ambassador told us that he felt that PAREM rewarded "what I call the 'warrior approach'. We are in effect paying them booty in order to buy peace. But will this bring durability? Paying 300,000 Fcfa to each ex-combatant to further his social and economic integration, implies that there is a social and economic environment into which he can integrate. I would prefer a community development approach." The ICRC Representative Susanne Hofstetter adopts a similar line: "We have preferred to support the communities which are receiving the ex-combatants. The cantonment was too long, and there was not enough preparation to respond to the needs of ex-combatants who were not going into Government service."

**PROGRAMME D'APPUI A LA REINSERTION  
DES EX-COMBATTANTS DANS LE NORD MALI**

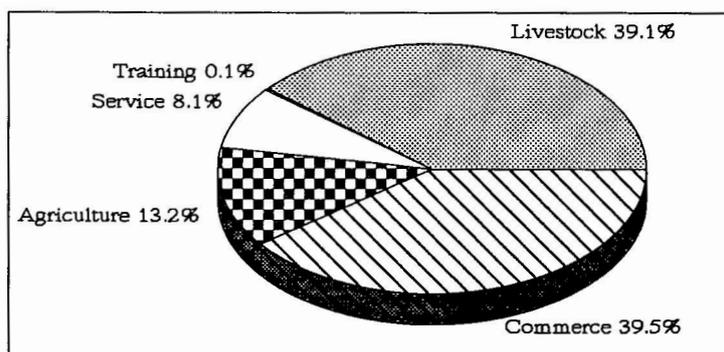
**Overview of the Programme**

	No. of projects	Ex-combatants demobilized	Ex-combatants financed	% financed	Amount spent (Fcfa)
Gao	195	3,796	3,800	100.11	1,157,169,040
Timbuktu	489	3,235	3,294	101.82	1,024,807,495
Kidal	182	2,423	2,415	99.67	745,347,749
<b>Total</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>9,454</b>	<b>9,509</b>		<b>2,927,324,284</b>

**Breakdown of Projects by Sector of Activity (20.09.97)**

Projects	No. of projects	No. of ex-combatants	Amount (Fcfa)
Service	96	772	242,447,500
Agriculture	118	1,252	382,316,495
Commerce	337	3,752	1,157,997,994
Livestock	311	3,722	1,137,611,295
Training	4	11	6,951,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>9,509</b>	<b>2,927,324,284</b>

**Number of Ex-combatants by Sector of Activity**



“Situation par secteur d’activité” at 30 September 1997. *Source:* PAREM Activity Report.

Most NGO comments in 1996 supported those of the ICRC. Some even accused PAREM of taking Mali back 12 years to a “relief mentality”, offering cash gifts instead of sustainable development, which requires mobilizing national and local resources that can be matched with technical training or credits. Professionals argue that it is better to make people loans which they must repay, leading to larger loans for themselves or for their partners... then you are creating an economic dynamic, rather than one of dependency. This is the development critique of an essentially political project: the political impact will not be achieved, unless the ex-combatants are integrated into an ongoing economic process. NGO criticisms may be justified technically, but they surely underestimate the political imperatives deriving from promises in the *Pacte National*. On the other hand, simply concentrating on individuals may not be enough: NGO criticisms reflect fairly accurately the thrust of two key strategy documents for the North (from UNDP and ACORD) to which we shall return in chapter 6. But even if not all their worries have been removed, we found that the criticisms we heard in 1996 became muted as people discovered in 1997 that PAREM’s group projects were working better (and were more communal) than might have been expected.

There is also more to PAREM than simple cash gifts. To get the first part of the cash (which is paid in three *tranches*), each registered ex-combatant must come up with a viable project. Individual projects funded by PAREM are supposed to be vetted (to see whether they really exist, and whether they have a chance of succeeding). Ahounou reasons:

Even if we only have 20 per cent of ex-combatant projects succeeding after one year, this will be in line with Western European and American experience of small enterprise survival rates, and that is in advanced countries which are at peace. We are hoping for 25 per cent success. In addition, the training they receive will help the ex-combatants to fit into society and to take advantage of other socio-economic opportunities.

At least—as PAREM staff observe wryly—they do not have 25 per cent failure after 6 months.

Although few of the participants appear to have taken the money and disappeared, PAREM’s NGO partners are critical of the speed with which the money is being distributed. They fear the political imperative (the “booty factor”) will obstruct the economic and social impacts of the project. NGOs maintain that there is pressure on PAREM to cut down the analysis of projects, so as to move the money and get the angry young men settled as soon as possible. The project was slow to begin, and it may have become too rapid, yet PAREM’s management denies that money is going out to people whose projects are not viable. The pressures are real enough. PAREM offices have been occupied, their vehicles have

been hijacked, the wife (“Mama Parem”) of manager Paul Howard was even taken hostage. This is not an easy place to be. February 1997 was a difficult month. Under intense physical pressure, the team in Gao did give out larger payments (more than one third as an initial payment) until the cash ran out, which of course the remaining clients refused to believe. One day shortly after that, Howard had to call in the Gendarmerie to defend the PAREM offices and staff. The gendarmes’ gas canisters remained closed: they palavered in the yard until 3pm, by which time the sun was so hot that everyone went home.

One of PAREM’s problems is communication. It is extraordinarily difficult to explain to semi-literate or non-literate workers (let alone to ex-fighters) why donors and accountants demand all this paper-work (some of which is unnecessary, although the auditors like it). These are not obedient military men, but irregular partisans whose lives have depended on quick thinking for themselves. They are independent types, used to taking their own decisions. They are bored, frustrated, waiting for money. Journalist Saouti Haidara (1997) interviewed bitter young men sitting around the PAREM offices who were happy to admit that they had previously been active “rebels” (others might call them “bandits”) who didn’t hesitate to slit a throat for gain. “They are ignoring the real rebels,” said one Arab, “PAREM gives its money to people who had nothing to do with the rebellion. They choose projects on the basis of family links or personal friendships or because people slip them some money under the table.”

Such complaints may contain a grain of truth, but what is beyond doubt is that people are quick to believe that they are victims: that there is discrimination, or nepotism, or corruption, or that the other ex-movements are receiving greater favours than they are. There has grown up a mythical debate over “quotas” based on the lists signed by the leaders of each movement... quotas between movements which, since 27 March 1996, are not supposed to exist. PAREM cannot dare to change these lists. Rightly, the United Nations refuses simply to give out cash, insisting on examining each project and on paying out the money by stages. “Otherwise,” says Howard, “they’ll just take the money and spend it. They’ll be back at square one, and we won’t have done anything to integrate them back into society.”

PAREM has been criticized by some leaders of the ex-movements as slow, its distribution of funding reluctant, and its systems burdensome. Ex-combatants do not want to hear about problems of cash-flow. The hijacking in broad daylight and in the middle of town of three United Nations vehicles on the 9th (in Kidal), 11th (in Timbuktu) and 12th (in Gao) of December 1996 was too much of a coincidence to be a coincidence. The security forces retrieved two of the vehicles before the end of the month: but such hijackings are a warning to PAREM, to the GRM and

to all donors that development promises must be met. Here is the comment from *Le Républicain*:

PAREM, the gigantic programme for reinsertion of demobilised ex-combatants, is under scrutiny. People criticise its slowness and its partiality. When frustration boils over, it is PAREM and its agents who get scalded. It has happened once already. That was a rough day in Gao, one which they are not likely to forget in a hurry (Maiga 1997).<sup>14</sup>

Then there are the horrendous logistical problems of the desert. Kidal for example has no bank, and there is not a single steel safe in the town in which to store large sums of money. “They occupied my offices in Kidal,” remembers Abdoulaye Bathily of the FAO and formerly deputy director of PAREM. “They accused me of being slow to pay out the money. I couldn’t tell them, for security reasons, that my problem was to find a vehicle in which to hide the \$8,000 I needed sending from the bank in Gao. Mr Rose of UNDP was trying to negotiate the use of the UNHCR airplane, but its hire was too expensive. Most donors cannot begin to understand our difficulties.”

Donor cash-flow is a permanent headache. The promises come from the donors, and the United Nations gets the blame when their money doesn’t arrive. Under intense pressure from the ex-combatants, the GRM announced in late 1996 that \$8.5 million were already pledged to the UN Trust Fund (it was \$10 million by June 1997). Naturally, queues (or rather mobs) formed outside the doors of the PAREM. “Give us our money!” But a pledge is a promise, it is not cash. When told that “there is no more money available this month,” it is hardly surprising that ex-combatants in Gao and Timbuktu believed that the millions of dollars had been stolen. Responding to political demands, PAREM disbursed \$3 million by the end of November 1996 in record time, so that in December the UN fund was reduced to just \$10,000. It was actually the Malian Minister of Finance, Soumaila Cissé, who found some cash for the Trust Fund and saved the PAREM staff from a

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<sup>14</sup> This refers to the day when the driver of a PAREM vehicle was dragged from his car, and the vehicle was turned over. One of the aggressors was hurt as the vehicle rolled, and the project management refused demands to pay his hospital bills. The men who take most of the heat when ex-combatants want to complain, are the eight “Technical Advisors” in PAREM (3 each in Gao and Timbuktu and 2 in Kidal) who were selected by the ex-movements to be representative of the ethnic and cultural and political composition of PAREM’s customers. (One has moved on and been replaced.) We cite their names with appreciation: Mohamed ag Mahmoud, Zeid ag Mohamed, Mohamed ben Fadi, Boubacar H. Touré, Mahamar Firhoun Maiga, Mohamed el Mehedi ag Rhissa, Hachimould Sidi Mohamed, Ibiya ag Sidi, Housseyni ag Intfaskiwen.

lynching, by pre-financing 50 per cent of the GRM's 1997 \$1 million pledge. Here is a African Government which is contributing to the Trust Fund, alongside the donors, and which is prepared to give its money in the cause of peace. The United Nations would like more such members.

Most United Nations donors are slow to pledge and even slower to pay. Donors blame the Malians. Indifference inside the Malian Administration in Bamako sometimes compounds delays: instead of energetically supporting the efforts of the UNDP, elderly Malian civil servants find themselves burdened with family problems, trying to feed the children of a deceased brother's extended family. But most blockages are due to donor officials—far from Timbuktu and Gao—who are ignorant of how hungry people react on the edge of the desert. The donors' forms and their bureaucratic paper-trail are inappropriate for a crisis. A hungry man with a gun needs to start his project now, at once, perhaps before the rains fall, whereas administrators happily plan in months or years. As one of the PAREM's Malian managers commented, "Donors see far ahead and they are very strong in finance, but they cannot do things fast. They underestimate the vulnerability of our people: that is a danger for peace." In our experience, the turnover of expatriate personnel is a major donor weakness. The funds negotiated by Joan, who may even have been to visit the projects, will now be handled by Jack who has just arrived in Mali, has never been to Gao, who doubts whether Timbuktu really even exists.

It is too early to declare that PAREM is a "success", but its existence has been essential to the process of making peace. We cannot yet, in mid-1997, evaluate the political, economic or security impacts. What does appear so far, however, is that PAREM has succeeded in injecting funds into communities, where ex-combatants are undertaking activities with their clansmen and neighbours. Funding for 9,454 participants has mobilized up to 12,000 people. We usually reckon that 10 dependents benefit indirectly from one income: so PAREM may have benefitted 15 per cent of the northern population. Not a bad start. But the only real success is permanent peace. If the GRM and the United Nations succeed in buying a period of peace through PAREM, how quickly will the donors release the \$200 million (see Annex 3) already programmed for development in the North? For the Trust Fund, the United Nations requested \$12 million and only raised \$10 million. In donor terms, the missing \$2 million are pennies and cents. Mali's partners are showing too little interest in preventive diplomacy and peace-building. If the donors do not come good in the medium-term, the result may well be (as one field worker in Gao told us) that "PAREM does not possess the resources to achieve its objectives". The objective is permanent peace.

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In this chapter, we have reviewed the six courses of action which were essential to the making of peace in Mali. After the fall of the dictator, civil-military relations were at a low ebb. Building bridges between the people and the armed forces, the authorities helped to restore the military's sense of self-worth. With the help of mediators, the National Pact reinforced the confidence of the population, while the creation of the *Commissariat au Nord* gave reality to a special status for the North. Recognising that peace must come from the people, Mali's President had the foresight to withdraw many military units, and to allow civil society to take the lead in community reconciliation. Thus the people of the North became the peacemakers, and persuaded the rebels to disarm. The weapons were destroyed in a Flame of Peace. Government reentered the peace process to arrange the demobilization of combatants, barely managing to find enough resources to organize cantonments and to provide training for the integration of former rebels into the Malian army, after a rigorous selection process had been agreed by all parties. The United Nations provided some assistance to the cantonments, while other donors remained aloof. Ex-combatants not accepted in the military, are assisted through the PAREM programme in their transition to civilian life. United Nations leadership has brought some coordination to donor actions, and the United Nations—as we shall examine in the next chapter—has contributed discreetly to many parts of the peace process.

### OUR CHILDREN DRAW PEACE

As the sun rose over Timbuktu and extinguished the stars which had witnessed the Flame of Peace, the Malian Government began to organise a children's art competition around the theme: a Monument for Peace.

This was chosen as a way to highlight the importance of the event for the whole of the Malian people. The organisers had three principal objectives: to show that the Flame of Peace has a lasting symbolism, to encourage a true culture of peace among young people, and to provide inspiration through their art for a Peace Monument to be erected on the plain of Abaradjou in Timbuktu.

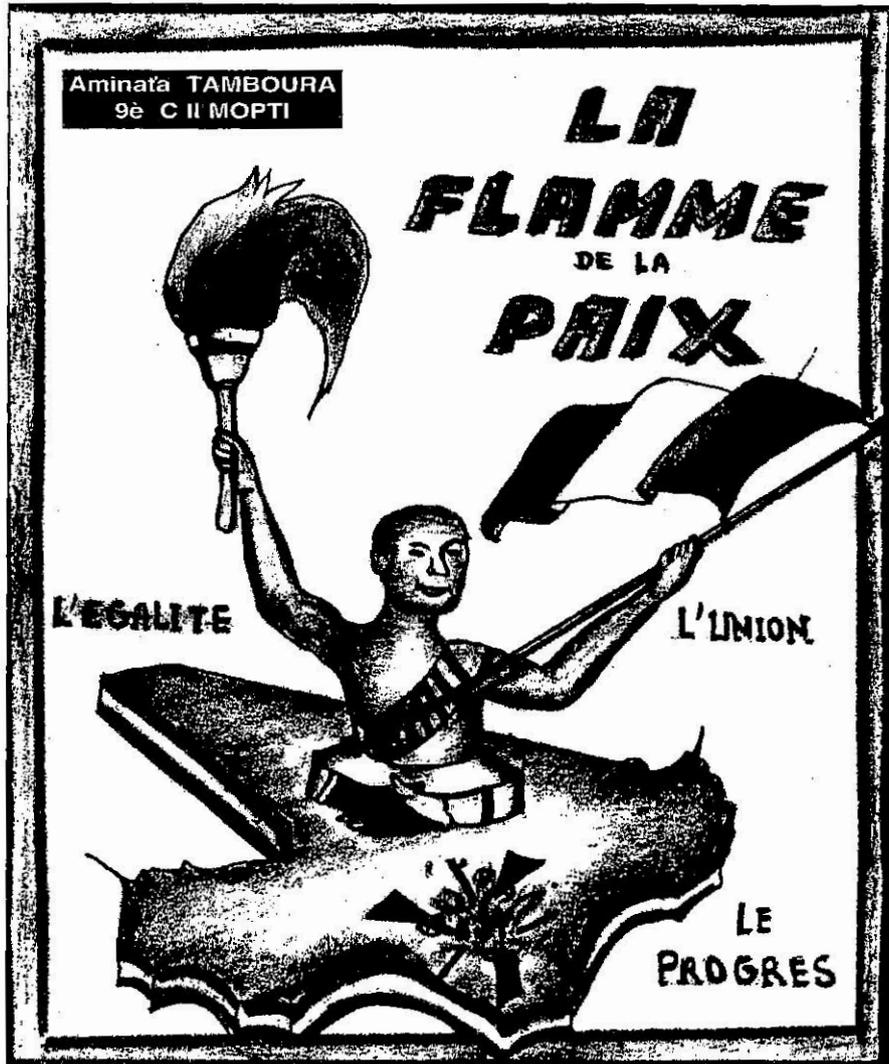
The art competition produced three winners:

1. Miss Aminata Tamboura of Mopti, studying in 9th grade
2. MrEmile Camara of the Cathedral School, in 9th grade
3. Miss Bintou Diarra of Markala, in 5th grade

In order that the general public can see and appreciate our children's perception of peace, and their choice of symbolism, the Ministry of Basic Education and the *Commissariat au Nord* decided to publish a booklet containing the best drawings and paintings selected by the jury. The secret hope is that our children may influence the behaviour of their elders in favour of peace.

THE *COMMISSARIAT AU NORD*

Introduction by the *Commissariat au Nord* to the drawings by Mali's children, from which we reproduce a few samples.



The winner of the national Monument Design competition was Miss Aminata Tamboura, aged 16, from Mopti, capital of Mali's 5th Region. (Source: Ministère de l'Education de Base, Mali, 1997.)

## Chapter 5

# The International Community as a Catalyzer for Peace

**Even the longest journey begins with a first small step.  
Fulani and Touareg proverb**

The first four chapters of this book have told a story of alienation and peacemaking in northern Mali. We have seen how the armed revolt was born of political and economic isolation, of poverty aggravated by one-party rule, and drought which brought us to the impact of declining natural resources in the Sahel. After the stories of violence and negotiation, we have followed the process of peacemaking. The present chapter looks at the role of the international community—mainly but not exclusively the UN agencies—and how their helpful drops of oil lubricated the Malian machinery for peace. One lesson from Mali's story is that a small contribution at the crucial moment can have a big impact on the way in which the peace machinery functions. Every meeting may help, each separate obstacle has to be overcome. In peacemaking and preventive diplomacy, as our proverb suggests, no initiative is so small that it is not worth a try.

### **5.1 United Nations Projects and Non-governmental Actions**

Although the United Nations may have an important role to play, United Nations agencies cannot lead the development of northern Mali. It is civil society which brought an end to the conflict, and only through civil society can we win permanent peace. The government is the main supporting player. All development strategies at present aim first and foremost to restore government services: administrative services, security services, and the social services of health and education, followed by water supplies and technical development services like agro-pastoral extension and rural credit.

To give honour where it is due, the Malians' most important support for peace and development in the North has come from Algeria and France, both of whom have been generous in an area which most donors shy away from:

supporting and strengthening security.<sup>1</sup> With a few exceptions, donors all want to “do their own project”, giving relatively little support to joint peace-building (at least until the UN Trust Fund was created in 1995). Restoring security is part of peace-building. While most donors evade their responsibilities by blaming the government for continuing insecurity, the United Nations has recognized the importance of establishing security first, in order to get development programmes moving again. We describe the United Nations contribution as “pouring drops of oil into the machinery of peacemaking”. But there is also the cumulative contribution of the United Nations family to development and peace-building. This is far from negligible, as Table 5.1 of ongoing United Nations projects shows.

What is irritating about lists of project funding is that they give little idea of impact in the field. While ACOPAM and UNCDF seem to achieve a lot with very little, the PSARK project of IFAD in Kidal has been paralysed by bureaucratic and political wrangling: only 17 per cent of the project’s resources have actually been disbursed, and this has mostly been spent on keeping the project’s management system in place for the past ten years (one very much wants to ask what they were actually managing). But since only 41 per cent of all the promised donor funds for the North have been disbursed (see Annex 3), the same question could be asked of several banks and donors. The IFAD programmes for rice growers in Ségou region have achieved great success, to the extent of actually becoming famous, largely due to the decentralized project design. The Kidal project on the other hand is highly centralized. For some reason, executive power resides in the BOAD in Lomé, in distant Togo. Following absurdly inappropriate banking procedures, field expenses have to be approved in Lomé: this for a programme located in one of the remotest regions of Africa with no roads and no telephones. Asked in conversation about the failure of the PSARK, former Rural Development Minister Madame Maimouna Ba, who follows the project closely, explains, “If you need a vehicle, it takes 18 months because you have to go through the administration in Lomé. If you say the UNCDF has better results than IFAD, the difference is entirely due to their management systems.”

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<sup>1</sup> Details of their contributions are given in the official ambassadorial declarations: Algeria, pp. 50-51 and France, pp. 57-62, in GRM 1993.

**Table 5.1**  
**United Nations Ongoing Projects in Northern Mali\***

<b>No.</b>	<b>Project name</b>	<b>Agencies involved</b>	<b>UN budget (\$US)</b>
1	Improvement of Lake Faguibine lake system	UNSO	4,254,661
2	Rice cultivation support in Gao and Timbuktu	UNCDF	3,333,338
3	Rural development project with multiple objectives, N Mali	WFP	12,400,000
4	Development of the Zone Lacustre lakes south of Timbuktu	UNSO	3,506,398
5	Nutrition and food security	UNICEF	3,036,100
6	Health programme for northern regions (UNICEF integrated health systems)	UNICEF-EU	1,444,644
7	Poverty eradication through national volunteers	UNDP	2,388,650
8	Special Fund for Northern Mali (UN Trust Fund)	Numerous donors (see Chapter 5.6)	9,693,424
9	Special assistance for the North	FAO, UNDP	1,603,440
10	Long-term support to returning refugees and displaced persons	WFP	10,300,000
11	Support to peace in Mali and the sub-region	UNDP	125,000
12	Support to the UN Resident Coordinator for peace-support	UNDP	336,000
13	Support for governance, conflict prevention and peace-building	UNDP	1,200,000
14	Agricultural development in the lakes region of Timbuktu Phase I	IFAD, OPEC, WFP, Mali	9,673,270

15	Agricultural development in the lakes region of Timbuktu Phase II	IFAD, OPEC, WFP, Mali	19,406,620
16	Food and revenue security in Kidal Region PSARK	IFAD, BID, WFP, Mali	18,886,186
17	Programme to repatriate refugees and displaced populations 1997	UNHCR	7,270,616
18	Programme to repatriate refugees and displaced populations 1998	UNHCR	4,870,000
19	Community health centre construction	WHO**	51,116
20	Support and monitoring of a sub-regional Moratorium on small arms	UNCDA, UNDP, Mali	5,900,000
21	Disarmament research and training	UNIDIR	150,000
22	Training in human rights and democracy	UNCHR, UNIDIR, CAPSDH	140,000
23	UN Trust Fund: strengthening civil society in northern Mali	UNDP, UN/DPA	3,000,000
24	Food production support in Mopti and Timbuktu	ILO-ACOPAM-AFAR	500,000
	<b>Total for Ongoing UN Programmes</b>		<b>123,469,463</b>

Sources: GRM 1993, pp. 53-56; UNHCR 1996, p. 30; UNDP office Bamako.

Note: Acronyms are explained in Annex 6.

\* All figures are indicative. They depend not only on programme planning within each agency and ministry and region, but also on resources becoming available. Naturally these figures for ongoing projects take no account of previous funding over many years.

\*\* Other WHO programmes benefit the whole country, which is also true for other agencies.

The situation is not very different for the IFAD programme in Niger, which was actually the target of the very first raid of the Touareg rebellion, in May 1990. For at least six months before the attack, IFAD staff members knew that Touareg frustration was likely to boil over. Tensions were running so high that in 1989 the drivers petitioned for IFAD project vehicles to be repainted, so they would not be recognized. After the raid on IFAD's base in Tchén Tchabaraden, some of the attackers were caught and imprisoned across the Malian frontier in Menaka: it was to free them that Iyyad led the first attack of the Malian rebellion

in June 1990. As we shall discover in Chapter 6, peace in northern Mali depends on relaunching the economy, and the relaunch of Kidal's economy depends on the PSARK. While we do not go so far as to blame IFAD for the Touareg rebellion, it is clear that IFAD and BOAD need to undertake some serious rethinking.

IFAD is not the only agency whose impact has been criticized. Banks like the BAD and the BID figure prominently in the official funding tables, but their impacts are invisible to the majority of Mali's population. If we don't see the results, it may be a question of poor communications or it may be a problem of poor design and execution, with money going mostly to fund salaries and accommodation for highly qualified intellectuals who actually achieve little for the people of the North. Development money pours into ministries, but it is not clear where it comes out. There are important political interests at stake. All development banks and bilateral donors tend to play politics before they consider development impacts, and this criticism can be levelled at certain multilateral agencies. Under a military government or a repressive one-party regime, every assistance to any ministry (even WHO and UNICEF working with the Ministry of Health) may turn out to be helping agents of repression rather than agents of socio-economic development. In northern Mali 10 years ago, we believe that this was so. At the time of writing we believe it is no longer the case when Mali's democratic Government is making every effort to promote peace and development in the North.

Other United Nations inputs in the North have been generally at the level of strategic thinking and planning. Many of the documents and debates in Mali's peacemaking process were funded by the UNDP, which certainly had a helpful influence throughout the past three years, promoting dialogue and peacemaking, and the elements which make for good governance (including Mali's elections). It is difficult to measure the impact of something like a UNIDIR regional conference on micro-disarmament, although it is certainly a "good" event. Research on disarmament is clearly helpful, even valuable. It may be the catalyst for peace and disarmament, or later for the re-organization of the armies of the region, but such impacts are hard to quantify in the short term. We are supporters of this United Nations long-term strategic thinking, whether or not the effects can be measured. Although it is easy to count children on a school bench, we are sceptical of the belief that abstract concepts like "good" or "development" or even "education" can be measured statistically. One of the most positive impacts that the United Nations can have, in our opinion, is in promoting discussion at the national and regional level of measures in favour of joint peace-building across the frontiers. We shall return to this theme in our final chapter.

As a general rule, our experience shows that development money is best spent if it touches the beneficiaries directly, working in partnership with strong grassroots organizations. Of the United Nations agencies, the easiest to evaluate is the World Food Programme, because the food-for-work is given directly to the workers in the villages, very often on projects which are carried out in collaboration with NGOs who provide on-the-spot supervision with technical advice. Free food handouts promote the “dependency syndrome”, but WFP’s move into food-for-work often provides a very helpful stimulus for grassroots development.

All the bilateral donors and many of the United Nations Agencies use NGOs as partners in the application of their programmes. While some NGOs are too small to be effective, they are generally close to the grassroots. As we shall see in the next section, the UNHCR has given grants for well-digging, income generation and agricultural development to a dozen NGOs.<sup>2</sup> What is striking however, is the reluctance of the donors to make substantial grants to national NGOs. On the HCR list there are five French NGOs and, at most, two Malian NGOs. Gua Mina has received money for working with women in Timbuktu. The second is ACORD: originally created as an international NGO consortium in 1974, many Malian observers consider that ACORD has succeeded in making the transition to “Malian NGO”.

ACORD’s is the model programme in the North. The NGO put into practice the ideas of an FAO mission to relaunch the cooperatives in the wake of the 1974 drought, in order to create alternative development poles in areas where out-migration and loss of crops and livestock had severely disrupted the socio-economic structures of the communities. This was a time when the military regime had actually crushed the cooperatives, which were too closely associated with the previous regime of Modibo Keita. The French IRAM provided inspiration, and they provided André and Maryse Marty who worked with Adama Ouloguem and his team in the cooperative service to create seed banks and cereal banks and revolving loan systems for small ruminant herds, and community medicine within a cooperative structure of decentralized democratic governance. Transparency was achieved through democracy, and both were practised in the

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<sup>2</sup> For water and health, UNHCR has given money to ACORD, Action Contre la Faim, Norwegian Church Aid (AEN), Aide Médicale Internationale, Centre Canadien d’Etude et de Coopération Internationale, Comité pour Léré, GTZ Germany, and World Vision. Islamic Relief, Atlas and Equilibre and the Red Cross-Red Crescent are helping with refugee transit, and Gua Mina is organizing income generation in Léré (as are ACORD, ACF, AEN, CECI, and WV). See UNHCR 1996b, p. 4, table 3.

general assembly of each cooperative, which took decisions and supervised distributions. The following figures are taken from Coulibaly (1995, p. 28), who describes the programme in terms of “the tenacity, the mobilization of energies, the capacity for imagination which only come from ‘developers’ who listen to the grassroots structures of the people”.

ACORD started in Gao and spread westwards.<sup>3</sup> Within six years there were 12 livestock cooperatives functioning, six for fishermen, 39 village multi-functional *groupements*: a total of 101 villages and 40 nomad fractions were organized and 25 per cent of the population had received livestock or fishing loans. Nothing was given free. Everything was on credit. There were 90 seed banks giving out a bag of seed for sowing in June, receiving up to two bags of grain at harvest time: repayment rates varied from village to village, the main thing being that the poor no longer had to borrow seed from the money-lenders. One hundred per cent repayment rates were general for the first six years, until the crisis was over and repayments seemed less important for maintaining community solidarity. But the programme did not stop there. ACORD has continued to work with the communities, changing their activities (for example, increasing literacy and accountancy training) as the needs have evolved. Their constancy over 18 years in the North, says the current Director, provided a basis of mutual confidence which helped the NGO to act as mediator during the years of violence (Rita Ba 1995).

The success of ACORD and its NGO partners is best measured by the response of their customers. At the height of the troubles, when no vehicles could leave town without the danger of attack, the populations were in a state of shock. Many had vanished into the desert, and development programmes were grinding to a standstill. ACORD sent out the message to its partners that two General Assemblies would be held, one each for the pastoral and valley zones. To the surprise and pleasure of the NGOs, 85 groups sent representatives to the Menaka meeting, 65 to the second in Bourem. Certain delegates had travelled three days by camel, representing cooperative groups which were thought to have disappeared. Thereafter, development work began anew, using the “inverse method”. Since the NGO vehicles were grounded, the agro-pastoralists took on the travelling: they “inversed” the extension mechanism, bringing millet to

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<sup>3</sup> The backbone of programme funding came from ACORD’s founder members Oxfam, DWHH, Novib, NICOS, Inter Pares, War on Want, GARD. In the early days the World Council of Churches’ Sahel Team in Ouagadougou and Misereor provided additional financial support, with volunteers from Dutch SNV and French AFVP. There was also collaboration with the only national Malian NGO working in the 1970s: Secours catholique malienne (Secama).

exchange for improved seeds, collecting and disseminating technical details, collecting and reimbursing micro-credits.

In Timbuktu, ACORD's collaboration started in 1978 with Ile de Paix and Frères des Hommes and Terres des Hommes, and later with UNICEF. There were very few NGOs working in Mali then. The 1984 drought brought an influx of NGOs, which led to the creation of the *Comité de Coordination des Actions des ONG* (this period is described in detail in Muller 1989, and subsequent developments in Deme and Poulton 1998). There were virtually no national NGOs at all before 1982-83: which saw the creation of AMRAD, AMADE, AETA, OMAES, and Gua Mina, the first of the development NGOs to grow with Malian roots. It is easy to forget in 1997, with 550 local and 100 foreign NGOs registered in Mali, that the right of association was only won through the popular revolution of 1991. Considered a basic freedom by the democrats, this democratic right is constantly under threat from the habits of centralizing administration which were moulded by the one-party State. The concepts of "civil society" and "democratic governance" are not yet assured of victory.

It is this which worries us, when we see that United Nations and bilateral agencies are not developing the institutions of Mali's civil society. For it is the leaders of traditional and modern civil societies who have brought an end to the war and who must lead the peace. Nor are we proposing a simple repetition of past recipes. The best document yet produced on the relaunch of the North recommends specifically that "It is clear today to the authorities, to the populations concerned, to their development partners and to the NGOs, that there is an extreme need to reanalyse the question of development for these regions" (Coulibaly 1995, p. 30).

Among donors, it is the United Nations agencies who are most likely to join in this process of reflection (and indeed UNDP has already begun the process, under the creative impetus of Djédi Sylla and Ibrahim ag Youssouf). Most donors are reluctant to support long-term self-sustaining development. The "development banks" are the worst: far from the field and dominated by lines of zeros. Donor officials are praised in their headquarters for spending money. We have often heard, "Give us a BIGGER project!" Never mind the size and absorptive capacity of the village, let alone our conviction that development comes first through the mobilisation of national resources. We often hear:

“You’ve got to move the money in the current financial year!” Never mind that local communities follow the seasons, and not the accountants.<sup>4</sup>

What donors like is a “project”, a nice short thing, preferably with a building or some imported vehicles which can be photographed, and on which the donor can stick his logo. Some people don’t like funding water programmes because it is difficult to photograph an underground well, and how can you photograph the “health education” or “clean water management” components which make the difference between success or failure in a well-digging project? Yet that is what NGOs are good at: helping villagers to organize, to create wealth and human development. As the NGO planners emphasise, “the bilateral funders need to turn a corner in the direction of development. In place of big extrovert projects which are over-ambitious, we need to promote projects with modest targets which take account of the socio-economic realities in these regions” (Coulibaly 1995, p. 45). This is not a revolutionary approach: the OECD has long recognized that “donor projects” are a part of the problem, that we need to find alternative approaches (Lecomte 1986). It is small-scale, long-term grassroots development, and not the big flashy projects, which will help the development of the North. Yet again in 1997, even “good” donors such as the Dutch in Menaka and certain United Nations agencies look like they are going to fall into the trap of short-term “high spending projects”.

Donor agencies are famous for not learning from past mistakes. A good example is unfortunately at hand: free food handouts. There is only one natural and intelligent reaction to free gifts: “If we can get it for free, why bother to work for it?” This was precisely one of the great problems after the 1984 drought: there was so much free assistance that it was difficult to persuade villagers in northern Mali to take responsibility for their own development. The debate on linking relief with development is perennial. We thought that WFP had persuaded everyone to accept “food-for-work”. We thought the UNDP had convinced people to go for human development. We thought that the NGOs had won the debate in favour of long-term development strategies. It seems not. Even inside the United Nations, donors just go right ahead as they always did. In Chapter 7, we shall find UNHCR justifying non-cooperation with UNDP on the grounds that

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<sup>4</sup> We exempt from this general criticism the five-year funding policy of USAID NGO programmes, certain Dutch and Swiss projects, and the Micro-Realisation programme funded by the European Union: many of their actions have been positive in the direction of smaller grassroots interventions, despite their preference for funding overseas NGOs rather than local civil society. For the EU’s new (1997) ECHO programme in the North, it is too early for us to take a view.

their “mandates are different”: the hoary old separation of relief and development. We were present at a donor food meeting, where a NGO representative supporting food-for-work had three times been interrupted by “big” donors wanting free handouts. Finally the chairman gave her the floor and apologised. “It’s quite all right,” she smiled sweetly, “being from an NGO, I am used to not being listened to.” Meanwhile Western donors and Islamic donors, and the so-called “Development Banks” just “dish out the dosh”, increasing long-term debt and dependency without any reference to long term development goals.<sup>5</sup>

There is a classic Malian illustration that even the beneficiaries prefer food-for-work. When the refugees did not return in 1992, USAID found itself with 4,000 tons of inferior red sorghum which needed to be eaten, or it would rot. The sorghum was handed out free to people who had suffered seriously from banditry and theft. A gift is not the best cultural solution in northern Mali: the lack of reciprocity means that a gift restricts a recipient’s freedom and acts upon his honour. A Touareg fraction in Menaka approached GARI and World Vision to ask for help. “It is better to organize a work project, and then to pay people with grain for their work. This is preferable to giving the grain as gift to people who do not work. Therefore we wish you to come and help us organize an NGO food-for-work project.” This story travelled quickly around the North as an example of community purpose restored after the long years of post-drought depression. As we have often said in donor meetings that it takes years to build up a spirit of community independence, but you can re-establish dependency in a single day.

## 5.2 UNHCR and Refugees

Once again, we are not going to pretend that we have precise figures. We accept the UNHCR’s estimate that around 100,000 refugees had returned to Mali by the end of 1996. We are relying on secondary sources on refugees because we never had the opportunity to visit any of the refugee camps in Algeria or Mauritania or Burkina Faso<sup>6</sup> although we have seen and talked with plenty of

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<sup>5</sup> For a rationale of how donors and NGOs can and should work together, see the essay “On Theories and Strategies” in *Putting People First* (Poulton and Harris 1988). Donors find it difficult to accept civil society organizations as equals. Yet at a recent UNICEF meeting with NGOs on child development, it was pointed out that NGOs (in this case) were supplying four times more money than the UN.

<sup>6</sup> In particular data from and discussions with the UNHCR, and the excellent chapters on visits to Mauritania and Burkina Faso in the ACORD document of Cheibane Coulibaly, Gausso Drabo and Alassane ag Mohamed (Coulibaly 1995) pages 46-64. To these main sources

those who have returned and even more of those who never left, preferring to “disappear” into the sand dunes or into the discreet periphery of certain “safe cities” (like Sikasso and Hombory, where the leaders of traditional civil society refused to allow any expression of anger or racism). Adding together the internal and external refugees, more than a quarter of a million Malians were displaced by the troubles (maybe one third of the northern populations). Many, many more were economic victims of the troubles: the WFP (1997, p. 2) plans distributions to 300,000 people during 1997, based on figures of 150,000 returning refugees, 50,000 who are still internally displaced persons, and 100,000 economic victims.

The UNHCR 1995-96 Progress Report counted 150,000 Malians who sought refuge in neighbouring countries, of whom 76,344 had returned home between November 1995 and the end of 1996. Of these, UNHCR claims to have helped 21,545: 12,902 in convoys and using UNHCR transit centres inside Mali, and the rest with food and equipment packages to help them get re-started (tents, mosquito nets, and a 3-month food ration from WFP). Those remaining outside Mali at the end of 1996 were estimated at 87,000, and UNHCR was intending to help 82,000 to return during 1997. By the end of 1997, all the camps are expected to be closed. UNHCR assistance for resettlement will continue for another year inside Mali.

The return of the refugees is especially significant since they who fled the violence are the best judges of when it is safe to return. Without the refugees, there cannot be peace. Their return was hoped for and planned for in 1992-93. A few hundred did indeed make the journey home in May and June 1993, receiving support from the UNHCR and NGOs, but they had dispersed by September, driven out by renewed fighting, or by the lack of facilities (in particular many of the wells of Kidal had been spoiled by the army: shoot a camel and heave the corpse into a well, and who would want to drink the water?). In any case, wells in the desert need regular upkeep. The sand will take over as soon as there is neglect.

After the 1992 National Pact, and again after the 1995 *Rencontre de Tombouctou*, the UNHCR missed a chance to reduce Mali's refugee problem. At headquarters where the UNHCR is dealing with 26 million displaced persons world-wide, and responding to problems like 1.7 million refugees around the Great Lakes, it is understandable that a meagre 100,000 refugees can “get lost” when the Agency is choosing priorities. But one cannot deny that the UNHCR

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we have added information from press articles and from informal discussions with many anonymous people who know the subject or who have themselves been refugees.

offices in Bamako and Nouakchott (Mauritania) failed to appreciate what actions were appropriate for peace in the Sahara. Focusing on renting new accommodation and on immediate Bamako-based friction with a few Liberian and Central African individuals, the local office “missed the forest for the trees” in the North. Tardy attempts to respond were too office-bound, using “pro-forma” solutions like contracts for lorries (inappropriate for nomadic returnees). Money was given for digging three wells, which were never dug. In 1995 UNHCR headquarters realized that priority should be given to the areas to which the refugees were already returning, and in 1996 the Agency launched a dynamic campaign to improve reception zones, notably by concentrating on water.

**Table 5.2**  
**The Refugees still in Exile**

<b>Country of exile</b>	<b>Refugees in November 1996</b>
Algeria	12,397
Burkina Faso	24,979
Mauritania	25,462
Niger	24,701
<b>Total</b>	<b>87,539</b>

*Source:* UNHCR.

The UNHCR reports, “The repatriation of Malian refugees had a late and difficult start. The lack of UNHCR structures in the areas of return and the very limited availability of implementing partners in the areas of the former rebellion put serious constraints on the operation” (UNHCR 1996b, p. 6). The same report shows a much greater flexibility in the plans for 1997, insisting that, instead of focusing on transport, “assistance will be aimed at the communities receiving returnees [and] assistance will be delivered in a decentralized manner to the communities of origin....” This is probably the correct complementary strategy to the UNDP’s PAREM, which necessarily neglects the communities in favour of individual ex-combatants. Together UNDP and UNHCR can supply the leadership needed for development in the North. As a good start, the UNHCR has

now made contact with NGOs working right across the region (see footnote 2 above).

The refugees used a system of scouts (*éclairieurs*) who would go home and report back on local conditions, before the leaders decided whether it was safe to return. UNHCR initially missed the scouts, assuming that refugees would wait for instructions before returning. The UNHCR Regional Coordinator told us later, "No one is as well-informed as the refugees themselves!" At one level that is true, but official communications to the refugee camps were particularly weak, and rumour often took the place of fact. A 3-week-old letter arriving in Mauritania containing bad news, was frequently credited with greater authenticity than more recent good news heard on the radio. "It is easier to manage the conflict than to control rumours", an NGO worker told reporter Adam Thiam (1996), and this has to be blamed on the neglect of information systems firstly by the Malian Government, and secondly by the United Nations entities. The Malian authorities were scandalously neglectful of the refugees, many of whom never received a single visit from a government representative. Even today, this problem of information management could easily bedevil the reintegration of the refugees and the medium-term prospects for peace in the North. We shall recommend in Chapter 7 a much greater United Nations emphasis on communications, particularly in supporting local language radio.

Although the camps were relatively well managed by UNHCR, the initial handling of the refugee problem in Bamako was not a great success. In the search for permanent peace, Coulibaly et al demand:

... a less bureaucratic approach to refugee problems. Traditional administrative practice in international organizations is to treat problems in a global fashion. This means that refugees are considered to be an indistinct mass. They are then divided into contingents for repatriation to pre-arranged sites. This approach runs counter to refugees' independent decisions to return to sites which they select instinctively. UNHCR needs to adjust to this new phenomenon, instead of trying to change the refugees' perceptions to fit a pre-determined plan. In this regard NGOs seem to us better equipped than traditional administrations, better able to adapt. It would be useful to design new forms of collaboration between NGOs, the State, and the international agencies (1995, p. 21).

The refugees are the litmus paper of peace in northern Mali. In the beginning, people kept their heads down and waited for the storm to pass. The fighting of 1990 and riots in Bamako's streets forced the dictatorship to negotiate, and 1991 started positively with the January *Accords de Tamanrasset* and the March overthrow of General Moussa Traore. Banditry continued, however, and on 20 May 1991 a young army officer in Léré lost his temper. Unable to catch the

bandits, who were stealing cattle or vehicles and fleeing across the nearby Mauritanian frontier, he lined up a score of elderly Arab and Touareg merchants and their sons, and shot them in the market square. For the frustrated, poorly educated soldiery, this was an act of heroism. The Transitional Government was appalled, but paralysed: the revolution was less than two months old, after 23 years of military rule. For the “red-skinned” populations, it was an act of butchery. Before the end of May, half the Touareg and Arab tents of Timbuktu Region had crossed into Mauritania. The refugee problem had begun. By 1995 there were three camps holding an estimated 55,000 people. Around 65 per cent were Touareg, 35 per cent Arab (Coulibaly 1995, p. 47). To these we must add the 5,000-or-so refugees who dispersed into the rest of Mauritania, who stayed in the dunes with their herds, or who went to and fro across the Malian border (including traders and armed raiders).

In Algeria, there had been refugees since the repression of the 1960s, swelled by the droughts of 1974 and 1984. Whereas those in Mauritania migrated from the mixed Timbuktu region, those in Algeria were from Kidal and Menaka and Gao, therefore all *Kel Tamacheq* in origin. The older refugees had been largely absorbed into the society of southern Algeria, or had moved on to Libya; the new refugees were grouped in camps close to the Malian frontier, although many of the men drifted towards Tamanrasset in search of wages.

The camps of Burkina Faso were quite different. We find a broad cross-section of Malian society who all happened to be light-skinned. When violence flared in 1994, and the southern populations began to talk of ethnic cleansing, teachers and traders and civil servants, and even army officers were forced to move their families out of the towns and barracks. Under threat of a *pogrom*,<sup>7</sup> they took to the nearest tarmac road, and headed for Burkina. The temperature in the camps of Burkina was quite different from those in the north and west. Here there were people who had served Mali, and who were bitter at their treatment. None of these people was in the least attracted to the rebel movements or the concept of Azawad: but after a year of neglect in the camps, even some of these urban refugees started wondering whether Azawad would give them kinder treatment. Cheibane Coulibaly spoke with:

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<sup>7</sup> This was the word used by Mali’s Prime Minister in relation to the massacre in October 1994 of the well-known *marabout* Anara and around 60 other members of the Kel Essouk, after the FIAA had bombarded Gao for three hours, attempting to draw the army into battle. The response demonstrated the lack of political control over the army. The Kel Essouk fled to Niger, while other groups left Mali to swell the refugee numbers in Burkina Faso.

... people in every sort and state of health. There were healthy people capable of productive work, some of whom were active in the sort of speculative trade that arises in refugee camps the world over. Others were men and women who had been left for dead by their attackers, carrying the scars of the sometimes hideous wounds which they had received when their camps were attacked. There were children practically traumatized by the memory of their parents' sufferings, of which they had sometimes been the unhappy witnesses (1995, p. 53).

The numbers in Burkina are as difficult to judge as those elsewhere: "official" figures always appear larger than the reality. Nomads are as hard to count as their sheep. Probably between 35,000 and 50,000 Malians sought refuge in Burkina. Since many of them were Francophone, they had more obvious affinities with the town, and some of them had relatives in Ouagadougou. It was not uncommon to find the family in town and their representative in the camp, claiming what he could from the UNHCR. No one can blame him.

From the point of view of Mali's political climate, the Burkina refugees challenged southern prejudice. These were not nomads, but neighbours and colleagues. They had not fled from Mali into "white" countries like Algeria and Mauritania: here were light-skinned Malians being offered refuge by black-skinned Burkinabé. Certain leaders of Mali's political opposition who had been preaching a message of discrimination, now saw in the Burkina refugees a disquieting mirror-image of their politics. Meanwhile the government preached tolerance and sought to bring the military under political control.

The UNHCR and WFP seem to have done an excellent job with the refugees outside Mali, once the problem was recognized. Adequate rations were delivered efficiently. In Mauritania and Burkina, the UNHCR used local NGOs as partners and their contributions are generally reckoned very positive. In Burkina, the NGO Delwendé was chosen by the authorities to be the UNHCR's partner, since the authorities wished to avoid government involvement in food distribution. We hear the usual criticisms about "mafias" and "inefficiencies" which, in West Africa, need to be taken with the proverbial pinch of salt although it does seem that Delwendé, used to working with peasant farmers, was not easily attuned the needs and social organization of their demanding Touareg customers.

In Mauritania, the authorities chose to place the refugees firmly under the supervision of the Garde Nationale, whose manipulations were the cause of much complaining. However, "relations are excellent between HCR and the refugees. Despite the obtuseness and obstructionism of certain Mauritanian (and even Malian) agents, the refugees have no doubts concerning the nobility of the objectives of the humanitarian and charitable institutions" (Coulibaly 1995, p. 50).

With UNHCR funding, the Comité International Catholique pour la Migration (CICM) made a great impact in the Mauritanian camps, on a conservative Arab and Touareg population. The majority of refugees worldwide are women and children. These were the CICM goals in Mauritania: schooling for the children and income generation for their mothers. To achieve attendance of 3,000 children in 45 classrooms is remarkable, in this Islamic and nomadic culture which rejected the colonial school system. The social impact has been striking: refugees are returning to Mali with education as their priority demand, after food and water. In Burkina, many refugees from an urban environment made education their priority. The North has been under-represented in national Malian life, partly because the Touareg and Arab and Fulani populations were unenthusiastic about modern schooling. It seems that in the future, northern parents will demand a better quality of learning for their children than the traditional Koranic lessons around a blazing fire. This change in attitudes to education is a challenge which Mali must meet.

Changes in attitude have taken place in other areas as well as education. The whole nature of social and economic organization will be altered by the experience of the camps. Local camp committees have been looking after welfare and distribution for several years, far from the traditional clan hierarchies of the Sahara. Just as the original rebellion was partly against the social hierarchy, so the refugees have become emancipated. Trading mafias aside, this has especially influenced the way in which women have been able to express their desires. We believe that Westerners generally under-estimate the power of African women, who have ways to express their point of view before decisions are taken. But those who visited the camps state unequivocally that “the women have achieved great economic results with their artisan crafts, and they are taking a growing part in activities inside the camps: resulting in a revolution of mentalities” (Coulibaly 1995, p. 48).

Where women are heads of family and where men are absent, it is unsurprising that social change will result. The success of refugee-made Malian handicrafts in the Nouakchott and Dakar craft fairs has led to new demand in Europe. Mali’s best leather work comes from the women of the Touareg *inaden* clan, whose blacksmith husbands make the world-famous Touareg swords and daggers. “What Mali needs most in this area,” says Madame Fatou Haidara, the minister responsible for the sector, “is reliable export outlets. We always do well in exhibitions, but we need long-term sales.” The NGO-sponsored refugee exhibitions may have led to new dynamism on both ends of the business: new outlets, and a new realization by the women of what the export market wants in terms of organization and style, and above all, quality. And the demand for

greater government and donor support for the development of the North in 1997 includes a new element: access to appropriate and flexible credit, especially for women.

Things are changing. As the Director of ACORD, a Malian woman, explains:

You can see what is happening: the men go off to war, and the women stay home to work. They take on both their own responsibilities, and also those of their menfolk. In our programmes we have put emphasis on developing their capacities, on helping women to face every type of new situation, to develop survival strategies which will allow them to handle every eventuality (Rita Ba 1995).

Most of all perhaps, social change can be perceived in the refugees' desire to get home to vote in the 1997 and 1998 elections. Without the refugees' participation, the elections in the North will not be fully democratic: even if the authorities repeat their extraordinary efforts of 1992, where *Chefs d'Arrondissement* took travelling voting booths across the dunes by camel and even, in the case of one area of Goundam with no transport, carried on the head of a uniformed guard. Even more than the rest of the northern population, it is the refugees outside the country who are insisting on the need to restore the services of the State. To some degree they see this as a guarantee of stability, a restoration of law and order: for they are the ones who fled from the repression of the movements first, the army and the civil population later. Many are also afraid of losing their economic space, if they stay away any longer. But more than anything, they see returning to their homes as the only way for them to regain a place in the fabric of the Malian nation.

### 5.3 United Nations Missions on Micro-disarmament

As the machinery of negotiation jerked forwards and backwards in Mali, President Alpha Oumar Konaré had a meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations to discuss the problem of illicit small arms in West Africa.<sup>8</sup> The Malian President asked for United Nations help with the control of small arms. The huge numbers of AK47 and other automatic weapons which have poured into hot spots like Chad, Liberia and Sierra Leone, make for insecurity throughout West Africa. Frontiers are permeable. Dissident groups move from one country to another. Nomadic traders with a tradition of self-defence can easily add a *kalashnikov* to their usual supplies of tea and sugar and torch batteries.

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<sup>8</sup> The occasion was the 1993 *Conférence de la Francophonie* in Mauritius.

Conveniently concealed inside a sack of grain, an old AK47 can be bought for as little as \$35, and resold for three times that price. More dangerous still, a climate of insecurity encourages drivers and herders to purchase weapons for their own protection, so that ownership of weapons becomes tolerated, accepted, even admired.

The notes of the Mauritius meeting were passed from Boutros Boutros-Ghali to his political secretariat, and from there to the United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs where they landed on the desk of a certain Ivor Richard Fung. The United Nations has been concentrating increasingly on preventive diplomacy (Silva 1995): the share of the UN's budget devoted to preventive diplomacy has risen significantly in the past three years. Ivor Fung happens to be especially interested in the control of small arms, and since he is himself from Cameroon, the idea of experimenting with arms control in West Africa had a double attraction. He called on Mali's Ambassador at the United Nations, the President of Mali wrote a letter to confirm his request for United Nations assistance, and the ball was rolling for a UN advisory mission.

The United Nations coined the term "micro-disarmament" to describe their interest in the control of small arms. "We had to start somewhere, so why not in West Africa?" Fung smiled happily, as the November 1996 United Nations conference ended successfully in Bamako (UNDP 1996), giving further impetus to the micro-disarmament initiative. He explained:

The UN can only become involved if a Member State invites us to take action. We never became involved in the Malian peace process; but with the letter about small arms which we received from Mali's President, we were able to set in motion a parallel process which helped to promote a general climate of peace. And it looks as if it is going to work. The Conference has concluded that we must have "security first", if we want to promote sustainable human development in Africa. The Conference has even expressed interest in Mali's suggestion that states should declare a Moratorium on the import, export and manufacture of small-arms in the sub-region, and has suggested that there should be a sub-regional meeting at ministerial level to study this idea.

Four months later, at Bamako's Week of Peace (celebrating on 27 March 1997 the first anniversary of Timbuktu's Flame of Peace), participants at the sub-regional meeting at ministerial level requested the United Nations and Mali's Foreign Minister to pursue the moratorium initiative with Mali's neighbours.

Although they had nothing directly to do with the Touaregs, there is no doubt that the two United Nations advisory missions on small arms were helpful drops of oil in the machinery of negotiation and disarmament, particularly with regard to the Malian military. The United Nations looked around for suitable mission

leaders, and came up with a happy combination of diplomatic and disarmament experience. As leader of the mission, the United Nations chose William Eteki-Mboumoua of Cameroon, a former Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity. Eteki brought seniority and stature to the mission. As his deputy, the UN chose Brigadier General (retired) Henny van der Graaf, who is, like Eteki, a Member of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. The General is applying his practical military experience, as Director of the Center for Arms Control and Verification Technology at the Eindhoven University of Technology (the Netherlands). General van der Graaf was accompanied by Colonel Douglas Fraser of Canada, so the military component of the mission was significantly weighty. Col Fraser acted as Secretary to the advisory mission, and Ivor Fung was the Deputy Secretary.

The first mission in August 1994, which visited only Mali, concluded that "the situation was severely affecting socio-economic development, thus contributing to a vicious cycle leading to even more illicit weapons... (but) the situation was not unique to Mali and had to be addressed in a sub-regional context". There was a need to organize a weapons collection programme in Mali, but this couldn't happen unless the overall security situation improved (Eteki 1996, Executive Summary). This led to a second advisory mission in March 1995, which visited six other countries in West Africa (Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal), following the same method of work used during the previous visit to Mali.

While suspicious of the idea of a United Nations mission, it was highly reassuring to the Malian military to receive "two of their own": in this case a brigadier general and a colonel. The general's rank was especially significant: it happened that the only person of equivalent rank in active service in the Malian army at that time, was the former Head of State, ATT, so General van der Graaf automatically received VIP treatment wherever he went. The Malian military appreciated Henny's cheerful disposition and West African informality. But West Africa is also a place of elegance, drama and style, and the Malians were disappointed that their distinguished visiting General always appeared in mufti. Henny realized that General van der Graaf should appear in uniform on more formal occasions, so he phoned the Netherlands to order a full dress uniform "complete with gongs and bells". But we are getting too far ahead, to a time when the UN mission had succeeded in breaking through the ice.

The first advisory mission took place at a moment of great tension and high insecurity in the North. The Malian authorities had always wanted to avoid the North becoming "internationalized", and nowhere was this feeling stronger than inside the Ministry of Defence. Eteki and his team were therefore received with

suspicion. When they started asking questions, their hosts objected that this was “an advisory mission, and not a mission of enquiry”. After thirty years of Soviet training, the Malian officer corps is secretive to a fault. This leads to the situation where no one will release even an opinion (let alone a fact) without the authority of his superiors... which he will never dare to request. One of the French military attachés we talked to, described the Malian military as “paralysed by fear of hierarchy, rather like the French army during the 1930s”.

That the mission overcame these hurdles of suspicion is evident from the fact that General van der Graaf has been back to Mali on several occasions, and was one of the weapons certifiers at the Flame of Peace in Timbuktu in March 1996. By this time the general was a good friend of many of Mali’s colonels, which was definitely helpful to the process of establishing dialogue between the civilian and military parts of the Government, and to the gradual establishment of civilian political control over a military institution which had, for 23 years prior to 1991, known only the military authority of Moussa Traore’s regime.

It is clear that the UN missions have also been helpful in catalysing contacts and coordination between States in the sub-region. Since the 1994 meetings in Banjul (April), Bamako (August) and Lomé (December), and under pressure from the Liberian crisis, various governments have agreed to improve contacts, exchange intelligence and harmonize legislation concerning small arms: loosely defined as weapons which can be carried by one or two men, and which require very little maintenance. The effect of these initiatives is not yet clear. At the request of the United Nations and in order to provide the advisory mission with a counterpart body, each country established a National Commission on Light Weapons. The United Nations November 1996 Conference on micro-disarmament provided a forum in which the National Commissions from a number of countries were able to meet in Bamako and discuss common problems. Eteki-Mboumoua, van der Graaf and Fung all made presentations at this conference (UNDP 1996), which may prove to be a catalyst both for cross-border cooperation between neighbours, and for the internal dynamics of small arms control in the host country, Mali.

We shall give the last word in this chapter on micro-disarmament to the mission leader, making the argument in favour of funding “security first” as part of the process of socio-economic development:

... there will be no opportunity for the voluntary collection of illicit light weapons until the citizenry are willing to give up their personal weapons and self-defence units, and those engaged in banditry out of a sense of survival, are relieved of that necessity. This will only happen when they are sure that the authorities can provide the necessary security environment and are making every effort to improve their economic conditions.

The sub-region is a clear case where assistance in the security field must be integrated with other forms of development aid.... democratic structures can only be cultivated and survive when there is a satisfactory level of development. Development in turn requires a stable security environment. One way to achieve that situation is to allocate a proportion of development assistance for security (Eteki 1996, p. 10).

#### 5.4 A Political Adviser Arrives within UNDP

From the point of view of the United Nations as an institution, the most innovative development of the Malian case-study is the fact that the United Nations Development Programme and the UN Secretariat were able to collaborate in the field for the first time in peacemaking and preventive diplomacy. The idea had been broached before, without success. UNDP Resident Representatives are not always inclined to take risks. Raised in a development bureaucracy, many of them are unable to grasp the political dimension of a situation as complex as Mali's. With hindsight, it was a happy thought which led the UNDP to appoint their man in Algeria as Resident Representative in Mali. Tore Rose (a Norwegian) arrived in Bamako with some familiarity concerning the political situation in the whole of the Sahara region. He quickly realized the importance for Mali's "development challenge" of establishing dialogue and peace in the North, and set about creating a good working relationship with the *Commissaire au Nord*, Mahamadou Diagouraga. The two men possess similar qualities of unflappable optimism and calm leadership. Their collaboration has been important for the success of the Malian peacemaking.

This is an area which illustrates vividly the importance of individual personalities. It is an illusion to think—except in the most general terms—of "administrative continuity" or "institutional memory". Development agencies in general are guilty of poor memory, whether at the field level, or in Headquarters. In the present case, the United Nations system was able to work successfully because a few key people wanted it to work. None of them was trying to score points off the other. Each saw an advantage in collaborating, both for Mali and for the United Nations. In Mali, the UNDP Resident Representative/UN Resident Coordinator had established a partnership with the Presidency and the Government of Mali. He received growing support from the UNDP Director of the Bureau for Africa, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, who was prepared to take a few political risks in the cause of West African peace. Across 1st Avenue in New York, the UN Centre for Disarmament Affairs led by Prvoslav Davinic (of former Yugoslavia) was keen to follow up the chance to control small arms, and

saw in Mali a pressure point which could influence peace in the whole sub-region. In particular, Ivor Richard Fung from Cameroon was prepared to go to Mali and make it happen, with the sustained support of the USG and ASG.<sup>9</sup> Unusually for a large bureaucracy (any large bureaucracy), no one seems to have raised objections: everyone was prepared to take a risk for Peace.

When the micro-disarmament issue was raised from New York, Rose recognized its importance for the whole African region, and its potential as a catalyst for peace within Mali, and promoted the radical notion of receiving Fung as political adviser in his UNDP office. Around the two of them, a small group of informal advisers provided input and ideas. Fung makes friends easily. As a West African himself, he knows how to talk to Malians, even to suspicious colonels. With Rose behind him, Fung gained the trust of the key Malian officials, in particular inside the Presidency and the Defence Ministry, and also inside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Whenever Ivor needed support, Tore made himself available. If a speech needed to be made, Tore Rose donned the cap of UN Resident Coordinator and made the speech.

Ivor Fung's title was entirely internal: as Political Adviser to the Resident Coordinator he was neither Deputy nor Assistant Representative of UNDP and was well down the official diplomatic hierarchy (if indeed he was within the hierarchy at all). As Fung worked to establish dialogue with the different components of the Malian state apparatus, he was variously introduced as "Political Expert", "UN political representative", and even on occasion as the "Representative of the Secretary-General". This Resident Coordinator never felt threatened if his political adviser suddenly jumped from the second story of the UNDP building in Bamako, to the twenty-eighth floor of the UN Secretariat in New York. Thus Fung's prestige moved up and down the diplomatic scale as a function of the requirements of each meeting. If an army General chose to impress his colonels with a grandiose title for Fung, the United Nations was tolerant. The agenda was peace for Mali and not personal titles nor status. Not all diplomats show this degree of maturity. The United Nations collaboration was successful because it had defined a clear hierarchy in the priorities, of which personal status was not one.

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<sup>9</sup> Under Secretary-General Murrack Goulding and Assistant Secretary-General Lansana Kouyaté were the people in charge of Davinic's Centre for Disarmament Affairs. Mr. Kouyaté was replaced in March 1997 by Ibrahima Fall, formerly head of the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva. Mr. Fall, who led the United Nations delegation to the Flame of Peace in 1996 and who read out the Secretary-General's personal message to Timbuktu, has continued to provide strong support for Ivor Fung and the micro-disarmament initiative.

And the same was true of the Government of Mali, which took advantage of Fung's presence at the various civilian and military and political pressure points along the peace process. All the initiatives we have described above had their origins in this partnership: the advisory missions, the Trust Fund, the Flame of Peace, the UN sub-regional conferences, the code of conduct on civilian-military relations, the moratorium initiative on small arms. The UN's drops of oil into the GRM's machinery of peace helped it to turn smoothly. If such team-work can be reproduced elsewhere, then there is no doubt that the Malian model offers not only a system for mobilising civil society in peace negotiations, but also a new approach for United Nations preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building.

### **5.5 Coordinating Donor Responses: United Nations, Swiss, US and NGO Efforts**

We have noted the absence of donor support in 1992, when the *Pacte National* had been signed and elections were leading to the inauguration of Dr. Alpha Oumar Konaré as Mali's first elected President. In 1996-97 the situation is very different, for the UNDP and the UN/DPA have created a Trust Fund with contributions of nearly \$10 million in early 1997. Into this Trust Fund not only several donors, but also the Malian Government (\$1 million) have paid contributions. The combining of United Nations development and political skills has been appreciated by donors. The Trust Fund stands out as a splendid and appropriate piece of United Nations leadership. But one is bound to wonder: "Where was UN leadership in 1992, when the new democratic government most needed it?"

The answer appears to be: "Nowhere." Back in 1992 the United Nations was coordinating itself between agencies, but it was not providing wider leadership to the development community. There was a small international observer corps which followed the Malian legislative and presidential elections: but it was not the UN Resident Coordinator who arranged it. It was the dynamic head of Canadian Cooperation, Denis Baudouin who proposed the idea to Abdourahmane Niang, organizer of the elections within the Malian Ministry of the Interior (no independent electoral commission had been created at that time: this had to wait until 1996-97). Niang was cautiously encouraging, and so the Canadian initiative went ahead with additional support from USAID and the Dutch.

United Nations leadership was not much more visible on the development side: although at the end of 1992 the inter-agency mission to the North brought

new momentum, and led to a valuable development conference of all parties in February 1993.<sup>10</sup> On a day-to-day basis it was largely the Swiss Consul Jean-Claude Berberat (who was funding long-term development in Niafunké), and Robin Poulton (managing the numerous NGO projects of USAID), who kept the development agencies ticking over, even when there was little or nothing to be done in the field. By funding activities like Timbuktu food depots for returning refugees coordinated by Care Mali; initiating a joint health plan for the North coordinated by the CCA-ONG pivot-group for child survival; paying salaries for project staff even if they were not able to work in the North; and by keeping the momentum of monthly information meetings on development progress and security news from the field, the Swiss, the Americans and other NGO funders succeeded in maintaining an illusion of development, at a time when many of the international and bilateral agencies had simply closed up shop. The constant movements of Red Cross vehicles maintained the image of activity. In 1990-94, USAID Director Dennis Brennan used his funding to keep NGOs in the North when some wanted to pull out. He understood the strategic importance of supporting peace, and the psychological need to keep development activity alive in the towns at least. USAID Mali even continued to fund World Vision operating out of Niamey, in Niger, in order to maintain the development effort in Menaka. The illusion of activity was important for keeping hope alive among the northern populations, and it showed support for the beleaguered Malian administration. The Swiss monthly meetings were where the illusion found expression in Bamako. Later the CCA-ONG took over running the meetings, but over time these lost their impetus, and eventually their *raison d'être*.

One lesson we can draw from this experience, as the meetings died during 1995-96, is that a successful coordinator has to have some financial leverage or people lose interest. In other countries, the UNDP (or UNICEF or WFP) has played a coordinating role. Since NGOs are notoriously reluctant to be coordinated (or even to collaborate), it is difficult for any one NGO—or for a voluntary association such as the CCA-ONG in Mali—to exercise the influence needed for coordination. The local government and the bilateral donors are

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<sup>10</sup> Our examples show that the United Nations was not absent (indeed UNDP provided funding for the elections), but that it was shying away from a leadership role. It can be argued that the GRM and United Nations were being cautious not to antagonize the French, or leaving the field clear for Algerian mediation between the armed factions. We believe that the UN inter-agency mission and the subsequent *Journées de Concertation* took place only because certain United Nations officials pushed them individually, succeeding in overcoming their bosses' reluctance to take a lead in anything controversial.

always politically tainted, and often (though not so often in Mali today) it is the government which causes many of the problems. So the UN Resident Coordinator does occupy an advantageous position, if the incumbent has the imagination to use his prestige and neutrality.<sup>11</sup> The model of United Nations coordination was in Ethiopia. Although it has been written up by Kurt Jansson (1987) who was the UN Special Representative, it is surprising how few United Nations staff are familiar with the story (all the more surprising since it is a UN success story). Should the United Nations ever consider that a coordinating role for NGOs is appropriate (and we believe that it is), then flexible and adequate funding commitments would play a significant role in giving the UN coordination some "bite".

Since 1994 the UNDP has begun to play a coordination role among the official donors in Bamako, although not among the NGOs. In late 1994, the UNDP organized a meeting in Geneva between the GRM and the donors, at which the organizers cleverly avoided "pledging" (which donors hate) and insisted rather on bringing Mali's development partners into the Government's process of thinking about peace and development. This led to the Timbuktu Round Table in July 1995: again this was not a pledging conference, but a visible proof that peace had arrived in the North. "On this occasion," says UNDP Resident Representative Rose, "the Government formally requested the Resident Coordinator to begin playing a facilitating role in contacts with the donor community on the question of the North" (Rose 1996, p. 3).

The creation of the Trust Fund and its funding of PAREM (the programme for reinsertion of ex-combatants which we describe in Chapter 4.8) has provided some linkage in the North since 1996, which involves most of the development players including NGOs (at least the international ones). Although UNICEF closed its office in Timbuktu, to everyone's dismay, there has been additional coordination from UNHCR through its funding of the major NGOs in preparing resettlement sites during 1996-97. Again, this has concerned only the international NGOs: there is a risk that these worthy efforts will miss the opportunity to strengthen the institutions of Malian civil society through which peace must come.

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<sup>11</sup> Outsiders' perception of the UN Resident Coordinator may however be affected by his nationality. The United Nations must avoid becoming a cosy club for local politicians, and it must avoid becoming associated with political, clan or family interests. As a general rule, in order to protect United Nations neutrality, we believe that it is undesirable to appoint United Nations international staff from neighbouring (or even nearby) countries, since cultures and politics often overlap "national" frontiers.

There is a constant risk indeed that the voice of civil society will never be heard in development strategy meetings. When governments claim to speak for their NGOs, they negate the very concept of a “non-governmental” voice. Often donor diplomats say it is unnecessary for them to “consult” with NGOs: yet the idea that an Ambassador could speak for “his” national NGOs appears laughable, when one compares the differing objectives and work environment of the two. The same is true for host governments, whose bureaucrats are only too happy to take the place of NGOs and other civil society spokesmen and women (especially the women), usually in the hope of maintaining their personal prerogatives at the expense of grassroots organizations. Thus, there are supposed to be sectoral commissions within the Malian *Commission paritaire pour le Nord* which include NGOs, but NGOs are not invited to the main forum. In any case, during the whole of 1994 it only met once. And if the NGOs are not heard, it is partly their own fault: if the NGO community was better organized and had better leadership, it could make itself indispensable: this has been proven at the international level by issues such as the environment, children’s rights, and the abolition of anti-personnel landmines where civil society has led international opinion.

The revival since 1995 of the *Commission paritaire* opened the possibility for improved donor coordination: it is chaired jointly by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and a donor (in 1997 this is the UN Resident Coordinator: succeeding the German Ambassador, who took over from the European Union Delegate). The fact that the United Nations has been given the Chair is a tribute to its success in coordination *de facto* around Peace in the North.

United Nations coordination efforts are not without their critics, naturally. At the time of the Timbuktu Round Table in July 1995, the UNDP was the GRM’s principal adviser and funder (and the UNDP actually made the thing happen at a time when Timbuktu was in pretty bad shape). At the same time, UNDP was persuading the specialized agencies and the bilateral donors to agree to take part in the meeting. Certain donors considered that the UNDP had placed itself in “a conflict of interest”, by siding with both the donors and the government. This somewhat punctilious point of view is apparently based on a conflictual perception of development and diplomacy: it is a view which we do not share. For us the struggle should not be against the partner government, but against the problems of hunger and disease and poverty and injustice which all the United Nations and donor agencies are supposed to be fighting.

There is another point to be made here (which we shall re-address in Chapter 7 when we consider “national sovereignty”): the United Nations is not a foreign embassy, the UN Resident Coordinator and his colleagues do not work for a foreign government. The UNDP being a multilateral organization, the host

Government is actually one of its “bosses”. Indeed every Member State may send a representative to sit on the Executive Board of every UN Agency. Thus the donor governments are also “bosses”. The United Nations should be the principal and most active of the government’s development partners in every country. The United Nations should, in our view, serve as the natural coordinating mechanism for all donors and NGOs, together with national government agencies.

It is clear that the UN Resident Coordinator will be stronger, if he can unite the United Nations specialized agencies behind him (or her). We address this issue below. In the meantime, it is important for UNDP to remember that donor jealousies exist outside as well as within the United Nations family.

## 5.6 The United Nations Trust Fund for the North

The Round Table of July 1995 was the occasion for the Government not only to show the world that peace was returning to Timbuktu, but also to present their plans for winning the peace. They called this the *Programme de normalisation et de réhabilitation au Nord* or PNR: rehabilitating the North and getting life back to normal. The UNDP was the government’s principal partner both for the organization of the meeting, and also in the endeavour of planning for the future. To support the PNR and to fund a process of peace-building, the UNDP and the UN/DPA took the happy initiative of jointly creating a Trust Fund.

The terms of reference of the UN Trust Fund for North Mali, to support the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, situate its creation firmly in the aftermath of the July 1995 Timbuktu meeting. They state in particular that “while confidence is returning in North Mali it is extremely fragile and hence, there is a great urgency to initiate concrete actions on the ground in order to underpin the securization of the region; ... (there are) procedural difficulties experienced by certain development partners in delivering some types of security-related development assistance through their normal channels....”

To some extent, the level of contribution represents the level of understanding by the donor—or by their local representative—of the strategic significance for peace in northern Mali. Some donor representatives have a broader perspective than others, but most of them can see that, without peace in the North, there cannot be development in the South, nor in the sub-region. If northern Mali breaks down into ethnic strife, there will be ethnic and religious wars from Mauritania to Sudan, which will inevitably impact on the stability of Algeria and northern Nigeria. So well done to the Bamako heads of delegations

of USA, Norway, Netherlands and Canada, Belgium, Japan, and France who all made significant contributions by early 1997.

But perhaps the most important contribution is the \$1 million made by the Government of the Republic of Mali to the Trust Fund. We cannot say whether this gesture is a first in Africa, but it is startling. One million dollars represents a big budgetary effort for a poor country, so the Government is “putting its money where its mouth is”. The GRM gesture is also very significant in terms of the relationship which Mali is wanting to establish with its development partners: “partnership” implies that neither side is a beggar, and nor is it acceptable for one partner to sit waiting to hear what the other will graciously give. Partnership implies a joint commitment to peace and development, a genuine dialogue between recipient and donors.

The Government had asked the United Nations to coordinate the Timbuktu donor meeting of July 1995, and the Trust Fund document goes on to speak of “the Malian Government’s wish that the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Mali act as facilitator in the contacts between the Government of Mali and its development partners for the funding of civil and administrative rehabilitation and development projects in North Mali.” We shall return to this theme in the last chapter.

By late 1997, the Trust Fund had almost \$10 million pledged out of a total needed of \$12 million. That is not enough. Even an expanded Trust Fund is a tiny investment. In one sense of course, there is no limit, and the sums requested are likely to rise as new opportunities emerge or as new crises arise (for who can predict rainfall patterns in the Sahel? 1998 predictions are dire for the whole tropical belt). But with donors spending \$1 million per day on Rwandan refugees during the past three years (and this takes no account of military expenditures), the Malian peace-building operation is really very cheap. Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building are good investments. “He that has ears to hear, let him hear.”

**Table 5.3**  
**Income to the UN Trust Fund to Support the**  
**Peace Process in North Mali**

<b>Donor country</b>	<b>Amount announced</b>	<b>Amount received (US \$)</b>
Mali	US \$ 1,000,000	873,596*
USAID	US \$ 2,000,000	2,000,000
Netherlands	US \$ 571,430	564,739*
Norway	US \$ 2,540,092	2,540,092
Canada	US \$ 735,294	735,294
Belgium	US \$ 1,000,000	937,500*
France	FF 10,000,000	904,272*
Japan	US \$ 1,000,000	1,000,000
Switzerland	SF 200,000	137,931**
<b>Total</b>	<b>US \$ 9,984,747</b>	<b>9,693,424</b>

Source: UNDP Bamako at 31.10.97.

\* Exchange rates at the time of payment in national currency diminished the dollar value of these amounts.

\*\* Swiss Francs 200,000 promised but not yet received in cash.

The Government's programme for the North (PNR) set out to address the following objectives (outlined in the GRM presentation document for PAREM dated 16 May 1996; actual 1997 figures appear in our earlier discussion of PAREM):

- demobilization of around 1,500 ex-combatants through the cantonment process;
- integration of around 1,650 ex-combatants into government civil and armed services;

- registration of all ex-combatants not in the cantonments (around 6,610);
- creation and start-up of a support structure; and
- start-up of re-insertion activities for ex-combatants (starting with those who were in the cantonments but who did not get into a government service): training, creation of salaried jobs, creation of self-employment, and of small and micro-enterprises.

PAREM is the first programme to be funded from the Trust Fund: its work is described in Chapter 4.8. But while PAREM will have finished its task of re-insertion at the end of 1997, the Trust Fund should live on. There is here the germ of a process of long-term development for civil society which is very precious, and which promises well for the disciplines of democratic governance. We return to this idea in Annex 4.

**Table 5.4**  
**Expenditures from the UN Trust Fund**

Activity	\$ US
Reactivating the administration	5,880
Restoring security	38,360
Demobilization of combatants	1,175,000
Health infrastructure	4,080
Education infrastructure	28,360
Integration of ex-combatants into administration and civil society	1,471,260
Communication plan	3,500
PAREM projects:	
- agriculture	764,633
- livestock	2,275,223
- commerce	2,315,996
- training and other projects	498,797
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,581,089</b>

Source: UNDP Bamako at 31.10.97.

The Trust Fund should become a permanent foundation for peace-building. In the West, foundations fall into the category of “philanthropy”. This word has been distorted by crooks dishing out money in the Anglophone world and by paternalistic manipulation in 19th century France, but the concept of philanthropy is a noble one, and is actually one of the Five Pillars of Islam (*zaqat*). Philanthropic foundations are now recognized in Malian legal practice (Thiam and Tipper 1993). The UN Trust Fund, however, is not about philanthropy. This is a case of self-interest for all those individuals and governments who have an interest in winning the peace through long-term human development. The alternative to peace and stability is failure, and the revival of a conflict which will spread like a gangrene across the whole Sahara region.

## 5.7 Leading the United Nations Family

A good bureaucrat, like a careful diplomat, never takes a risk: but a too-good bureaucrat, like a too-careful diplomat, makes a lousy UNDP Resident Representative, and a worse UN Resident Coordinator. The qualities needed for leadership include political vision, willingness to take a risk, strength of character and strength of purpose, a grasp of wider issues and an engaging personality. It is not easy to find the right combination. Yet without it, the UN Resident Coordinator will not easily command the respect needed for his role.

UNDP has its hands full with the disputatious United Nations family, which has been showing more signs of *fadenya* than of *balimaya* (indeed, if we follow the reasoning of our Chapter 1.4, the United Nations would definitely benefit from appointing more senior women executives). Not every UNDP Resident Representative can be a great leader, of course, and they do not all have the political feeling needed to excel as UN Resident Coordinator. But even where all the conditions are met, it is not every UN agency which will accept coordination.

Here we are touching on the vast subject of the reform of the United Nations system, under which the specialized agencies have allowed themselves to develop jealousies and feelings of prerogative which are inappropriate for development agencies. “The iron law of organizations” has taken over, by which every institution outgrows its original mandate, ending up by serving primarily its own employees. The problem with UN agencies usually lies with their headquarters strategies.

In these days of fax and e-mail, the whole concept of “decentralized management” needs to be redefined. Perhaps it was once useful to have a nearby source of advice and support. But how could FAO, ILO, UNESCO, UNICEF,

WHO possibly need sub-regional offices, when they all now have instant communication with HQ? (WHO once had a sub-regional representative in Bamako, as well as a country representative.) A UN Resident Coordinator in Africa told us that “the theory of regional offices is supported by the concept of value-added: but ‘value-subtracted’ is what they deliver in my experience.” Specialized agencies may not agree with the views of UNDP, but they cannot long support sub-regional overheads against the realities of instant electronic mail.

If we are against sub-regional offices, we are not very enthusiastic either about “agency representatives”, whose keen sense of personal status and diplomatic prerogative often militate against good coordination within the United Nations family. Why indeed do the donor countries continue to fund “country representatives” who behave like diplomats, instead of concentrating funding on field-level technical specialists? The real answer lies, we believe, in political expediency. Where else can an African Head of State place his ex-Minister of Health, if not in a senior position in WHO? So the agencies invest in posts to accommodate ex-ministers who are no longer competent technicians,<sup>12</sup> instead of concentrating their resources on the needs of women and children, responding to the priorities of Africa’s farmers and their husbands.

There are few complaints, on the other hand, about the goodwill of most United Nations staff in Mali’s peacemaking story. WHO are always cooperative, though not very operational, giving the impression of being more involved with self-management than with Malian vaccination campaigns or development strategies. Some other agencies which were only marginally involved (ILO, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNCDF, UNV, have all been helpful and collaborative) or which became involved (FAO, OIM) were easily coordinated because their programmes are largely funded by UNDP. Indeed FAO staff have been constantly positive in their approach to the North. During periods when the UNDP and FAO representatives were reluctant to take a lead, it was FAO programme staff who were often prodding behind the scenes to get initiatives going (for example in the organization of the 1992 inter-agency mission).

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<sup>12</sup> While all organizations suffer from creeping paralysis, UN agencies are more vulnerable to criticism than national bureaucracies. We are strong advocates of the 15-year rule whereby no one should be able to stay within any one organization for more than fifteen years. This keeps organizations dynamic, ensures a constant renewal of energies and experiences, removes dead wood, and saves people from professional decay: they cannot become time-servers simply for their retirement pensions.

One of the most original United Nations projects in Mali is the ILO-organized ACOPAM which has a strong presence in the northern half of Mali (mainly in Mopti and Timbuktu regions). ACOPAM started in Senegal, and it works more or less like an NGO with an ILO umbrella and Norwegian funding. Throughout the troubles, ACOPAM kept its head down and its optimism up, working as well as it could on developing village-level cereal production and storage in Timbuktu and Mopti regions, and coordinating with United Nations and NGO groups in a low-key and positive fashion. While ILO is not a major player in Mali, ACOPAM is one of the programmes which has worked most closely and coordinated most positively with other programmes in the North.

One happy irony of the Malian case is that the traditional “hard nuts” for the Resident Coordinator have not provided any difficulty. The World Bank, for example, was not really involved in the North. Jonathan Moore remarks:

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund ascribe very little relevance to rehabilitation, and consequently can inhibit it as well as fail to boost it. They have poor relationships with the UN entities generally... prefer to regard themselves as outside the UN system, and “co-ordination” with it is anathema (1996, p. 50).

Our general African experience confirms Moore’s view, yet the World Bank Representative in Mali proved the exception. Linda McGinnis provided so much energy and goodwill in favour of Malian democracy and development, and exuded such an atmosphere of optimism and enthusiasm for Mali’s progress, that she actually became a factor in favour of peace in the North. Realizing that peace was the first condition for development in Mali, Linda made the World Bank an agent of collaboration.

Some of the agencies which were slowest to appreciate the geo-political significance of the North, and the importance of United Nations solidarity to leading the peace and development efforts, were surprises in view of their previous history of good collaboration: WFP, UNICEF, IFAD, UNHCR.

The World Food Programme Representative is formally the UNDP Resident Representative: for the WFP was created in Rome as a joint UN-FAO venture. Yet coordination problems with WFP have proved to be the most difficult to solve, according to all our informants in Mali. This is apparently not a function of the field personnel, who are perceived as having done everything in their power to get WFP moving, but of Headquarters in Rome. One is minded of Moore’s conclusion: “The resistance of the UN’s operating agencies to co-ordination and even co-operation with each other comes from their headquarters.... The complex challenge of rehabilitation calls for a relinquishing

of the feudalism still being embraced by the pooh-bahs in their fiefdoms...” (1996, p. 49). We were not able to travel to Rome to identify Pooh-Bah<sup>13</sup> but he (or perhaps she) does no good either to Malian refugees, nor to the United Nations system. However there is good news in 1997: WFP has approved a \$13 million programme for displaced persons in the sub-region, with a heavy emphasis on North Mali, and collaboration has improved. Inside UNHCR in Geneva, we were given to understand that WFP had been persuaded to be more collaborative through donor pressure. What a shame, if the United Nations has to use its member delegations to keep its house in order. Of course, he who pays the piper calls the tune. One would hope that professionals already know the score.

Not that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees emerges unscathed. Taking a broader view, there is admittedly some justification for seeing Mali’s 30,000 refugees in Mauritania during 1992 as a drop in a bucket, compared to the problems facing UNHCR in Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone, or even in Senegal and Mauritania. As the numbers began rising, however, UNHCR did not react: neither in Bamako, nor in Nouakchott. It took an angry letter in *Le Monde* newspaper written by Père Frost, a priest in Mauritania, to make UNHCR take an interest in the refugee camps. When the time came for repatriation in late 1995, as the weapons were being surrendered and the combatants were entering the cantonments, UNHCR again remained mute. Plans to repatriate 10,000 refugees in lorries proved irrelevant for a floating population of some 200,000 nomads stretched across three or four countries.

The refugee agency was not listening to some of its own staff, nor to UNDP. A senior HCR manager argues:

We have to be independent of UNDP because we have a different mandate and we must work differently with the government ministries. We have another mentality, another institutional culture. We do not refuse to collaborate, but it is not in the interests of either agency to pretend that we have the same objectives. Refugees are very different from sustainable development.

These arguments from the “iron law of institutions” sound to us more like self-serving excuses for not collaborating, than genuine strategic difficulties. All the serious NGOs in Africa are forced to straddle the bridge between relief and

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<sup>13</sup> Moore’s literary reference is to the very British comic opera by Gilbert and Sullivan: “The Mikado” which contains two Very Important Officials: Koko, the Lord High Executioner and Pooh-Bah, the Lord High Everything Else. Headquarters staff are particularly dangerous when they behave as “Lord High Everything”, and block decisions in the field.

development (as we saw in the case of the Red Cross). Surely this is an argument in favour of greater UNHCR efforts to achieve collaboration, rather than less. We are more sympathetic to the reality that UNHCR is over-stretched in Africa since the Great Lakes crisis blew up: but this is still no reason for not behaving as a member of the family. In the case of Mali, closer cooperation might have saved UNHCR some embarrassment, and it would certainly have helped the Malian refugees, whose principal desire is to benefit from sustainable development.

It took a high-level decision to change UNHCR personnel before things improved. From April 1996, UNHCR moved into a higher gear, under the supervision of a new Regional Coordinator for Repatriation of Malians in all neighbouring countries. "Previously UNHCR was an unoccupied space" says one Malian NGO Director, "but things started to move in 1996, when the HCR gave out contracts for rehabilitation of wells. They realized that it wasn't in the camps that they needed to work, but at the potential reception points."

In 1995 the HCR had given money to a government agency to dig three wells. An anonymous UN colleague commented:

None of the wells was dug. You cannot get things moving if you sit behind your desk! In the beginning, HCR was too bureaucratic. And the best paper-plans in the world are useless if they don't take account of the field situation. The nomads have their own method of working: they send scouts ahead to see if things are better. If the situation is unstable or if the wells are unusable, the families will stay in the camps. Nomads are very well-informed. When they are sure that they can return, they simply disappear from the camps and turn up in the area from which they fled originally. The UNHCR's current operation is much more flexible, better adapted to the needs of the Malian refugees.

The situation should have been happier in Kidal, where the well-funded International Fund for Agricultural Development project, PSARK, has been installed since the late 1980s. Yet this (as we observed at the beginning of this chapter) is one of northern Mali's biggest disappointments. Bureaucratic delays paralysed the project from the beginning. Over the years we have made frequent enquiries: IFAD headquarters staff consistently blame their other partners. They are smooth and eloquent, but we find their defence unconvincing. One of the most extraordinary parts of the IFAD project design, it that the executing agency is a bank: not a bank in Kidal (where there is no bank), but the *Banque Ouest-Africain de Développement* in Lomé, Togo. Bankers know nothing of agropastoral economic and ecological systems. Staff in Kidal (and even in Bamako where there used to be an expensive project office which was closed) are disempowered, including the UNDP. This appears to be the worst sort of project design. There is not much influence that the UN Resident Coordinator can bring

to bear. Indeed when we asked about IFAD projects in the UNDP Bamako office, the immediate reaction of the person “responsible” for IFAD was “Oh! You know that we are only a letter box for IFAD. They never contact us. Their consultants only call us if they need an air-ticket or if there is a problem.”

PSARK and its sister-project in Niger are probably the least successful projects in the IFAD portfolio. What a contrast with the highly successful and decentralised *Projet de fonds de développement villageois* in Ségou from 1980-89, which became a model of its type. It gave birth to a successor *Programme de développement villageois de Ségou* which is ongoing (GRM 1989, UNOPS 1996). The figures show 168 village associations with 249 million Fcfa in the bank, and reimbursement rates for individual loans varying from 82 to 100 per cent over fifteen years. With a such a success story to tell in Segou, it is sad that IFAD could not do better in the North. IFAD had been intimately involved in Malian-Algerian politics (Idriss Jezairy of Algeria was President of IFAD before moving to become Executive Director of ACORD), and Algerian influence ensured the initial funding for the Kidal project. Given the political context under Moussa’s regime, it was up to IFAD to get the project going. To blame Moussa Traore or his administration for delaying PSARK is the equivalent, in the political context of Kidal, of accepting that IFAD shares responsibility with the military regime for inciting the rebellion of Iyyad and the MPA. 1996 saw some re-awakening of the IFAD project, and the winning of the peace in Kidal rests in large part on IFAD’s shoulders.

The final question of “family solidarity” in UN Mali concerns UNICEF. When the United Nations Children’s Fund first began to work in the North, it was in 1982 on the initiative of Annick Miské-Talbot, the very dynamic UNICEF Representative whose husband Ahmed Baba Miské we earlier met as Edgar Pisani’s co-mediator (in Chapter 4.2). Mme Miské had spent her youth bringing primary health care to Mauritanian women in remote desert camps. She was dissatisfied with UNICEF’s work in the cities, supporting health and education programmes which were mainly benefitting the Francophone children of public employees. The move to Timbuktu was a radical departure, an exciting innovation which the military government resisted as hard as it could. In those days there were no bilateral or multilateral programmes in the North, “development” meant the NGOs: ACORD and the World Council of Churches’ Sahel programme were relaunching the cooperatives, Ile de Paix and Misereor in health, and AFVP, Frères des Hommes, Terre des Hommes were active. That was all there was for a population approaching one million people whose economic and social needs were seriously neglected. UNICEF’s arrival signalled a new commitment to the North from “the most NGO of the UN agencies”. Others

followed, especially after the 1984 drought catastrophe. But UNICEF was the pathfinder.

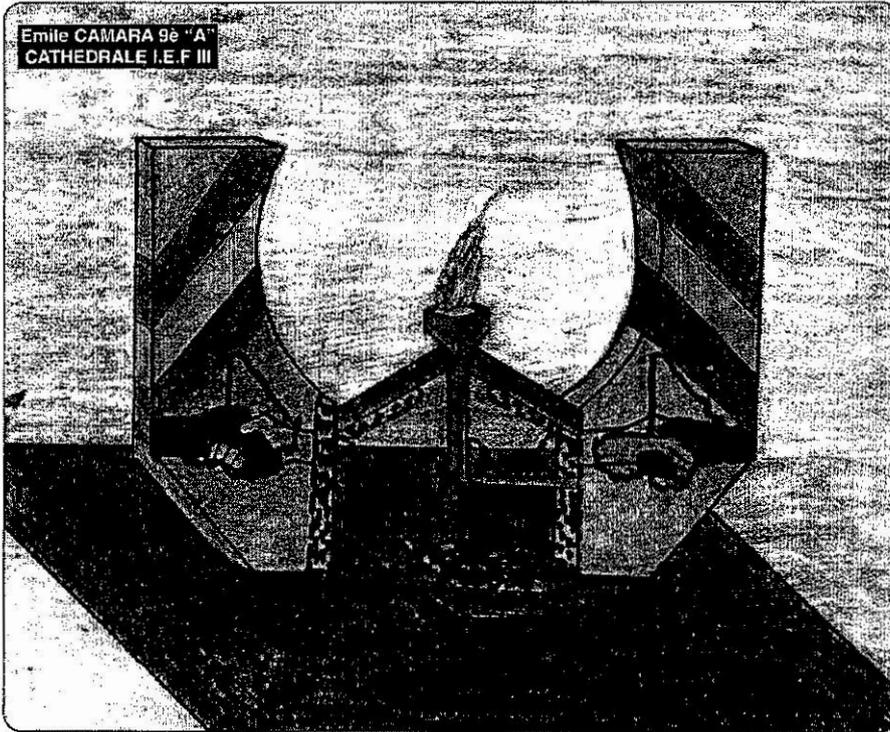
The pathfinder showed the way when the 1984 drought hit Mali's northern regions. The Italian health project in Diré and the Norwegian Church Aid (AEN-Gossi) programme working in the Gourma arrived under UNICEF. There were even some Swedish soldiers who came in with a relief effort for Timbuktu. Through the eighties UNICEF provided donor leadership and coordination in Timbuktu in the areas of health and education. Meanwhile administration costs rose. Come the early nineties, the UNICEF Representative in Mali, André Roberfroid found himself with several unproductive regional offices, and \$1 million of overheads which would be better invested in vaccination programmes. On rational management grounds, he decided to close down one layer of administration. Along with several others, the Timbuktu office closed in 1995. UNICEF's funding in the North increased from \$5 to \$7 million the same year. The Minister of Health understood the reasons for the closure, staff were laid off without difficulties, and the UNICEF facilities were turned over to the UNDP in order to facilitate the start-up of the PAREM programme: which proves that collaboration was very good between the Representatives of the two agencies. All very satisfactory.

But the closure of UNICEF's Timbuktu office came as a great shock to the local population and to the NGOs. As the violence of 1994 gave way to the hopes for negotiation in 1995, UNICEF was seen to be running away: apparently ignoring President Konaré's priorities to restart health and education services, precisely those areas in which UNICEF is seen as a leader. There appears to have been a problem of poor communications. United Nations agencies (even UNICEF) tend to see their role in terms of ministerial partnerships. They neglect the importance of civil society. United Nations agencies will have to change their approach with the arrival of Malian decentralisation—and a decline of centralised decision-making—and develop new NGO partnerships for greater initiative at the grassroots, along the lines suggested in Annex 4. We believe that this will also provide a new focus for collaboration between United Nations agencies (a theme to which we shall return in Chapter 7). And in the context of Mali, the most important collaboration would seem to be between UNDP and UNICEF who appear as the biggest players on the United Nations pitch. A closer relationship with civil society could have avoided the misunderstanding in Timbuktu: that the new UN Trust Fund showed UNDP committing itself to the North, just as UNICEF seemed to be pulling out. We do not wish to overstate the effect. Development can continue to muddle along without coordination. Yet it will be useful if this experience leads UNDP, UNICEF and their sister agencies to reflect

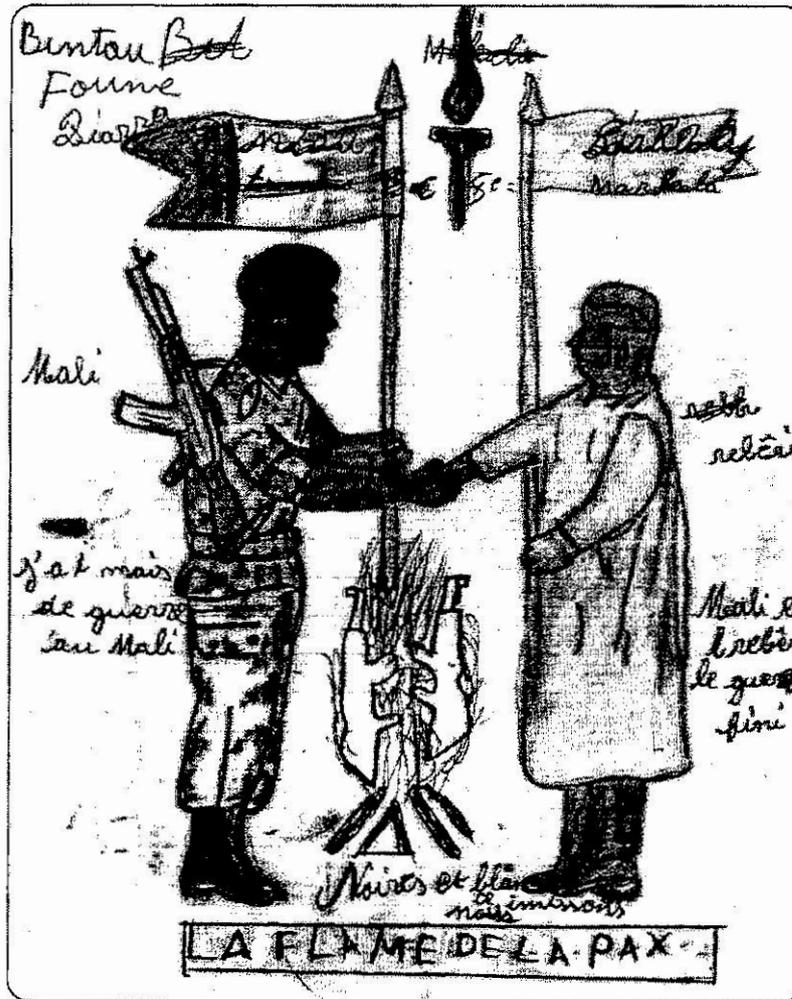
on the UN's joint leadership role for the setting and execution of development strategies.

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This chapter has provided an overview of the way in which the United Nations—and to a lesser extent other donors and the NGOs—contributed to the Malian peacemaking process. Partly this concerns development strategies for relaunching the northern economy to ensure continued peace, including the UN's (especially UNDP's) role as a coordinator. By accepting an innovative partnership with the UN Secretariat in New York, the UNDP's work took on an unusual political dimension which has evolved into a leadership role among donors, at least in the North. At the same time, this political dimension has provided exciting opportunities for sub-regional initiatives in the disarmament field which may promote further cross-border peacemaking.



One runner-up in the competition was Emile Camara, from the Cathedral School in Bamako. (Source: Ministère de l'Education de Base, Mali, 1997.)



**Bintou Founé DIARRA  
MARKALA**

Another runner-up was Miss Bintou Founé Diarra from Markala, the garrison town near Ségou, in Mali's 4th Region, where a famous dam on the Niger River irrigates the *Office du Niger*. (Source: Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, Mali, 1997.)

## Chapter 6

# Ensuring Continued Peace and Development in Mali

**If you think that you have already arrived, you never intended to go very far.**  
Songhoy and Malinké proverb

We have seen what happened during the armed rebellion, why it happened, and how civil society and the Malian Government—with support from the United Nations and donors and NGOs—have calmed the passions of violence. We have seen that disarmament and cantonment have facilitated the re-integration into society of ex-combatants and potential combatants. Peace will only survive in the long run if the causes of underdevelopment are removed. Our proverb emphasizes that peacemaking is only the first part of the process: we have to move on strongly into peace-building. If that is neglected, violence could flare up again. This chapter digs deep into the socio-educational and economic processes which can promote reconciliation and development and avoid future conflict, while emphasizing the shared economic responsibility of donors for ensuring that permanent peace is achieved.

### **6.1 Democratic Governance: Limiting Abuse and Empowering Civil Society**

Decentralization and the strengthening of civil society are fundamental to the Malian interpretation of good democracy and good governance: two of the building blocks for permanent peace. American specialists are leaders in the theoretical analysis of “democratic governance”, and the work they have supported in Mali helps to explain why NGOs and civil society are vital to the maintenance of peace in northern Mali.<sup>1</sup> Assessments of constitutional,

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<sup>1</sup> The concept and function of democratic disciplines were developed by Dr. Ronald Oakerson, professor of political science at Houghton University. USAID’s work on democratic governance in Mali has been largely developed by Dr. Cheibane Coulibaly and his IMRAD

governance and practical implementation issues in Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Tanzania, have led to a theoretical model based on the concept of “democratic disciplines”. One of their attractions is that they push the concept of “democracy” well beyond the confines of the ballot box.

The analysis begins with two propositions that are relevant to collective participation. First, people make rational choices, whether they are private citizens or public servants. Second, individual behaviour is driven by incentives. The incentive not to steal is the fear of being caught and punished (which depends on the rule of law). All levels of governance in African countries suffer from serious incentive problems, partly as a result of inappropriate rules (laws, regulations, and procedures), and especially because of the distortions of the centralized one-party State. Officials who exercise authority, also exercise discretion: in interpreting the rules and in applying them in one way rather than in another. Discretion is inevitable, but dangerous. The reasoning follows that, if we can modify the incentive system, through applying the rule of law, discretion will not be abused and better governance will result. The element of participation is essential, both as a source of incentives for ordinary citizens to join in the Nation and the process of national development and also because a strong and active civil society appears to be the best guarantor of good governance in the provinces. Limiting the abuse of power (or discretion) by those who exercise it on behalf of the State is the primary route to good governance.

The model proposes six democratic disciplines which have a role in disciplining state authority through the mechanisms of participation, and this differentiates democratic governance from other forms of governance.

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colleagues (see Coulibaly 1994).

## Six Democratic Disciplines

- \* **Constitutional Discipline:**  
the use of fundamental rules to assign, distribute, and limit discretion used in governance at all levels, but especially (in this case) government at all levels, including the role of police, military, judiciary etc;
- \* **Electoral Discipline:**  
popular limits on governors, meaning that they can be thrown out if they are unsatisfactory, and which therefore makes official representatives accountable to the people (and not just to each other);
- \* **Deliberative Discipline:**  
due deliberation among elected representatives, and between administrators and the legislature, before decisions are made... and an open debate between the electors and their representatives which allows various points of view to be expressed and weighed;
- \* **Civic Discipline:**  
the openness of the public realm (freedom of speech, media, right of association and assembly), favouring citizen activity which asserts the interests of the governed: thus allowing a strong and organized civil society to emerge;
- \* **Decentralization Discipline:**  
democratic governance at multiple levels, which offers communities the chance to participate in local government and governance (the opposite of the one-party State). The decentralization of maximum authority to regional and local governance levels should follow the principle of subsidiarity devolving responsibility for the range of governance functions to the lowest feasible level, and using higher levels only when needed;
- \* **Judicial Discipline or the Rule of Law:**  
the equal access of citizens to impartial adjudication of disputes.

How can we work on this theoretical model in practice, using it to improve the chances of building peace in northern Mali? Or, in other words, when you live in a small town in rural Africa, where the French-speaking elite controls all the positions of power in the political parties and in the administration, how can you ensure that the six disciplines actually apply? (Or at least the last five: the average citizen has little impact on the constitution, except through public

debate.) Our answer is that the citizens can only protect themselves and the rule of law, if they are well organized, and have access to knowledge about what should happen and what could happen: in the old days under Moussa Traore and Modibo Keita, they knew only what did happen.

It was the traditional leaders of civil society who negotiated peace in the North; and it is they who are in the front line when it comes to facing down the administrative abuse of power. In West Africa, you cannot leave this to elected deputies who are mostly recycled public sector employees. It is a question of empowerment, and it appears therefore essential that traditional leaders and communities should be able to join together for the common interest. There is a danger that decentralization may become a source of division, if the elected representatives of the people in the rural communes, and their traditional leaders in each community, are not able, in law, to associate for specific purposes. Thus a single community may wish to form an association to run a school or a health clinic: but the natural interest group for the management of a river-flooded rice plain may be a heterogenous collection of farmers from three or four communities, whose lands happen to fall within the same irrigated space. If the law does not allow them (and even encourage them) to unite, their potential for joint action is weakened, and they may not be able to defend themselves in law.

Promoting such legal collective action is extremely important in terms of winning the peace, especially to avoid conflicts over land use. Nowhere is this more vital than in the North, where ex-combatants have shown a high propensity to act collectively. As in the case of peacemaking, the NGOs may serve as catalysts for such groupings, without being themselves “in the front line”. But unless the farmers and agro-pastoralists of the North are able to band together for the common interest, there is a chance that decentralization will work against the empowerment of the people.

The burgeoning organizations of civil society are not only the key customers and beneficiaries of good governance, but also the key players in making good governance happen. They will also be the leaders in the “communal management of shared frontier space” which is critical to peace-building across national frontiers. We believe that the United Nations has a role to play in protecting and developing civil society. After the PAREM has finished its work with the ex-combatants, this is where the Trust Fund should put its money.

## 6.2 Democratic Governance and a Fundamental Rethinking of Education

Mali's education system in 1991 was in a lamentable state. Fewer than 23 per cent of children attended school, and in Timbuktu Region the real figure was certainly below 10 per cent.<sup>2</sup> Francophone education had become the affair of an administrative urban elite, which explains why northerners' demands have included better primary, secondary and tertiary education (with the call for a "*université du terrain*", a form of "open university"). Worse still were the under-achievement rates: fewer than one per cent of children completed the *Baccalauréat* programme in the planned 12 years, representing a monumental waste of human and financial resources. The Moussa Traore regime neglected education (where his strongest political and ideological opposition was located), but it is the nature of the system itself which was mostly to blame. Early attempts to reform the French model had been frustrated, leaving an outdated system based on the colonial imperative to train secretaries and interpreters (but never managers) to staff the administration.

It is sad but true that the main obstacle to educational change has been the teaching profession. Their status (dare one say "power"?) is based on their mastery of the colonial language, and on their French diplomas. Educational research in Africa and worldwide proves that reading and writing are best learned in a child's mother tongue. Malian resistance to better learning dates back as far as the 1966 Bamako Conference on Education: the conference adopted just four national languages for teaching (Bambara, Songhoy, Peul and Tamacheq), which the ministry buried in a handful of "experimental" schools. Some of these schools obtained very good results, which were never disseminated.<sup>3</sup> A whole new group of teachers can (and must) be recruited to work in the maternal languages of the children. For a new type of schooling, we need a new type of teacher. They will be young people who will use neither the

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<sup>2</sup> This includes recognized Franco-Arabic schools and *madersa*. While every boy and many girls attend the village Koranic school at night, the poor level of teaching through rote-learning of Arabic sentences does not encourage us to include them in our educational statistics.

<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile the Dogon were obtaining high literacy rates, thanks to the Catholic Church's translation of the Bible. As soon as the Holy Koran is translated into national languages, literacy rates in Mali will soar. It is also evident that a real improvement of the French language education system depends on good teaching in the mother tongue during the first three years, allowing confident, well-prepared children to cross the bridge into French education and achievement.

French language nor the French diplomas as their rite of passage into the classroom, and they will be employed not by the State, but by the parents, which is a logical progression away from the one-party State. Teachers who are skilled in French will be needed more than ever, to teach the much larger number of children who will move into the higher classes. When these issues were debated at the *Journées nationales de l'éducation* in early 1993 (subsequent to the National Conference), most of the teachers present had supported the downfall of Moussa's regime. Yet they were reluctant to confront the changed educational system which logically follows revolution, in a country where 70 per cent of children never go to school at all.

A new school system is coming, nevertheless. It started in Mali's deep south near the frontier with the Côte d'Ivoire, where the women of Kolondiéba needed to read and keep accounts because their cereal banks were proving so profitable (so much better managed than those of the men). But their literacy classes were overrun with adolescent children. Teenagers were sitting on the floor, standing at the back and in the doorways, crowding the windows and stopping light getting into the room. Worst of all, the kids were so much quicker at learning to read, that their mothers felt humiliated.

These activities were part of the long-term development programme of Save the Children, an American NGO which stated back in 1986 that it would "only start work in Kolondiéba if we are certain to be able to stay and support the rural development efforts of the people for at least 15 years". With this sort of commitment to building local capacities, development does happen. The programme managers<sup>4</sup> got together with the villagers, and decided to start separate literacy classes for adolescents whose parents had never sent them to a French-language government school. As a result, the villagers started Bambara-language schools for their children: schools which were not creating an elite of Francophone administrators, but providing education as a development tool for the community (the village schools are described in UNESCO 1994).

Such initiatives are vital for any system of democratic governance. It is by such successes that participation is assured and civil society is built. Under the UDPM one-party regime, every initiative and every decision had to come from the Party. Mali's 1991 popular revolution liberated the initiatives of the Malian people. This is an important educational and philosophical point, for we are

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<sup>4</sup> Credit goes principally to Dr. Michelle Elcoat Poulton, Solo Kanté, Zoumana Laugharn and Amadou Konaté, and their educational guru Professor Urban Dembélé.

talking here about the liberating effects of language: the principal medium of learning and communication and exchange. It is vital to recognize that there are two languages at play in the educational system: the *langue d'éveil* in which children learn, and the *langue d'ouverture* which allows communication with the wider world. The first means *awakening the spirit* of children, and the second is the language to *opening new horizons*.<sup>5</sup> In Mali, history has determined that the latter is French for most people, and Arabic for a few. But for everyone the world over, the language of *awakening* is their mother's tongue. Without *éveil*, children cannot reach their educational or human potential. Imposing a "foreign" language at the moment of a child's educational awakening is bad pedagogy: French must be introduced at the right moment, only after the mother tongue has been mastered. This is essential, if Mali's children are to receive the best possible start in life, so that they will later take up their full role as participants in the governance and development of their country.

In 1994, the Minister for Basic Education, Adama Samessekou, led a team of his senior cadres to visit the villagers and schools of Kolondieba. They found children writing after only four weeks, with better writing than children learning French after two years in a government school. They were impressed by the villagers' arguments, based on practical experience. Yes, the villagers agreed that their teachers were unqualified in the academic sense, but they were better qualified than government teachers, in the important area of understanding the children's communities and their educational needs and language. Yes, the teachers were paid very little in cash (as little as 3,000 Fcfa per month as compared to a salary of 30,000 for a young government teacher), but local teachers are living in their family compound, and they are happy because they are helping their own community, gaining prestige for the village, for their parents and for themselves. Yes, said a village Chief in one particularly famous reply to the minister's delegation, the villagers are aware that education is traditionally provided by the State, but since the 1991 revolution and the democratic elections, we know that we are the State: "*l'Etat, c'est nous!*"

Mali's Third Republic will be remembered first for the 1992 launching of democracy, and then for the 1995 launching of the new schooling model known as *Nouvelle Ecole Fondamentale* (NEF, which people outside are already describing as the NEM: *Nouvelle Ecole malienne*). The educational process is returning to the parents, changing "school" from a foreign or urban institution

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<sup>5</sup> Some English documents refer to this, rather prosaically, as the *vehicle language*.

into a relevant part of the nation's social capital. The most important innovation is that the early years of education will be carried out in the child's mother tongue. Years 4 and 5 will provide a bridge (*passerelle*) to the French language medium of Year 6 Certification and future studies.<sup>6</sup>

This illustrates a revolution in thinking: from a centralized colonial system, to the decentralized governance of modern Mali. As we reconstruct the education system, we should rethink what we want to teach our children about their history and culture. Is there no place for learning about the historical structures of decentralized governance? ... or the role of solidarity in civic education? ... or African traditions of conflict resolution? ... and the strengths and weaknesses of social capital? Violence dominates the history which Europeans teach to their children, and to children in West Africa. There is a terrible distortion in our history books, a glorification of military violence and conquest. It is not consistent with our vocation as peace-builders. Why do we put up with this version of history and culture?

### 6.3 Rewriting Africa's History and Its Traditions of Conflict Resolution

At the November 1996 Conference on Disarmament, Development and the Prevention of Conflicts in Bamako, we were invited to think about why children the world over (and not just French children) have heard of Napoleon Bonaparte, who wanted to unite Europe by conquest, yet so few have studied Jean Monnet, another great Frenchman whose dream of a peaceful Union of Europe is actually taking shape before our eyes. Are we unable to think of history in terms other than violence and conquest? Is there an European spin on history, antithetical to peace-building, which Africa could usefully rewrite? (Murray 1996).

When we were at primary school in the 1950s, Africa virtually had no history. There were few African historians or archaeologists. Research was thin, and anyway all colonial regimes taught European history. Children didn't learn about genocide in Mexico, nor the abominable export of millions of Africans into

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<sup>6</sup> This process is being guided by Lalla Ben Barka as head of PRODEC: *Projet décennal de l'éducation*. Formerly head of women's literacy in the DNAFLA (*Direction nationale de l'alphabétisation fonctionnelle et de la linguistique appliquée*), Lalla was lately coordinator of the West African educational research network ERNWACA-ROCARE. She is a leading member of civil society institutions including the coordination of women's associations and the Malian research-action university institute, Philanthra.

slavery. Instead we learned about the World Wars of 1939 and 1914, the thirty years war, the hundred years war, religious wars.... African history textbooks were written and produced outside Africa. Even European vocabulary creates a distortion of African reality. The words “King” and “Empire” resound with Napoleonic overtones of conquest and domination which are quite at odds with the decentralized forms of African governance we described in our opening chapter. We should seek to rewrite history in accordance with the values we wish to promote in the West African context (and here we are thinking of that Greater Manding linguistic and historical space which stretches from the Mossi plateau to the sea, encompassing colonial frontiers from northern Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire up to Mauritania and across to Niger, Burkina Faso and Nigeria).

Rewriting history is not distorting the truth: it is a question of choosing which parts of history we wish to emphasize. In our desire to “win the peace”, we should energetically promote values other than those of violence.

For one of Africa’s historical strengths is conflict resolution and peacemaking: as the Malian peacemaking has shown in the present study. We need to think how to create a culturally balanced history of West Africa in terms of values and in terms of geography. When evoking resistance to colonial invasion, the name of Samory (ancestor of Guinea’s Sékou Touré) springs to the lips of the griots of Mali and Guinea. They should sing as loudly of Firhoun in the desert, the Touareg warrior chief who fought the French and whose grandsons are leaders for reconciliation in Northern Mali today. Why sing only of resistance to the French? Why do we not celebrate the Askia’s defence of Songhoy against the Moroccans, the resistance against the slave trade of the Bobos in Mali, of the Ashanti in Ghana, or of the Mossis in the upper Volta?

If we sing of Mali, we should sing equally loudly of ancient Wagadou, of Ghana and of Songhoy and of their decentralized systems of governance. When we sing of Soundiata Keita the founder Mansa of Mali, we need not ignore his battles: but in addition to the glory of his generals, we should emphasize the qualities of his griots and diplomats, the strength of his mother and his sisters, the work of his judges and administrators and his systems of decentralized governance which brought peace and security for 200 years. How many West African children learn the story of Soundiata’s grandson Aboubakry, the scientist and explorer, whose fleet landed on the coast of Brazil in the early 14th century, 170 years before Columbus reached the Caribbean? His successor Moussa is famous for the quantity of gold he distributed in Cairo in 1323 (the slump in gold prices lasted for 20 years, relaunching the myths of Timbuktu and King Solomon’s mines when the story finally reached Europe 200 years later). But where do Africa’s children learn about the medieval universities of Timbuktu,

Gao and Djenne which Mansa Moussa patronized? Do they study the architecture of Abu Ishaq al-Sahili of Granada who built them,<sup>7</sup> or the philosophy of the Moroccan traveller Ibn Battuta who visited and described the buildings of Timbuktu a hundred years later? The great medieval centres of African learning were flourishing at a time when Europe's earliest universities were just beginning.

In seeking an answer to these questions, educational instinct turns to the writing of curricula and text-books. We are not against this: here is an opportunity for UNESCO's new Culture of Peace Programme to take the lead in promoting new historical values in education (UNESCO 1996). To help win the peace, UNESCO should turn its magnificent academic research into historical action: using Africa's newly-discovered history for an educational crusade to increase knowledge and understanding of the strengths and social capital in African societies. There is a vivid example of African peacemaking in Amadou Hampaté Ba's "*Amkoullel*", about his Fulani childhood in Bandiagara on the Dogon Plateau (now in Mali). Elected President of his age-group association, or *waaldé*, Amkoullel was challenged by a rival group to a battle for supremacy. Amkoullel's group emerged as victors from the battle. The part which interests us as peacemakers is what happened next. Did they parade and humiliate their "captives" as the Romans used to do? Did they knife the leader in the stomach, as in the American West Side Story? Did they consign them to rancorous oblivion, like the European electoral system? None of these! Africans seek consensus. The two *waaldé* joined together. Amkoullel was president; the leader of the defeated group became vice-president; Amkoullel's spokesman remained griot, and the defeated group's man became deputy-griot... and so on. Such stories need to reach the air waves and the school books of West Africa.

School books are only one of many appropriate media. We need to invest in the modernization of our communication systems. Democratic Mali has indeed developed the widest coverage of local radio in the region: 80 per cent of the population have access to radio in their local dialect. By mid-1997 there were 77 licensed radio stations broadcasting to rural Mali, and the number is expected to pass 100 in 1998. This is a precious asset for promoting a Culture of Peace. As an example, let us take Radio Boxanta, which broadcasts to the northern town of Gossi from a couple of bamboo sticks stuck into the biggest sand dune (from which it takes its name). This tiny enterprise was started in March 1996 by a group of young mechanics. They play music cassettes, taking it in turns to act as

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<sup>7</sup> *Djingerai Ber*, the Great Mosque of Timbuktu was built for Mansa Moussa in 1326 out of mud, and it stands as splendid and cool today as it did 670 years ago.

presenter, and getting local people to come and talk into the microphone. They retransmit the national news bulletin, by turning up the volume of their transistor radio and placing it close to their microphone. Costs—such as batteries at about 250 Fcfa per week—are covered by individual gifts and advertising charges of around 200 Fcfa each (about 40 cents in US money: this is not a high-investment enterprise). These young broadcasters received support from the nearest NGO (AEN), in the form of a solar panel and a battery, and there is now talk of an NGO subsidy for part-time salaries.

But we are not thinking only of modern technology. There is another dimension to African history which escapes the Western academic tradition: the oral dimension. We need to preserve our oral history, and UNESCO could find ways to make it accessible to historians and to the people. The oral dimension is richer than the written, for it has many voices, and they need all to be heard. History is not a single written “truth”. It is the multiplicity of voices which makes history interesting. Even the griots, who recite the history of the nation or the history of their patron, have several voices. They have a public voice and a private voice, an historical voice and a diplomatic voice, a secret voice and an intimate voice. What they say is as interesting as what they do not say. They do not tell everything: they do not know everything.<sup>8</sup>

And there are the other voices which are not heard, but which can and should be a part of our history and our education system: the voices of the initiates, and the women, who will never be heard unless we seek them out. Women are the guardians *par excellence* of tradition and belief, and they must be mobilized for modernity. The key to every African story and history is a woman. Women must be heard and their voices recorded, and meanwhile, they must also be given access to education and new knowledge: for it is they who, inside the house, tell stories to the infants and prepare them for life. And the grandmothers also hold the power to cure children who are struck by disease: to take them to the clinic or let them die through ignorance.

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<sup>8</sup> This is the place for us to pay homage to the memory of Kela Bala Diabaté, Chief of the Griots of Kela and Kangaba, who died in May 1997 while we were finishing this text. In terms of Manding history, the social, spiritual, judicial and initiatory place which Kela Bala occupied was a combination of Imam, Bishop, Judge, and Vice Chancellor of Oxford University. We have seen people reaching to touch Bala’s robes during a ceremony, to receive from him the power of grace. Many times, Kela Bala led delegations to mediate conflicts which no one heard about because they were resolved: most recently, about three years ago, before his final illness, he resolved a serious land usage conflict on the Guinea-Mali frontier, which might have led to violence. May his soul rest in peace.

The voice of women is muted in history. This needs rectification. Somebody should write the story of Malian peacemaking through the eyes of Mali's women. They would give greater emphasis to the breakdown of families, to the suffering of children, to the challenges for youth and to the values enshrined in their mothers' breasts. A woman's story would give greater value than we have been able to do, to the quiet, anonymous contributions to peacemaking of mothers in the family, of women's groups in each community where they are discreetly powerful. There would be analysis of the efforts of those who have been active in leading associations of modern civil society, like the women's peace movement led by Mariam Maiga and Tahnouna, who criss-crossed the country preaching peace and reconciliation. And the story would include the many associations working for peace and justice, fighting against poverty and exclusion, protecting widows and orphans.<sup>9</sup> To quote one of our favourite Tamacheq proverbs: "A wife is the belt which holds up her husband's trousers." That speaks volumes for the dependence of society on women. In view of what we have said in our earliest chapters about the importance and the stature of women in Mali's social capital, their voice in Mali's history needs to be heard loud and clear. And we all should listen.

Exploiting African social capital implies capitalizing on the knowledge of the griots and hunters and blacksmiths and herbal healers and old women and traditional birth attendants, who could and should be encouraged to share their knowledge. We need to modernize the initiation process: not to diminish the prestige of Malinké hunters, or Bozo fishermen, or the Songhoy faith-healers of *holloy*, but to embellish their prestige through the spreading of their knowledge. We must hear the voices of groups like the Dogon blacksmiths who hold the wisdom of earth and fire and the Fulani herders who know every bush and plant. We observed (in Chapter 2.2) the colonial misuse of "caste". The status of *niamakalan* (Manding blacksmiths) is very different from the "untouchables" of India: they are the "masters of the fire of the earth, creators of the instruments of

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<sup>9</sup> Let us honour the dozens of dynamic leaders of these associations, women like Madame Konaré, Mme Cissé, Mme Sy, Mme Keita, Mme Diallo, Mme ag Erlaf, Mme Ndure, Mme Diakité, Mme Ongoiba, Mme ag Inchrach, Mme Bocoum, Mme Boukanem, Mme Ben Barka, Mme Ba, Mme Diabaté, Mme Maiga, Mme ag Imaye, Mme Yattara, Mme Diagouraga, Mme ag Youssouf, Mme ag Agatame, Mme ag Sidalamine, Mme Rhissa, Mme Sidibé, Mme Coulibaly, Mme ag Asabit, Mme Fofana, Mme Tall, Mme Haidara, Mme ag Intalah, Mme ag Bisada, Mme ag Ghali, Mme ag Bayes, Mme ag Ecawell, Mme ag Idbaltanatt, Mme ag Mohamed, Mme ag Hamani, Mme Thiam, Mme Oumarou, Mme Ambeiry, Mme Iswaden, Mme Traoré, Mme Kanté, Mme Diarra, Mme Koné, Mme Ascofaré, Mme ag Ayoub, Mme Tangara, Mme Kane, Mme Ouloguem, Mme Touré and many others whom we do not know personally.

production and the weapons of war, the messengers to the world beyond, the priests, the initiated and the initiators: those who hold the power of knowledge... and the power to transmit such knowledge to succeeding generations” (Samoura 1996). UNESCO and political leaders should give a lead: the Minister of Health, Modibo Sidibé showed the way in December 1996 by officially and publicly inaugurating the headquarters of Mali’s new herbal medicine association.

Religious leaders are also important for reconciliation. Kare Lode, himself an ordained minister, emphasizes (1997, p. 60) that no parties in the Malian conflict misused religion for their own purposes. Lode quotes numerous cases where imams were important peacemakers and where Islam was cited in community meetings, such as: “Islam teaches us that it is formally forbidden for two Muslims not to talk to each other for more than three days.” Lode is certain that his own religious commitment was perceived as a positive force for peace during his work with civil society (described in 4.5). In our rewriting of African history, the voice of religion should be heard in favour of conflict resolution. While most people would expect reconciliation to originate in mosques and churches, in practice we often find that the language of peace comes from politicians, and this is not only because politicians shout louder. In Ireland, the churches have actually been a factor for aggression, by protecting the communal, fratricidal tensions of ethnic separation and providing theological justification for aggression. Likewise in the Sudan, in Lebanon, in Yugoslavia, in Iran and in Afghanistan, clerics have taken guns and imposed their will—political and theological—turning religion into a weapon of aggression and submission: submission not to God, but to armed warriors.

While Mali was spared religious aggression, it was Malian political leaders—and most clearly the two Heads of State since the demise of the dictatorship in 1991—who provided the impetus for peace and the language of compromise: both Amadou Toumani Touré who supervised the peace negotiations, and Alpha Oumar Konaré who has overseen their implementation, have preached reconciliation and forgiveness. In the cause of peace, the Imam of Mecca came to visit Timbuktu, and this had a profound impact on spiritual leaders in the North. In every mosque and church, prayers were said for peace. Malians believe in God and in the power of prayer, and this brought a spiritual dimension to grassroots Malian peacemaking.

In teaching Africa’s history, we need to rehabilitate and exploit the strengths of the social capital we discussed in the first chapter, including religious tolerance and traditions of conflict resolution. Winning the peace is all about good governance in the context of a newly decentralized Malian State. Good governance starts with security first. But it moves almost at once into education

for good citizenship and conflict avoidance, which includes accepting responsibility at the community and family level for the future development of the state: for “*l’Etat, c’est nous!*”

#### **6.4 Water and Land: Winning the Peace by Avoiding Conflict**

Winning permanent peace requires communities to collaborate and work together under the benevolent arbitration of the State. Through decentralization, Mali has the opportunity to develop new mechanisms for conflict avoidance. We have seen in previous chapters, that the years of drought tested to their limit the rules regulating traditional access to water and pastures (especially the *bourgouttières*). “Ownership” is no simple matter. Sahelian agro-pastoral production systems through the ages, have typically incorporated a mixture of property mechanisms that allow for changing environmental constraints. Around the lakes for example, in the region of Timbuktu, land is redistributed each year according to the amount of land (and water) actually available. Curiously enough, when the water levels are low, there is more land to be distributed: unless a drought-crisis arrives, when the lakes dry up completely and leave the land without enough moisture to produce a crop.

The system kept a variable-yet-constant balance between crops, *bourgou*, and water until drought and civil unrest brought confusion. Demographic pressure encourages farmers to cultivate marginal lands, reducing pastures and reinforcing the southward migration of livestock which we noted in Chapter 2. The question of how Sahelians should share their scarce natural resources is becoming increasingly difficult to answer. We need open access to water and grazing, with clear, negotiated and transparent rules of access. In this section, we offer a solution for negotiating such rules, because without it there is a serious risk of conflicts breaking out. The risk of conflict is present in all Sahelian countries.<sup>10</sup> A virtual state of war existed after April-May 1989, with large numbers of refugees and victims of violence, following disputed access to the waters and pastures of the Senegal River which forms the frontier between Mauritania and Senegal.

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<sup>10</sup> See for example the articles by Gerti Hesselting, Boubacar Moussa Ba and Cheibane Coulibaly in IMRAD Dossier No. 3, 1995. On land tenure in northern Mali, see articles by Samba Soumaré and Oumane Traoré in the same issue, as well as Hallassy Sidibé 1993.

The Mali process of peacemaking which is the subject of our study, offers new approaches to the management of land conflict: for we have seen that peace came to northern Mali through conciliation, negotiated by the leaders of civil society. Showing the wisdom of experience, the Malian State stood back from the process in order to make space for civil society to find agreement. In no way did this diminish the State, which remains the only possible guarantor of the peacemaking process. On the contrary, the State is always strengthened through reconciliation between its citizens.

The argument seems to us compelling, that this lesson should be applied to the resolution of disputes over natural resources. Communities are at the origin of conflict, therefore it is the communities which should manage and to resolve conflict. The State must be the final arbiter in case of disagreement. As the court of final appeal, the *Etat de droit* must be seen to act in an independent and disinterested way. In the past, land tenure has been a frequent source of local dissatisfaction with the justice system. Mali's policy of decentralization offers an opportunity to remove from the State, the stigma which the one-party system has left on officials acting as plaintiff, judge and jury in the same dispute.

We propose that decentralized decision-making and reconciliation should apply to land disputes, just as it will apply to natural resource management. Reconciliation is carried out in Mali by community elders: not forgetting that these include women and blacksmiths and griots, and that they are seldom elected politicians. Each *Commune rurale* should constitute a Conciliation Council, elected by the communities and representing all the users of natural resources. The Conciliation Council must therefore be composed of respected local men and women, representing fishermen and farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists and artisans (well-diggers, blacksmiths and potters, leather-workers and basket-makers) not forgetting representatives of the various transhumant populations who may actually be registered as voters in a different administrative area, but whose ancestors have long followed the shoals of fish up and down the river or brought in their animals each year to graze. The selection of Council Elders must not be a party-political process. Political parties should specifically be excluded from taking any part in the Conciliation Council, just as they are excluded from other areas of the administration of justice.

Any dispute shall be brought before the Conciliation Council. Following the tradition of the "palaver tree" which inspired Mali's National Conference of 1992 and the Regional Concertations of 1994, as well as the peace and reconciliation process which cemented peace in the North, the Council will seek agreement between the disputing parties. If an accord is reached, it must be turned into a signed document which will be witnessed by, and registered with, the local judge.

The clerk of the court will keep one copy. Thus the accord will have the authority of a contract recognized in law. Nevertheless we would not insist on a document drawn up in formal legal French. It seems to us that the value of such a document for permanent reconciliation will be greater, if it is drawn up in the language(s) of the protagonists: its symbolic force derives from the fact that it is an agreement freely entered into, and not one which is imposed by the State. It is rare in Mali for descendants to challenge agreements entered into by their ancestors... whereas it is not at all rare in the justice system for a plaintiff to make appeal to a higher court of law.

If the Conciliation Council is unable to achieve agreement between the parties, then the dispute may come before a court of law. In this case, we would like to see a bench composed like Mali's rather successful Commercial Tribunal: a magistrate sitting between two expert and respected assessors who are competent to advise him (or her) on the complicated issues at stake. In the case of natural resource disputes, the official magistrate would choose assessors from among the elected members of the Conciliation Council, and the law would take its course. But the tribunal would sit only if the Conciliation Council failed to come up with a signed agreement between the various parties in dispute. The Malian legal tradition already allows magistrates to seek advice from elders proposed by the regional governor. Our suggestion goes further, placing elected assessors on the bench beside the magistrate. By democratizing the process and formalizing the role of the elders, justice and the people will be brought closer together.

The concept of the Conciliation Council derives therefore from Malian precedent:<sup>11</sup> from the wisdom of tradition, from the Malian model of peacemaking in the North, and from the successful experiment with commercial tribunals. The traditional (oral) skills of reconciliation will be reinforced with new capacities for analysis and recording (in writing). And the whole process will be organized by the newly elected communes, as a form of community participation in the State's judicial system. Judicial procedures often seem forbidding and obscure, especially for non-literate rural communities. The Conciliation Council will strengthen Malian justice. Above all, this is a mechanism for mobilising Mali's social capital in favour of communal harmony and for solving intractable disputes which might otherwise lead to conflict.

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<sup>11</sup> In Niger, the justice system has been strengthened through reinforcing the conciliation capacity of traditional chiefs (see IMRAD 1996). We are suggesting here a rather different solution for Mali, which seems to be better adapted to the Malian situation.

## 6.5 Strengthening the Forces of Order

Applying justice also implies the use of acceptable levels of force. Following years of instability, there is an incessant demand in northern Mali for the return of State authority and the rule of law. This includes an efficient police presence; but the uniformed forces will only be effective if they establish a working partnership with the leaders of northern society. Peace requires that we create in northern Mali a new climate of opinion, in which it is simply unacceptable to be seen to own an automatic weapon. The climate of peace and security must be created by the fathers and grandfathers—and equally, by the mothers and grandmothers.

Rural Africa is best disciplined through the natural social control mechanisms inherited from the ancestors. In an ideal world, the ex-combatants would respect the disciplines of “shame” and “doubt”, and above all, “risk”, the fear of what their own society will think about and say about behaviour. Unlike Europe, Africa functioned less on the basis of repression, than on the rules of exclusion. An individual exists only within the social context of his family. Ibrahim walks around with the name of his father Youssouf as his identity label. Whatever he does resounds to the credit (or, God forbid, discredit) of his father’s name and the whole clan. The same is true of Touré, Maiga, Keita, Tall and Diarra. Such is the symbolism of the Touareg turban, which allows a Targui to see no evil, to hear no evil, to speak no evil: protecting his family’s honour, and protecting his person from shame.

But this is not an ideal world. We are dealing with societies in transition, where some of *ishumar* rebels we described in Chapter 2.3 are actually in revolt against the hierarchy of their society. Social exclusion is not likely to be a deterrent to a young man who rejects his elders’ authority and who has lived the individualistic life of a mercenary. The nature of the State is that it should have the monopoly of repressive power, and the rule of law dictates that this monopoly should be used according to certain strict rules which will be reinforced through new systems of decentralized governance. Social control needs to be associated with strong and effective (and honest) security forces. The security forces need to work on behalf of, and in concert with, the leaders of each community. This was not the case under the one-party State, which used the police and security forces as agents of repression.

In these semi-arid pasture lands, communities know best where there is a hot-head with a hidden rifle. In February 1996 in a village near Gossi, as peacemaking was at its height (see Annex 1), there were two mysterious fires

within two weeks. In both cases the houses were destroyed. In both cases, neighbours were unable to approach the houses to put out the fire, because there were unusual explosions suggesting that the fire had discovered a hidden supply of ammunition. When asked what caused these fires, Elders were heard to mutter wisdom about the Hand of God. Others feel that God guided human hands. Re-establishing the rule of law requires a partnership between elders and the police.

Social controls will be reinforced, if decentralization includes the licensing of weapons. At the present time in Mali, shotgun licences for hunting are purchased locally. Other firearm licences are issued in distant Bamako, with the result that no one bothers to ask for one. If the licensing were decentralized to the level of the rural commune, the elders of civil society would have a greater degree of influence over the ownership of firearms. Community leaders tell us clearly that they know who has hidden arms and ammunition. The uniformed forces of gendarmerie, national guard and city police cannot know as well as the families themselves who in their community has a rifle. The two sides must learn to work in partnership, and decentralization will help.

Peaceful community elders are powerless in the case of banditry. Here the forces of order must intervene, so they must be equipped to be able to act. And when they are successful (for example) in recuperating a stolen vehicle, they must get into the habit of returning the vehicle to its owner. Mali's uniformed forces are in a poor state. In addition to their radios, vehicles, fuel supplies and weapons, even their uniforms are often inadequate, as one must expect in a country whose scarce resources were squandered through 23 years of stagnation. Salaries are barely adequate. The security forces must be strengthened if we are to win the peace: and they, like the military forces, must be rehabilitated in the minds of the people of the North. This process (as we saw in 4.1) is one of slow healing on both sides.

Was the army an instrument of repression under Moussa Traore, or can it take the credit for toppling his regime? Despite the policy of reconciliation with civil society which it has preached, the army still occupies a fairly ambiguous position in public opinion.... The pride of the institution has been hurt and the wounds have not yet healed. On the internal level, the creation of the 'coordination committee of NCOs' seems to have had a profound impact on how the army works. Yet everyone knows that, without a strong republican army, well-disciplined and confident of its own value, there can be no State which is worthy of the name. It will require a broad consensus of social and political influence to find an answer to this problem (PADEP 1994, pp. 69-70).

In spite of the democratic government's demilitarization of the police,<sup>12</sup> few development partners appear willing to assist Mali improve its uniformed forces. The French have been the most helpful in this area and there has been considerable collaboration between the two countries. But the participation of the French is a factor which discourages the others. Let us quote the example of the desert camel patrols which have been so spectacularly successful along the Mali-Mauritanian frontier since the latter part of 1996. Cattle theft was one of the major problems during the years of insecurity. Mali lost a large number of livestock, encouraging Fulani herders in particular to purchase arms with which to defend themselves against cross-border bandits and cattle thieves. The Government decided to recreate the *Méhariste* camel patrols which were once the main source of security in the desert regions. When the first patrol was created at Léré near the Mauritanian border, there was no money forthcoming from the hard-pressed Ministry of Finance with which to purchase camels. The French had promised support, but there were delays with their funding. Another donor considered giving financial support, but when he heard that the French were involved he backed off for fear of treading on their toes. "Turf" jealousies are, of course, even more acute in the diplomatic than in the development community. Fortunately in early 1997, French funding was becoming available for the expanded *Méhariste* units.

Thanks to his location inside the UNDP, the United Nations political adviser, Ivor Richard Fung, became one of the bridges between the security and development communities. As the United Nations agencies and the NGOs were paralyzed by the theft of vehicles and the threat to life, Fung came to realize the indivisibility between "security" and "development". This found expression as the primary recommendation in the report of the Sahara-Sahel advisory mission (Eteki 1996, p. 4):

The Mission recommends that the United Nations system work with the states and the donor community to develop support for a *proportional and integrated approach to security and development* including the identification of appropriate assistance for the internal security forces.

These are the influences which led the United Nations to elaborate the "Security First" doctrine, which others have called "security for development". For while it appears reasonable in principle to restrict development funding to "non-

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<sup>12</sup> The police are now under the Ministry for Territorial Administration and Internal Security.

military” uses, this reasoning becomes weaker—and in the long run self-defeating — if the insecurity stops the development process altogether. In such cases, “security” becomes a pre-condition for development, and its installation becomes a development cost. Since this is a radical notion for many development managers, it is worth examining for an instant the relationship between “security” and “defence”: for they are quite different, requiring different skills and different enforcement mechanisms.

### **The Component Factors of Security**

Security depends on a large number of factors, in which repression plays only a minor role. Security depends first and foremost on:

- \* Good governance and the acceptance by a majority of the population of the mechanisms for governance (often absent under a one-party regime). Participation and public debate are necessary conditions for good governance: therefore decentralization and democracy probably reinforce it, while good education and information systems are essential ingredients.
- \* A strong economy, bringing a decent standard of living and relatively full employment: the lack of the latter condition is undermining certain European socio-economies (despite apparently high national income figures), just as it is also undermining many African regimes. The fragile peace in northern Mali will depend for its longevity, on our success in achieving growth and creating employment opportunities.
- \* The rule of law which is part of good governance: requiring reasonable force to ensure credibility, it reinforces the confidence of citizens in the institutions which govern them, and therefore their adherence to the State.
- \* Appropriate skills and technologies which (if the previous conditions are met) give people the confidence to invest in themselves and their families’ future well-being. Donor projects often neglect this aspect, in their precipitation to import the newest techniques (which are often not appropriate, if only because of the non-availability of adequate training and spare parts)
- \* Healthy international relations which guarantee a nation’s borders: these are most effectively guarded by two sets of collaborating communities, customs services and frontier guards, whose joint interest is the protection of their “mutual space” against the smugglers of arms or drugs or contraband goods.
- \* Efficient and effective and well-motivated police and customs forces which work within the rule of law, with the support of civil society. Their performance depends largely on the previous conditions, but also requires good leadership and decent levels of equipment and training.

The best defence against external aggression is to have good international relations. Defence forces only need to defend a country's frontiers against aggression, if the other conditions have failed. Security and development are the first defence of the people. The strength and quality of the defence forces are a secondary priority, because they also depend on the previous preconditions. A strong economy and good governance are necessary to support a strong and effective army, which must have the confidence of the citizens whose resources fund its personnel and equipment.

The UN Trust Fund to support the peace process in northern Mali is not only concerned with the re-integration of ex-combatants, as we saw in section 5.6. Included among its objectives are "the operationalization of police forces to assure internal security in North Mali", training and communication aimed equally at uniformed and civilian forces, and "other activities to consolidate the process of securement leading to renewed development in North Mali." Here is a practical application of "Security First".

If there is still a long way to go in clarifying the limits and risks of this doctrine, its initial formulation seems to make good sense. As development practitioners ourselves, we have never been involved with the security forces. Yet the insecurity in the North of Mali not only blocked our development programmes, it actually forced us into army-protected convoys. Development and security became intertwined. As sporadic acts of banditry continue during 1997 to undermine confidence in Mali's new democratic institutions, we have become convinced that the installation of the rule of law can only come about if both the moral authority and the physical authority of the State can be exercised.

At the high-level consultation on peace-building in West Africa at the United Nations in New York (21 October 1996) the UN Resident Coordinator in Mali presented the arguments in a clear and coherent form:

The Mali experience shows, without a shadow of doubt, how much cheaper it is for the international community to support conflict resolution and peace-building, rather than to act only after serious breakdown and the presence of dramatic conflict.... There is a definable area in between military cooperation on the one hand (which is best left to bilateral arrangements) and development cooperation on the other. In this in-between area, external assistance can be very helpful, and the UN / UNDP duo is perhaps well placed to serve as a channel.... In northern Mali, we found that for lack of a few million dollars to re-establish secure conditions, over \$200 million of already-committed aid money was idle. Without security, no development. And without development, no longer-term security.... So it would appear logical that a holistic approach to sustainable development should recognize that helping a society to find a stable and respected role for its military can be as important to that society's well-being as improving the vaccination coverage (Rose 1996, pp. 7-8).

## 6.6 Donors, NGOs and Civil Society

“We must create new forms of solidarity,” said President Alpha Oumar Konaré in his November 1996 speech to an international conference in Geneva (Konaré 1996). By this, the President meant that winning the peace and building development can only be achieved through the strengthening of African civil society. Running as a presidential candidate in 1992, AOK offered in his campaign speeches a *projet de société*, a new model for political organization based on empowerment of local people, and a return to traditional Malian cultural values. This led to the policy of decentralization, which has been the pivot of the Malian government’s development strategy since AOK was sworn in on 8 June 1992. We have seen in section 4.3 that decentralization was also pivotal to the negotiations leading to the National Pact with the movements of the Azawad: with the creation of institutions such as the *Commissariat au Nord*, the *Collèges Transitoires d’Arrondissement*, and the new 8th Region of Kidal.

Decentralization is a very difficult concept for Mali’s development partners to handle. The bilateral and multilateral donors are themselves extremely centralized, staffed (especially at headquarters) by people with the habits and mentality of public service “functionaries”. This does not necessarily make them inefficient, but they work in a very centralized, slow and methodical Western way. Western donors thrive on paper. The fact of receiving a report, is more important than what it says. Donor missions to Mali seldom travel beyond Bamako—which is equally true of journalists, and even of most expatriates who work in the capital. If visitors do travel into the bush, the vast distances and the debilitating heat encourage them to limit their journeys to the tarmac roads. “Tarmac development” is a familiar phenomenon in Africa: explaining the concentration of donor interest in urban areas which are easy to visit, and in regions with significant cash-crops which attract foreign investment and decent roads. Donor neglect of remote regions leaves populations without proper vaccination coverage, health care, education facilities.... and this does nothing to help raise African countries from the bottom of the UNDP’s 1990-97 Human Development Index. The neglect of remoter regions has a further political impact which can be heard in the repeated calls for *désenclavement* (meaning the demand for better communications to reduce isolation), and which found violent expression in the problems of northern Mali and Niger.

Winning the peace means working in the North, and this in turn requires that many of Mali’s development partners rethink their current approaches, and find new ways to work in partnership with the decentralized and newly empowered

rural communes. Some donors already have a semi-decentralized mentality: the Germans, the Dutch, the Swiss, the Canadians are among the most flexible in this regard, together with those donors who carry out a significant part of their development work through the non-governmental organizations. But all donors, including the World Bank and other United Nations agencies, must gear themselves for change.

How can donors reach the nearly 200 rural communes in the North? Even if they want to visit every nomad encampment, the best-intentioned donors are constrained by distance. They therefore need to find channels to reach the grassroots and the communes. In this context, the NGO sector appears as an useful and necessary intermediary between the centre and the periphery.

Are NGOs a solution, or a problem? Some observers believe that the NGOs could be part of the problem, that they are cost-ineffective and urban-based, not very different from the urban government bureaucracies which have led Africa into its present state of poverty. There is certainly a risk that the NGO sector in Africa may become an alternative "parasitic layer" of para-governmental bureaucracy. This risk is strongly increased by the conditions which are imposed by the bilateral donors. It is a fact of development life, that donors offer short-term funding which creates NGO dependency. Donors offer no incentives to NGOs to decentralize, and they give no rewards to NGOs for working in the remotest areas of the Sahel. On the contrary, donors give rewards for essentially western attributes: well-written reports (in the case of USAID Mali, these reports even have to be submitted in English), nicely-presented financial accounts, regular and timely attendance at meetings in the capital city. "Out of sight, out of mind" becomes "out of sight, out of money": NGOs are forced to open an office in the capital city, for this is where the donors are located. That means increased overheads and an inevitable urban bias. So NGOs develop the faults of their funders.

Despite the very short span of experience which has elapsed since Malians won freedom of association in 1991, there are now more than 100 local NGOs which are competent in one or another specialized field. These are the partners through which United Nations and bilateral donors will be able to reach the new decentralized development structures in Mali (Deme and Poulton 1998). It is our hypothesis, that the NGOs and the organizations of modern civil society offer a mechanism for reinforcing social capital and bringing it to exert a favourable influence on winning the peace. Social capital is a Malian force for good (although it can be also be a force for inertia, protecting inefficiency, or worse). But social capital is itself immobile. To be useful, it must be mobilized: as in the case of the peacemaking process we described in Chapter 4. In Mali in the 1990s,

the NGOs are catalyzers of civil society and the mobilizers of social capital. Donors should work with NGOs in this direction. This provides us with another challenge: since we need NGOs as mobilizers of capital, can we also devise systems which wean NGOs away from their dependence on donor finance?

The UN Trust Fund presents us with a great opportunity to innovate in the North, with the long-term objective of ensuring continued peace. We propose the creation of a partnership with NGOs which supports their long-term development activities in the field, and which switches the concept of “accountability” from the donors to the beneficiaries. On 15 May 1996, Mr. Gustave Speth, the Administrator of UNDP held a meeting with NGOs in Geneva to discuss partnership. At this meeting, one African NGO made a series of proposals from which we quote:

Small grants by themselves are not sufficient to develop strong civil society organizations. Small grants can promote inefficiency and increase donor dependency, as NGOs hike their begging bowl from one small grant to another. We believe that UNDP should develop a programmatic relationship with a small group of local NGOs in order to promote a mutual growth-partnership. This would be an alternative to the “failed project dynamic”, in line with the analysis of Bernard Lecomte in the OECD booklet of 1989 on Aid by Project. UNDP has the opportunity to seek an alternative method of working with NGOs. It is through a group of (say) 12 selected NGO partners in each country that your Resident Representatives can gain a new understanding of civil society, the complementarity of Government and Non-Government, the ways in which UNDP can promote democratic governance and human development. This would be a mutual programmatic partnership for the long-term. The 12 NGOs (selected for their apparent capacity to grow in strength and understanding) will sign a 10-year Memo of Partnership with UNDP in which mutual obligations will be made clear.

We believe long-term partnership is the best way for UNDP to strengthen civil society. This brings us to the important question of accountability. We propose that you should broaden the concept from one of book-keeping, to the question of accountability within civil society. We believe that partnership with UNDP could give us a unique opportunity to develop this area, and to redefine the responsibility of NGOs beyond one of simply receiving small grants. The role of NGOs must be to bring the population into the development process. If they do not achieve this, they fail, and this should therefore be one measure of their accountability. NGOs should be held accountable for mobilizing local human, material and financial resources in favour of national development and democratic governance.

\$20,000 invested in one year’s salaries for five field agents of a local NGO, should be able to leverage at least \$20,000 of local resources: membership fees, volunteer work, community contributions in cash or kind, mobilization of government employees who are otherwise idle, creation of job opportunities for unemployed graduates, professional training, training in civil responsibility, translation and publication in local languages of civil and human rights literature, stimulation of savings, guarantees for credits which can mobilize bank deposits, stimulation of technological innovations, attraction of further financial support from donors or from migrants.... the list is limited only by the imagination of UNDP’s NGO partners.

Finally, we propose a further element of accountability. If we are serious about building a strong civil society, one of the most important measures of accountability should be the reality of democratic governance within the NGO partners, and within their community partners (CAPSDH 1996; the full text is reproduced in Annex 4).

Of course, most “donors” are themselves completely undemocratic. Although they may serve democratically elected ministers, donors are bureaucratic institutions, fundamentally unsuited to preaching “democratic governance” to African civil society. The long-term partnership we are proposing would force both donors and NGOs to become responsive to a new set of stakeholders: to the beneficiaries at the grassroots. During our consultations for preparing this study, one international NGO funder remarked to us that “Africa has thousands of organizations, but very few institutions”. Yet Mali’s civil society badly needs the stability of permanent institutions. A few foreign NGOs have developed marriage-partnerships with local NGOs (some have even given birth to new national NGOs) since the advent of democracy.<sup>13</sup> It is through such partnerships that international organizations can best strengthen the local institutional capacity.

In the spirit of peace-building, we are searching for stronger forms of “new solidarity” at the grassroots, promoting the economic development will remove the causes of conflict. Modern African civil society can only become strong, if it supports the institutions which promote democratic governance, and defends the “democratic disciplines” we presented above. Mali’s peace depends on donors and NGOs supporting development in the grassroots communities which are receiving the ex-combatants. This requires new strategic thinking, and a new donor approach to the institutions of civil society. It is only if the donors can adopt new mechanisms which promote long-term development, that we shall succeed in ensuring permanent peace.

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<sup>13</sup> Several international NGOs have made a serious commitment to the development of northern Mali—ACORD, OXFAM, NOVIB (since 1975), AFVP, ACOPAM and SNV (since 1980), AEN, NEF, SCF, SC, World Vision and Care and Africare (since the drought of 1984).

## 6.7 Getting Northern Mali Back to Work

Born of economic crisis, the insecurity of the North will only disappear if the Malians and their partners succeed in relaunching the economy of the North. Many of the young men who are re-integrating into society have had a long career of bearing arms in foreign conflicts. Such men may sincerely wish to settle down and raise families (and some may find it difficult), but if they cannot make a decent living, there is always the risk that they may return to their bad ways. In winning the peace, the secret of success is in getting the northern economy going again.

Relaunching the economy means, however, that measures must be self-sustaining. The UNDP believes there is a danger in seeking to “compensate” for northern economic disadvantage, that short-term donor projects with large budgets and superficial impact could reinforce dependency: “It seems ill-advised, and probably even damaging for these regions in the long run, to get them used to being assisted. It will not help them to be protected for a long period against the normal realities of the financial world” (UNDP 1996, p. 3). In their authoritative critique of previous strategies in the region, Cheibane Coulibaly *et al.* (1995, p. 29) appeal similarly for avoidance of “simplistic actions which are the easy way out, and avoid a true reflection about development and programme design.” They distinguish two types of “easy ways out”:

1. *gigantisme des projets* (meaning huge prestige projects), and
2. *romantisme économique* (or unrealistic economic romanticism).

The first is familiar to bilateral donors, constantly under pressure from western companies seeking construction contracts with a 20 per cent profit margin (which compares favourably to the 3 per cent they earn in Europe). The second describes the micro-projects scattered around by certain NGOs, particularly those who fly in teams for a crisis, and fly out again in a couple of years, before the grassroots institutions have become strong enough to tackle the underlying causes of poverty. Scattering good will across projects does not solve under-development. The French call it *saupoudrage*, which we translate as the “salt-and-pepper approach to development”, it adds flavour, but you cannot gain nourishment from it.

Yet we are convinced that people can live in northern Mali, and even that the region is capable of generating a food surplus. Although we have shown (at the beginning of Chapter 2) that the North was to a large extent marginalized, both politically and economically, during the early years of Mali’s independence, the

two greatest reasons for northern socio-economic distress were the years of drought, and the physical isolation of Gao and Timbuktu from the economic and political centres of the country. On both these issues there has been some progress. Since the end of the 25 year period 1965-90, rains and crops have been better. There is never a year where everybody has a good crop, but in general since 1990, people have suffered less famine except where (in places like Lake Faguibine, west of Timbuktu) the insecurity caused them to abandon their fields for entire seasons. From around 1985, the State did make some efforts to reduce isolation: both with the construction of the important Mopti-Gao tarmac highway, and with greater northern political representation in the government and party hierarchies (admittedly it was limited and fairly elitist: but it was an improvement on the 1960s and 1970s when there was almost no northern participation in national politics). Likewise in 1980, the Region of Gao was divided into the two Regions of Gao and Timbuktu. Since the outbreak of the northern rebellion and the fall of the dictatorship, there have been many more changes. In 1992, the Region of Kidal was created and a civilian governor of local origin was appointed, and since 1995 decentralization is slowly making itself known.

The GRM's decentralization strategy cannot increase rainfall, but we believe it can have a striking impact on solving the other problems. Bringing decision-making home to the North will remove the feeling of political isolation, for even with locally elected deputies sitting in the National Assembly, Bamako seems a long way from Kidal (much as Corsica is far from Paris). The 1970s experience in Gao and Timbuktu with relaunching the cooperatives, and the impact of successor NGO activities in Gao and Timbuktu, shows how effectively local energies can be focused and local resources mobilised. But the agro-pastoralists must be convinced that they themselves will be in control of activities. As catalysts, NGO provide resources primarily in the area of technical and organizational skills, for in a year of good harvests the population can mobilise the other resources themselves.

The 1995 meeting in Timbuktu, organized by the government and the UNDP, was a strategy meeting between Government, donors and local development organizations in the North. Beyond symbolizing peace and a return to work in the region, the *Rencontre de Tombouctou* identified the broad strategic priorities of Mali-Nord.

The four strategic priorities:

1. *Reconcile economic growth and environmental protection through the development of the region's agro-sylvan-pastoral potential.* This includes the

need to ensure food security, to ensure the harmonious integration of cropping and herding (never an easy task, and one which is made harder by the disappearance in dry years of the desert pastures), and the practice of what the first United Nations Conference on the Environment described as a philosophy of “eco-development” (Sachs 1980) in which economics and the environment remain in harmony for the benefit of future generations.

2. *Ensure human development based on the availability of basic social services (education, health, drinking water, etc).* The national reform of the education system which we discussed earlier, starts with improving infrastructure and the status of teachers, but it includes most of all the adaptation of education to the languages, needs and life-styles of the population, and the development of decentralized literacy and professional, technical and vocational training. Development of health will be based on decentralized and community-based primary health care, and the West African regional policy on essential medicines (outlined in a document known as the “Bamako Declaration”), with a target of one water point per 400 people.

3. *Modernize the regional economy through the development of basic infrastructures, with intermediary urbanization and a minimum industrial base.* Transport and communications are vital for reducing the isolation of the North both in terms of the rest of Mali, and to promote trade with neighbouring countries. Urbanization policies will promote “development poles” creating employment and revenues (and reducing out-migration) in secondary towns where adequate facilities are provided, which includes suitable professional training. This will stimulate cultural tourism, and the implantation of small and craft industries. Appropriate risk-taking credit facilities and helpful export-promotion assistance must be provided. There are in the North certain raw materials which the GRM will promote, including the phosphates of Bourem, the salt of Taoudenit, the plaster of Tessalit, the limestone of Alhor, and skins and hides of which the quality needs improvement.

4. *Political decentralization accompanied by a participative planning process and the necessary deconcentration of government administration.* As long as the concept of “*commandement*” remains the dominant behaviour in central ministries, it will be difficult to create in Mali the concept of service which is inherent in the Anglo-Saxon “civil service” and which is so different from the “state functionary” approach of Francophone administrations. Furthermore, decentralization will not be successful if the administrative and

technical services remain wedded to Bamako instead of responding to local elected communes and councils after 1998. However, in the future, officials may no longer regard service in the North as a penance, or as exile: they will have greater motivation and better facilities, and there will be more technical and administrative staff in government service whose families are from the North.

To get the economy restarted, the North does not need high-cost and low-employment projects such as an expansion of Timbuktu airport, or the Tawsa dam.<sup>14</sup> Such projects are designed by foreigners and approved by distant bureaucrats. Such projects inflate the financial figures and fulfil political obligations (to whom?), but they will not touch the bulk of the 800,000 agropastoralists who live between Léré and Tessalit and Labezanga and Korienzé.

We need instead a whole series of small-scale and small cost programmes of the type that NGOs organize close to the grassroots. Based on the successful process of peace and reconciliation, the NGOs are proposing a development strategy around the local market where people meet and trade naturally. Often this will coincide with the territory of the rural commune (although seldom, as Map 4.1 shows, with old administrative boundaries). More often still, it will correspond to the dynamic of community development which the peace process restarted. One United Nations official observed, "The bureaucrats were unable to stop the fighting, and they will not be able to install the peace. Peace came from civil society: it is through civil society that the northern economy will be relaunched."

The right of association is a necessary institutional pre-condition for the actions of civil society. First and foremost therefore, to get the northern economy moving we must protect and expand the right of association. The political leadership of the country agrees (many of them have worked with NGOs), but the administration does not necessarily follow them. In the deepest recesses of the Malian bureaucracy, administrators believe that peasants cannot be trusted and

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<sup>14</sup> This dam at Tawsa (Tossaye) has become a political necessity, but we have strong doubts concerning its agricultural advantages. Experience in Africa suggests that "if you dam the river, you damn the people." We need answers to questions: how much established fertile farming land will be lost under the floodwaters, for a gain of how many hectares? Will the new hectares be as fertile as the lost hectares? Who will own them and control them? Who will control the waters? Who will run the amortisation fund, maintain the structure, and ensure that the dam is managed with technical efficiency and impartiality? Other questions follow, including protection of fish stocks, loss of biodiversity, threats to the unique wetlands of the Niger Interior Delta, and relations down-river with the Niger Republic.

must be controlled (“*encadrés*”). The centralized mentality fears “association” as a concept, and believes that people who wish to form groups need to be controlled by the State. This comes straight from the French legal tradition and the pernicious “law of 1901” which requires that any association be approved by the authorities. Officials cannot actually deny registration under Mali’s laws and democracy, but their frequent abuse of “discretion” transforms the simple act of association in Mali into a bureaucratic obstacle course. In a seminal article, Albert Meister (1957) contrasted the French “state control” approach to associations, with those of the Swiss and Nordic and Anglo-Saxon traditions which assume that ten or a hundred people grouped together—or in a collaboration between neighbourhoods or groups—have the same rights as each of them acting separately. This explains the greater success of cooperative-type movements in Anglophone African countries, than in the Francophone countries which have sometimes suppressed even their own traditional cultural associations. Yet West African society has always been run by age-groups and associations. This African heritage needs to be protected and developed.

The debate around decentralization has brought to the surface the profound gap which exists inside the Malian administration between those who believe in democracy, and those who believe that their education (under the one-party State) and their employment in government service has fitted them to govern the illiterate masses. We have underlined the risk to farmers and pastoralists, in our discussion on applying the democratic disciplines (in 6.1 above) that decentralization might actually weaken their capacity to resist the abuse of power unless they have a guaranteed right of association. Most of the deputies in Mali’s first elected chamber in 1992, were former employees of the State. When it comes to controlling the administration, deputies sometimes prove to be less the representatives of the People, than the friends and ex-colleagues of the Francophone administrators with whom they have daily intercourse. In that case, the only possible challenge to the abuse of power will come from civil society.

Confronted by the need to negotiate peace in the North, Mali’s political leadership has had little time to invest in the building bricks of permanent peace. They have not had time, most notably, to work out how best to support the emergence of a strong associative sector and a vibrant social economy (composed of the associative groups acting in the economy, including cooperatives, unions, professional associations, mutualist groups, etc). As part of the peace-building process, we believe that Mali needs to revise the NGO and associative controls inherited from the previous regime, but they must be modified in favour of free association, tempered by good housekeeping and transparent democratic control.

The Mali model shows that the economic answers for the North lie with the private sector and the social economy. This is not a statement of anti-government propaganda. The role of government services is vital, but should be limited to services which the government can and should provide: in particular the enforcement of personal security and the rule of law, and the maintenance of collective infrastructures which benefit the greatest number of citizens, including roads, high schools and hospitals, and the dissemination of information through the extension services. Economic activities are not a part of the package. In line with the philosophy of decentralization, government should provide a climate and infrastructure favourable to economic growth and decentralized banking, but the activity of economic development is not something which governments are good at doing.

Above all, the social economy is where greater economic growth and improved food supplies will come from. The relaunching of the cooperative movement in Gao in the 1970s, followed the principles of slow and steady animation and organization of community groups, around an economic activity of common interest. This is a classic social economy programme. The PAREM collective projects we discovered in Chapter 4.8, confirm the importance of the communal dynamic. Agro-pastoralists need a multiple series of self-managed activities including credit for small-scale technologies such as motor pumps, village-run cereal, seed-storage and seed-selection banks, access to information, appropriate education and training services, improved supplies of water and vaccines for children and livestock, and the systematic expansion of human and veterinary medicine based on local knowledge, rather than on imported drugs.

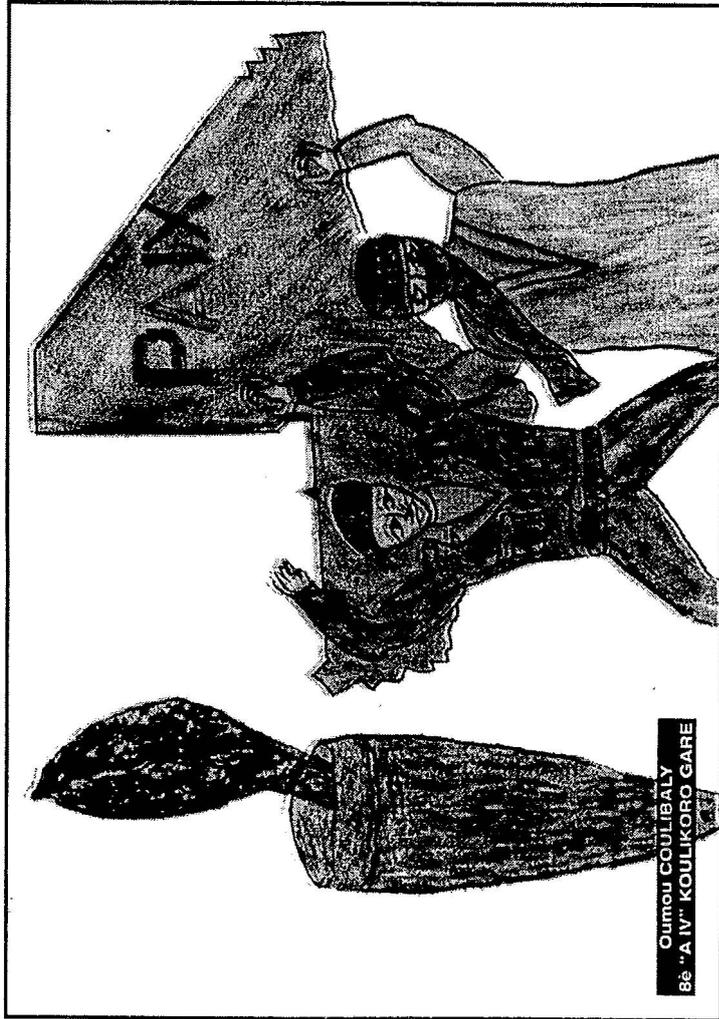
Such systems can benefit women and artisans and small entrepreneurs of all types, but they must be run in the field by the beneficiaries, on a scale which is suitable to the needs of the beneficiaries. An underlying philosophy to this approach is that, in a country where natural resources are few, the quality of the human resources can compensate. This implies an intensive investment in the education of women, not with a short-term literacy project but through a sustained campaign of training and accompaniment which will bring sustainable human development. "Development" does not consist of a series of technical recipes: it comes from changing the behaviour patterns of the people and restoring confidence in their capacity to organize their own lives.

This sort of system cannot be based on the classic donor project cycle lasting two or three years. The NGOs have had more impact in the North of Mali than all the big bilateral and multilateral projects, because they work in the villages and camps, and they are still there fifteen years later, in partnership with the community institutions which they have fostered. That is why the relaunch of the

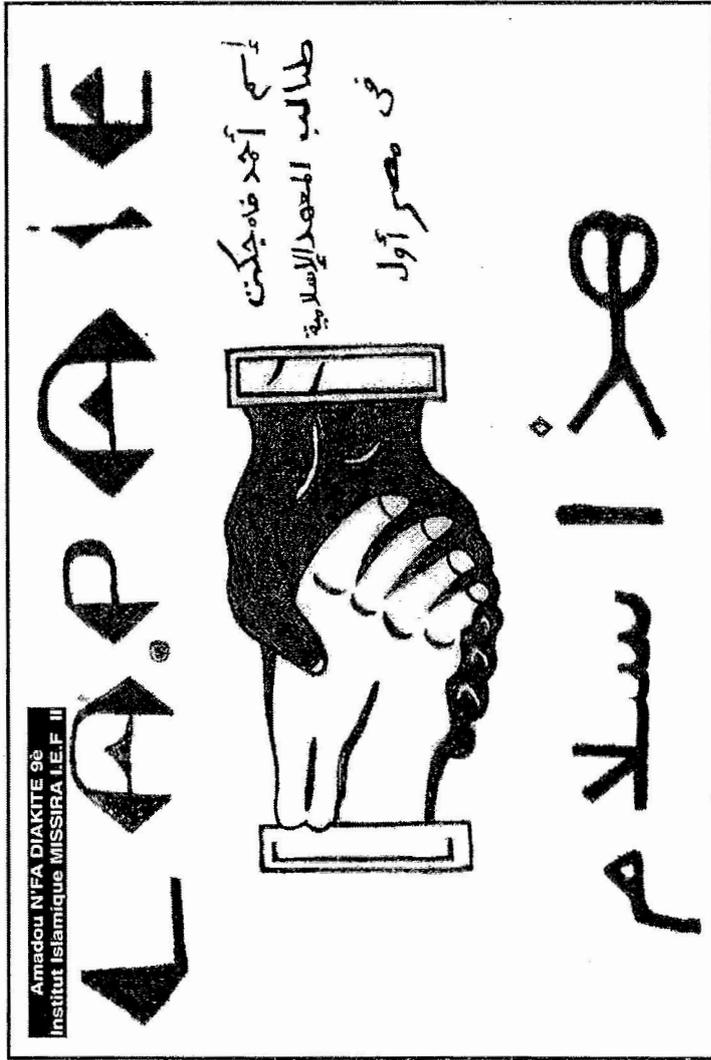
northern economy will only succeed if it passes through the institutions of civil society: they who made the peace, must be the builders of peace.

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Ending hostilities was a start; this chapter has outlined what is needed to ensure continued peace and long-term development. Local Malian civil society institutions are important for development (and for settling conflicts over land and water), just as they proved crucial for peacemaking and disarmament: from this it emerges that the right of association must be a fundamental pillar of the State. Within civil society, NGOs have an important role in decentralization and as catalyzers of social capital. Even more fundamental are the attitudes of Malians to peace and development. These translate into the need for a reappraisal of African education and history, from which new messages should emerge, through schooling and training and through the media: promoting social and civic values which will promote long-term peace. We have seen how donors discourage civil society by encouraging dependence on centralized funding. Mali's development partners need to adapt their strategies to a new, decentralized and democratic Mali. In this regard, we believe that security in the North—and better security forces—should be funded as a development cost. Donors may actually sabotage permanent peace if they fail to adapt. Repeating the failed models of the past, such as scattered short-term micro-projects and gigantic prestige projects, could lead disaffected young men to decide that banditry is more profitable than peace. Among donors, the United Nations agencies have the opportunity to play a leadership role, and it is this which provides the focus for our concluding chapter.



Designs and drawings were sent in by school children from all over Mali. Among those which caught our eye was this triumphal gesture of peace from Miss Oumou Coulibaly of Koulikoro. (Source: Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, Mali, 1997.)



And the handshake-of-peace conceived by Amadou N'fa Diakité in Bamako. (Source: Ministère de l'Education de Base, Mali, 1997.)

## Chapter 7

# The Flame of Peace Burns New Paths for the United Nations

**And even if God is keeping your flocks, take care to hire a shepherd.  
Rwandan proverb**

In this chapter, we bring together the many threads of United Nations activity that contributed to the peace process in Mali. The United Nations has acted as a “shepherd” of the process. Although the peacemaking itself has been a Malian triumph, the United Nations has shared in the success through its support for preventive diplomacy and peace-building within Malian society, and by adding a regional dimension. The initiative for a West African moratorium on small arms may prove to be another joint success. Since 1994, the United Nations has taken initiatives in Mali which provided discreet but effective donor leadership in the peace process even if this leadership role might have been more affirmative at an earlier stage. We draw from the Malian experience some general conclusions which could be applied in other countries and in other situations. At the risk of repetition, therefore, this chapter highlights United Nations activities which we have touched on in the preceding chapters, concentrating especially on issues of leadership and coordination, communication and partnership, not only between United Nations agencies, but also between the United Nations family and the governmental and non-governmental institutions of Africa.

### **7.1 The United Nations as a Partner for the Malian Government**

The task of coordinating aid is never easy, even assuming that a good and honest Government is in place. It is nevertheless a task which we think appropriate for the United Nations. As Mali moved from dictatorship through revolution towards democracy, the donors were often unhelpful. Some donors appear confused by the complexities of the new pluralistic Mali, and the multiple voices of civil society. There are times when one wonders whether the representatives of

Western democracies are not more at ease dealing with (and manipulating) African despots. Furthermore, donors do not like to be coordinated. Each head of mission is jealous of his prerogatives and keen to extract maximum political impact for the few dollars he is spending in the recipient country.

The United Nations should ideally emerge from the list of donors as the neutral agency, a family of development specialists united behind the Resident Coordinator. Though a rare occurrence, this has begun to happen in Mali. At the Geneva round table of 1994 (and at the GRM's request), the UNDP began to play a coordination role among the official donors in Bamako, although not really among the NGOs. At the beginning of 1997 the UN Resident Coordinator took over as co-chairman (with the Malian Minister of Foreign Affairs) of the GRM-donor *Commission Paritaire* for North Mali (which itself was a creation of the UN-sponsored *Journées de Concertation* of February 1993). The creation of the UN Trust Fund, the new initiatives of PAREM and the efforts of UNHCR have provided more opportunities for United Nations leadership in northern Mali since 1996, involving most of the international development players: Malian NGOs and civil society are still not automatically considered as development partners.

The UN Trust Fund created in 1995 illustrates the type of leadership initiative which we consider appropriate for UNDP. As we saw in section 5.6, the Trust Fund has attracted contributions from numerous donors, including a \$1 million contribution from the Malian Government. This success is partly thanks to associating the skills of UNDP and UN/DPA: a new form of United Nations partnership which donors appreciate, and which could be repeated in other countries. But where was United Nations leadership in 1992, when Mali's new democratic government needed friends? Back in 1991 and 1992, the United Nations did little to mobilize donors to support the weak Transitional Government. We shall argue in the next section that the United Nations should not sit passively waiting to be asked. If the GRM request for United Nations coordination came in at the end of 1994, it was because the UNDP had already started taking initiatives.

UNDP's coordination efforts, even though we consider them successful in Mali, are not without their critics. At the time of the Timbuktu Round Table in July 1995, the UNDP was the GRM's principal adviser and helper (the UNDP paid for a lot of painting and repairs at a time when Timbuktu was not ready to host an international conference). As UNDP was lobbying the development agencies to take part in the meeting, some considered that the UNDP had placed itself in "a conflict of interest", by siding with both the donors and the Government. We have made it clear that we think this argument is nonsense (although that does not stop certain donors from supporting it), since the development partnership is not one of conflict and competition. Indeed, donor and

host Governments are jointly “the bosses” of the United Nations, which has to serve them simultaneously. The United Nations should be striving to initiate common development strategies, whenever African Governments and donor representatives cannot agree.

Meanwhile the United Nations partnership with the GRM—and more specifically between the teams of Commissioner Diagouraga and UNDP Resident Representative Rose—has proved a significant factor in bringing peace. Together they have helped to link Malian and foreigners together around the relaunch of the northern economy. Naturally this is not the work of just two people. Many others were involved, as we have seen throughout this study. The UN’s success has been as a good partner, knowing when and where to place drops of oil in the machinery of peacemaking and peace-building.

## **7.2 The Tricky Issue of Sovereignty and United Nations Interference**

When does “domestic” violence become the affair of a country’s neighbours, or of the international community as a whole? A glance at former Yugoslavia, or at the Great Lakes region of Africa, shows that there is no easy answer. Violence breeds refugees who cross frontiers and create havoc in neighbouring countries. The UNHCR is called in to look after refugees from conflicts of which their home governments deny the existence. Our commitment to Human Rights and our respect for the Rights of the Child deny us the right to close our eyes, to block our ears to shut out the screams of the victims. In such cases the United Nations should not hesitate to intervene before violence takes place. The successful experience of northern Mali shows that the United Nations can promote conflict resolution, and help to mobilize the machinery of local peacemaking.

The international debate continues as to how far the “sovereign Nation State” can ignore human rights. We may be speaking of a small elite, often a military junta, a clique which has used the trappings of the nation to hijack State “sovereignty” for itself. In such cases, it is “We the peoples of the United Nations” who are the victims. Does the United Nations organization have to wait until it receives an invitation which may never come? The international community is increasingly recognizing a right to interfere, assuming a *droit d’ingérence* at least for the purposes of providing humanitarian assistance to refugees, and possibly to solve conflicts. What lessons can we infer from the Malian story? Did the United Nations take initiatives beyond the accepted limits of sovereignty?

The limits on the concept of absolute national sovereignty, are discussed in a special issue of the journal *Damoclés* called “*Quelle ONU, pour quelle paix?*”, notably in articles by Guérin and Girondeau (1993). The United Nations Charter does not explicitly mention humanitarian assistance. Article 2 of the Charter has two paragraphs which cover our subject, stating that:

4. All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.

7. Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.

Diplomats from other conflict-infested countries in the region, anxious to avoid any foreign interference in their own domestic violence, may insist that in the Malian case, it is the provisions of Chapter VIII which have guided Algerian and United Nations sub-regional mediation efforts: “Members of the United Nations... shall make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements...” (Article 52, paragraph 3). Yet who would doubt that, in northern Mali and Niger as well as in Algeria and Chad, there has been generous covert interference in their domestic political life? Where do terrorists find their weapons? Should we consider supplying weapons an act of aggression? The “global economy” may even render “national sovereignty” obsolete, as transnational corporations exert more influence than many of the member states of the United Nations.<sup>1</sup> If others interfere on the side of violence, should the United Nations interfere on the side of peace? Chapter VII of the Charter is entitled: “Action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression”. It authorizes the Security Council to take coercive measures to prevent aggression including “such action by air, sea or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security” (Article 42).

Guérin (1993, p. 27) argues that by entering an alliance such as the United Nations, every State accepts some small limitation to its sovereignty, and by adhering to the Charter it lays itself open willingly to actions under Chapter VII. He cites further jurisprudence in the form of United Nations General Assembly

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<sup>1</sup> See for example articles in *Le Monde Diplomatique* of April 1997 which show that, of the world’s 200 biggest economies, 100 are corporations.

Resolutions 43-141 of 8 November 1988 on humanitarian assistance, and 45-100 of 11 December 1990 on creating humanitarian corridors, 47-770 of 14 August 1992 on assistance for Sarajevo, and 47-794 of 4 December 1992 on aid to Somalia: all of which provide justification for believing that the international community is prepared to step across national frontiers in cases where the populations are no longer protected by—or are indeed threatened by—the regimes which govern them. The former Director of UNIDIR observes:

Increasingly, security is defined and pursued with reference to people as well as States. There have been two important precedents in the 1990s. The Security Council Resolution 688 of April 1991 held that internal pressure in Iraq and consequent cross-border flows of refugees threatened international peace and security in the region. On 3 December 1992, the Security Council “determined that the magnitude of the human tragedy in Somalia constitutes a threat to international peace and security.” For the first time since South Africa and Rhodesia in the 1960s, encroachments on minority rights and war-instigated humanitarian tragedies were defined in reference to Chapter VII of the Charter. These were actions in favour of people, not in support of States (Sverre Lodgaard, personal communication).

The concept of “sovereignty” arouses passion, sometimes misplaced. Malian diplomats were arguing ferociously against any “foreign involvement” in the problems of the North, even as negotiations were taking place in Algeria and Niger. Despite the allergies of his diplomats, Mali’s Minister of Foreign Affairs during the 1991-92 Transition, Tiéblé Dramé decided to use the United Nations General Assembly to open international discussion on the problem of the Touareg revolt:

Most African ministers present in New York in October 1991 said that it was unwise to open chances for the Powers to become involved with the Touaregs. But I had a different point of view. The Government of Mali had nothing to hide, and we believed that transparency is the best policy. It is best to be frank.

But Minister Dramé, speaking to us in perfect English, goes further:

It is not enough for the General Assembly to be informed, for the Security Council to take an interest. It is essential that the UN becomes involved on the development side of peace-making. Development makes peace. After the Transition Government had signed the *Pacte National* in 1992, it was time for the United Nations to take a lead in development for the North of Mali.

At the start of the Malian troubles and after the signing of the National Pact, United Nations leadership was not forthcoming. Even since 1994, the UN’s successful coordination efforts have been based on comparatively tiny initiatives.

On the basis of the Malian experience, we are arguing a general case in favour of greater United Nations confidence to take initiatives,<sup>2</sup> for both peace and human development. Preventive diplomacy is much cheaper than waiting until the great powers land the United Nations with a problem like the Great Lakes. The Malian experience further reminds us that there is no development without “security first”. As the United Nations has a development mandate, this may mean that the United Nations needs to be a little less deferential in the direction of “sovereignty”, when faced with internal conflicts. Or perhaps it is a question of redressing the definitions: ensuring that dominance by government does not destroy the “people’s sovereignty” expressed through democratic governance. Several examples spring to mind following Mali’s 1991 National Conference. The agitation of the farmers’ leaders was palpable, as their views were ignored and their participation frustrated by administrators controlling the *Journées du monde rural*. On occasion the debate was taken over by those very ex-Governors who, under the military regime, had been responsible for disastrous mismanagement of the rural economy. These are the people who hijacked “national sovereignty” in order to direct United Nations and other donor funds into the projects of their personal choice, yet they were allowed to emerge as spokesmen under democracy.

Instead of rigidly following government administrators, we argue that United Nations agencies should be prepared to take an independent line. We do not consider this to be “interference”. In every country, UN agencies are staffed with nationals of that country, as well as international staff. These UN nationals have been selected for their technical competence, and their views may be better balanced than those of government servants subjected to more direct political influence. UNDP and other agencies need to elaborate and follow strategies based on priorities expressed not just in the capital city, but by leaders of civil society in the provinces. This implies that the United Nations should decentralize, in the way that the UNDP in Mali has decentralized in the northern PAREM project. How else can the United Nations ensure that programmes benefit the population and the popular economy?

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<sup>2</sup> Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO visiting Mali during the Week of Peace, spoke on 25 March 1997 of United Nations initiatives in Sarajevo: UNESCO took the decision to supply paper and ink to a peace-promoting, multi-ethnic private newspaper, and funded an private radio station based on a ship in the Adriatic, in order to influence local people and politicians in favour of harmony and peace. This seems exactly the type of action the United Nations should support, even if it is bound to be controversial with some diplomats and political interest groups.

This is easier to write than to put into practice. Most UN agencies are reluctant to decentralize. There will be objections to UN initiatives, especially in the peacemaking business, where the military are involved. We have described how suspicious were the Malian military of the United Nations advisory mission on small arms. They were reassured to receive “two of their own”, General Henny van der Graaf and Colonel Douglas Fraser, who played a significant role in the process of establishing confidence among the Malian military hierarchy which, for the first time since 1968, was expected to accept direction from a civilian government. Drops of oil in the process of peacemaking. The art is to drop the oil in the right place. The general’s presence helped the United Nations to achieve an creative partnership with the military, contributing to peacemaking in northern Mali. This “gently pro-active approach” could be the new way for the United Nations to work not only in areas of conflict, but in the promotion of democratic governance and decentralized human development across Africa. The Malian partnership between UNDP and the UN/DPA points a new direction in pro-active preventive diplomacy and peacemaking.

The first UN advisory mission took place in 1994, at a moment of high insecurity in the North of Mali. There had been talk of a more active United Nations contribution to peacemaking, such as blue beret training to encourage the integration of rebels into the army and to improve army morale. The line is a thin one, between helpful actions and excessive interference. A very limited United Nations presence (at negligible cost) may be a sufficient but necessary level of involvement in an internal peace process. Drops of oil were needed in 1992-93 when Mali’s peacemaking machinery ground to a halt, but they were not applied until 1994. Thereafter the United Nations became more active, for example with General van der Graaf’s reappearance as a weapons inspector at the Flame of Peace in Timbuktu in March 1996. He added international stature to the Malian army’s actions, and this was reinforced on the diplomatic front in Timbuktu, by the presence of a high-level United Nations delegation: an important gesture towards traditional “national sovereignty”.

There is another approach to the question of whether more imaginative UN initiatives might constitute “violations of sovereignty”. We note that UN agencies are a permanent feature of the African landscape. Locally, they have therefore become an institutional part of each developing State. Under these conditions, the concept of “interference in the internal affairs of the State” raises a false problem. Since the UN agencies have long been working at the invitation of the host government, we may conclude that their presence is accepted, appreciated, has received consent. United Nations agencies should

therefore be seen as an integral part of the national development infrastructure: in the same way as the NGO community is part of civil society.<sup>3</sup>

In Mali throughout the troubles, United Nations officials were active on the informal level, working behind the scenes, in support of peace. The 1992 inter-agency mission across the North was a significant gesture of United Nations solidarity between agencies, and with the local populations and national authorities. The UNDP took major initiatives to organize the donor round tables in Geneva in 1994 and especially in Timbuktu in 1995. When certain United Nations officials in Bamako saw the *Ganda koy* video cassette, they discreetly funded its diffusion, and created an opening for dialogue between FPLA and MPGK. Certain donors expressed surprise when the UNDP began to take a more active part in the discussions about security (including the military), and brought in a political adviser to the Resident Coordinator. Traditionally, the UNDP has not been pro-active, nor has it had a political vision. Embassies might well express surprise, since this was a “first”. We hope that the success of the Malian initiatives will ensure that it is not the “last”. Oiling the machinery of peacemaking can be seen by men of ill will as “interference in the affairs of State”. The Malian experience suggests that such initiatives should be taken rather as “partnership with the peoples of the United Nations”.... initiatives which have promoted peace.

### **7.3 Uniting the United Nations Family and Civil Society in the Field**

It is clear that the UN Resident Coordinator will be stronger if he can unite the United Nations specialized agencies behind him (or her). Not every UNDP Resident Representative can be a great leader, of course, and they do not all have the “political feeling” needed to excel as UN Resident Coordinator in difficult circumstances.<sup>4</sup> But even where all these conditions come together, not every UN agency will accept coordination. The specialized agencies have

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<sup>3</sup> Since Member States sit on the Executive Boards of the UN specialized agencies, they also exert political control: which reinforces our argument that their local offices should be seen as part of the national development infrastructure.

<sup>4</sup> The Resident Representative has a mandate from the Administrator of UNDP and is accredited to the Government of the host country through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Resident Coordinator holds a mandate from the Secretary-General and is also accredited. Usually the UNDP Resident Representative is also the UN Resident Coordinator.

naturally fallen victim to “the iron law of organizations”, so that every institution tends to serve its own employees at the risk of neglecting its original mandate. This is particularly tragic in the case of agencies whose mandate is to reduce poverty. Most of the problems appear to come from the headquarters of the specialized agencies, where bureaucratic problems may be exacerbated by the recruitment of old politicians and diplomats, or administrators whose technical skills are out of date.

Much as we deplore the behaviour of Senator Jesse Helms with regard to the United Nations, it seems clear that it is donor pressure which will streamline the United Nations system. One way to reduce the coordination problem in the field, would be for donors to refuse to fund representative offices for the UN member agencies. This was tried with FAO back in the 1970s, and it was a success. The FAO Representative became Senior Agricultural Adviser to, and had an office in, the UNDP. He was automatically a senior member of staff, involved in all decision-making in the UNDP. He no longer had separate overhead costs to pay, nor did he waste his time in the diplomatic receiving line at the airport. Plenty of UN agency representatives adore lining up with ambassadors, but we should not be paying people for that. Their job is supposed to be leading the campaign for better agriculture or better health or better programmes for children or refugees. The reform of the United Nations system is way beyond the scope of our present study, so we shall leave the subject with the donors who, as Jonathan Moore says in his study of United Nations relief operations, should be:

... making it as painfully clear as possible to the operating agency heads (e.g. UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, UNDP) that cooperation among them is urgently required and that wrangling and infighting will not be tolerated.... The message isn't getting through, and it needs to be conveyed in concrete instances and not just as a matter of abstract sentiment, as well as buttressed by the countries which sit on the executive boards of the agencies in question (Moore 1996, p. 42).

One of the major reasons for this state of affairs is the lack of coordination among the ministries of the donor countries. Donor technical ministries send representatives to sit on executive boards of the UN agencies, each speaking with a different voice and supporting the unique and overwhelming importance (and independence) of their particular sector. This problem has long been recognized, but it appears that the donor countries are unable to change. The solution might be to create in each country a deputy to the Foreign Minister with a title such as “Minister for the United Nations”, who would nominate and brief all delegates speaking for the Member State. In this way technical

ministries would be obliged to coordinate their positions into a coherent whole: donors might contribute to United Nations coherence instead of encouraging conflicting sectoral politics.

It would be wrong to suggest there is no United Nations coordination in the field. While we have been critical of certain agencies (notably in Chapter 5), we have been warm in our praise of the United Nations inter-agency mission of 1992 which brought hope to the war-torn regions of northern Mali, and of the subsequent *Journées de Concertation pour le Développement des Régions de Timbuktu, Gao et Kidal* which took place in February 1993. The fact that all the agencies were collaborating together, and with the French and Algerians as well, provided a spirit of confidence and leadership to the development community. The UN Trust Fund has been created in the same spirit, and since 1996 UNHCR has been coordinating efforts with regard to resettlement of refugees. Under the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in Mali, the United Nations family may be re-gearing itself in 1997 for the relaunching of the northern economy. If the UN agencies can work in concert, donors and NGOs will follow United Nations guidance to support the leaders of Malian civil society in ensuring continued peace and development.

There is no doubt that United Nations leadership of the donors has been valuable for peacemaking since 1994. The Resident Coordinator explains the mechanism thus:

In order to be useful, our role has consisted of helping to strengthen positive developments, and helping to take preventive measures against negative developments, and this necessarily in a relationship of confidence with the political authorities. The key element to being useful is the flexibility and potential impact which the UN Resident Coordinator can have when using the authority devolved upon him, by UNDP, in his capacity as UNDP Resident Representative. Not only does the Resident Coordinator have a small pocket of money to draw on, but as UNDP Resident Representative, he can quickly authorize modestly-sized projects at the Government's request, and can also access special financing sources available through UNDP headquarters. All of these mechanisms were used in Mali, and the total cost does not yet approach a million dollars: preventive action is indeed cheap investment (Rose 1996, p. 2).

So the UN Resident Coordinator does occupy an advantageous position if the incumbent has the imagination to use the prestige and the neutrality of his title.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The neutrality of the UN Resident Coordinator may however be compromised by his nationality. This may have been a factor in Mali where the previous incumbents were Tunisian and Rwandan, both special cases with regard to potential ethnic or civil wars on the edge of the Sahara. As a general rule we believe that it is inappropriate to appoint United Nations staff from

The model United Nations coordination story was in Ethiopia (Kurt Jansson 1987), and we commented earlier that it is surprising how few UN staff are familiar with the story. Personal qualities are what count most. The key thing is to have the right woman in the right place at the right time: in this case the Director of UNDP's Bureau for Africa, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, who considered that the cause of peace was worth a few risks. She also needed a courageous Resident Coordinator, and he needed good advisers. In this we are not thinking only of his Deputy Resident Representative and the office team (although they are very important of course), but of a group of outside local people who were able to advise him, and with whom he could empathise. In our proposal for UNDP to create a new set of partnerships with certain civil society organizations and NGOs (which we outlined in section 6.6 above), we have in mind that some of them could become, as in Mali, the partners, informal advisers and inspirers of the United Nations.

Groups outside the official donor community in Mali—notably the important NGO community which was leading development in the North—have not felt the benefit of UNDP coordination, and the UN missed earlier opportunities to provide leadership. NGOs are reluctant to be coordinated, so a successful coordinator needs to wield political and financial clout. The local government and the donors are always politically tainted, and often it is the government which causes much of the problem (this was true in Mali before 1991). We see a clear opportunity throughout Africa for UN Resident Coordinators to develop a partnership with civil society, to the advantage of democratic governance in the broadest sense. The Peace of Timbuktu is a story of peacemaking and peace-building, in which government and civil society worked together with the United Nations. We consider that this new pattern of partnership should become a strategic priority for the United Nations, alongside the protection and expansion of rural radio which we discuss below.

The Malian creation of a *Commission Paritaire* improved donor coordination greatly: the model could be used in other countries. The fact that the UNDP Resident Representative took over in 1997 as co-chair (from the German Ambassador, who succeeded the European Union delegate) is a tribute to United Nations coordination success in the North, and it is a great help to Mali's democratic leadership. The United Nations advisory mission on small

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countries nearby, since "nationality" is insufficient to guarantee the "internationality" essential to the UN's identity and impartiality.

arms observed that “There are indications in certain of the States (contributing to reinforcement of security forces in West Africa) that they would prefer a broader-based approach to security assistance and that an international effort would provide them with more independence in that regard” (Eteki 1996, p. 6). Peace and security, as we have observed, are necessary conditions for development (and we return below to the doctrine of “security first”). The United Nations is now successfully providing in Mali the donor leadership which Eteki describes. Acting together, the UN agencies could extend to the institutions of civil society a similar form of coordination and leadership.

## **7.4 UNDP Partnership with the Political Secretariat**

The partnership between the UN’s political and development wings has been a crucial part of the Malian success story. The idea of such linkage had been suggested before, but UNDP Resident Representatives are inclined to avoid political risks. The Malian case is interesting not least, because the United Nations Development Programme and the UN Secretariat were able to collaborate for the first time in peacemaking. The role in Mali of Ivor Fung, of the UN Centre for Disarmament Affairs, is an example of how important individuals can be, even inside a bureaucracy the size of the United Nations. The idea of experimenting with the control of small arms in West Africa, and the Malian President’s approach to the Secretary-General, provided the opportunity for Fung to launch an initiative throughout the sub-region, using the mechanism of the advisory missions on small arms. Prvoslav Davinic, Fung’s boss, gave him full backing, and later turned up in Timbuktu in March 1996 to act as one of the weapons certifiers for the Flame of Peace. We have argued that the United Nations should be prepared to take initiatives in the cause of peace, becoming less wary of the prerogatives of “national sovereignty”. In the present case, the United Nations teamed up with Mali’s President to get around any such objections from neighbouring countries.

The UN’s Department for Political Affairs has been concentrating increasingly on preventive diplomacy, and they coined the phrase “micro-disarmament” to describe their interest in the control of small arms. Being both a West African, and a woman, the Director of the UNDP’s Africa Bureau, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was prepared to take a few political risks in the cause of West African peace. And Tore Rose in Mali was prepared to take financial initiatives: he realized that there would be no development in northern Mali without peace, and therefore he reasoned that peace had become part of the development

process. With Ellen's backing and the Malian Government's approval, Rose proposed the radical notion of receiving a political adviser in his UNDP office. There was agreement on a hierarchy of priorities, which allowed both United Nations officials and Malian officials to innovate, knowing that they were experimenting.

The UN Resident Coordinator himself describes the synergy between UNDP and UN/DPA as "an unqualified success". His analysis brings out the complementary skills and confidence-building that the arrangement allowed to develop:

The arrangement is a genuinely pilot experience, by which the Resident Coordinator function can acquire a low-key political dimension, tailored to circumstances which by no means require a Special Representative of the Secretary-General, but which do require something more than a UN-system coordinator (Rose 1996).

This points out that Fung was working in a specially created role as Political Adviser to the Resident Coordinator. Fung worked to establish dialogue with the different components of the Malian State apparatus, happily moving up and down the diplomatic scale as a function of the requirements of the job, with variable titles from "Political Expert", to "Representative of the Secretary-General". The United Nations put priority on supporting the agenda for peace for Mali. The Government of Mali used Fung and the Resident Coordinator to reinforce the internal peace process: producing the advisory missions, the work of William Eteki-Mboumoua and General Henny van der Graaf, the Flame of Peace, the United Nations conferences and consultations, the Trust Fund (with DPA proving successful as a partner in fund-raising), collaboration with UNESCO in Paris, and with UNIDIR and the UN Centre for Human Rights in Geneva, a draft Code of Conduct for civilian-military relations, cross-border collaboration, the moratorium discussions on small arms, a West African sub-regional dimension....

The innovative process has now gone well beyond the confines of Mali-Nord. Experience proves that a national peacemaking process is insufficient by itself: regional efforts are needed to sustain subsequent peace-building, and this is particularly evident in the case of the Touaregs and Arabs, whose traditional space spreads over several international frontiers. The United Nations therefore has a crucial role to play as peace-facilitator. The Malian Flame of Peace led the UN Secretary-General to organize (with Dutch financing) a High-Level Consultation on Post-Conflict Peace-building in West Africa on 21 October 1996 in New York, at which Mahamadou Diagouraga and Tore Rose were

among the principal performers. This is but one of a coherent series of steps, many of which are new initiatives. The idea of a West African moratorium on small arms circulation is a Malian initiative. At the request of the countries concerned, the United Nations has initiated a dialogue with weapons suppliers (grouped under the Wassenaar Arrangement), and this is another “first”. As the former Director of UNIDIR explained to us: “These represent logical steps in the pursuit of a secure environment for socio-economic development, and a realization that in the long run peace processes and preventive actions are vulnerable if conducted on a national basis only. Regional measures are needed to sustain national efforts” (Sverre Lodgaard, private communication). It is clear that national sustainable development is impossible without regional peace and security.

The United Nations has been handed some pretty nasty situations in recent years. When the great powers make the sort of mess that we have seen in Afghanistan, Angola, Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda, it is only dedication, patience and professionalism which hold the United Nations relief operations together.<sup>6</sup> Within the United Nations, the UNDP, UNICEF and especially UNHCR have achieved extraordinary results, often in a political vacuum and surrounded by arms salesmen. The Malian experience in preventive diplomacy shows us a situation in which United Nations professionals took initiatives before the situation got out of hand. With minute sums of money, the United Nations coordinated support for the Malian Government’s conviction that peace could work. Peacemaking—by definition—contains an important cultural dimension. There are new concepts emerging from the Malian experience, which are changing perceptions within the United Nations itself. If Mali’s teamwork can be reproduced on the ground elsewhere, the Malian model may be the first example of a new United Nations strategy for peacemaking and peace-building.

## **7.5 United Nations Development Leadership and “Security First”**

The security situation is having a serious effect on the delivery of humanitarian aid and achievement of sustainable development. The United Nations Development Programme and other agencies are forced to withdraw many of their personnel to the larger centres,

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<sup>6</sup> See Moore 1996: *The UN and Complex Emergencies - Rehabilitation in Third World Transitions*, UNRISD, Geneva.

as are many of the NGOs... The inability of the international organizations, individual countries and NGOs to deliver programmes is in itself contributing to the unrest. Most agree that until governments are able to provide a minimum level of security their programmes will be at a standstill (Eteki 1996, p. 4).

This paragraph from the report of the second United Nations sub-regional advisory mission on small arms, emphasizes what we hear on the radio every month. Violence destroys everything. We should not exaggerate the importance of isolated actions in northern Mali: however dangerous they may seem, they are small compared with the risks of daily life in certain areas of Lagos or Kinshasa or Belfast or Washington DC. But banditry is destructive of the confidence of populations and development partners, and for the economic recovery of the North of Mali. It is up to civil society and the populations of northern Mali to take in hand the social climate of their communities and to consolidate the winning of the peace. Peace requires the restoration of the authority of the State. The moral authority of the State is the most important part of authority: this is why the Malian President is insisting on restoring administrative, health and education services as an absolute priority. But law-and-order and justice are also part of the deal. Without the capacity to apply laws, the State is unable to protect its citizens. As we saw above, "security first" is a condition for development.

The NGOs have always been exceptionally reluctant to become involved in matters of politics and security. Under the military dictatorship, most NGOs refused to travel with a member of the Forestry Department unless he removed his uniform. In the circumstances of rebellion however, NGOs in northern Mali found themselves side by side with the security forces. If it was not possible to leave Gao or Kidal without a military escort, often it was also necessary to supply fuel for the military vehicles. In many cases (as one NGO Director complained to the Security Commission in the *Journées de Concertation pour le Développement des Régions de Timbuktu, Gao et Kidal* in February 1993) the NGOs were even asked to pay *per diem* to soldiers on escort duty. Despite their ideological aversion to working with the uniformed symbols of authority and repression, NGOs have had to compromise with the concept of "security first".

Donors have less reason to fear involvement with the uniformed forces, since they represent Governments. Certain agencies have strict rules against using development funds for military-related assistance: but the problems of policing should cause less heart-searching, especially since Mali's police are no longer under military control. Even if donor missions are unmoved by tales of stolen cattle, they are sensitive to car-theft and assassination. Many of the vehicles which were stolen during the years of insecurity were paid for out of donor

project funds. Some were replaced from project funds, and then stolen again! Simply on the basis of protecting their property, donors are coming to realize that carrying out their development mission demands security first. It should therefore be acceptable to devote a small proportion of development funds to strengthening police and security forces.

It is clear that there is an urgent need to make the security forces more effective. We have mentioned the effectiveness of camel patrols in reducing cattle theft along the Mauritanian frontier. What needs to be re-emphasized here is the scale of the problem. Mali's frontiers are among the longest in Africa; added to which, the Sahara Desert provides a climate which is disagreeable for long patrols, impossible for permanent surveillance by customs officers. Modern technologies can compensate for the difficulties and distances, but they are expensive. Permanent satellite surveillance is out of the question, but we are actually thinking of less costly alternatives such as light planes, a helicopter or two, fast four-wheel-drive vehicles, adequate quantities of fuel and parts, reliable radio sets. Nothing very revolutionary. This is standard equipment for any police force, but it is beyond the immediate capacity of the national budget of Mali. Financial assistance is needed for a light and effective deterrence to bandits. Even the presence of two helicopters for a few months, would change the atmosphere in any one of these northern regions: for potential car-thieves would know that their stolen vehicles could be identified and located from the air.

UNDP has been as politically wary as any development agency, concerning military and security matters. The Malian initiative is a "first", notably in that it is the first time UNDP has collaborated in the field with the UN/DPA. The UN Trust Fund is also a new initiative, with its potential for funding "security for development". Successful peacemaking and reconciliation in Mali has brought recognition that peace and development are intertwined. This link has previously been highlighted by political scientists in "the literature", but it is the first time that it has been seen in practice and within the activities of the United Nations. It is this Malian innovation which has led to the "security for development" or "security first" approach. It is one which will have imitators in other countries.

For the last word in this section we shall return to William Eteki-Mboumoua, leader of the United Nations advisory missions on small arms:

... there will be no opportunity for the voluntary collection of illicit light weapons until the citizenry are willing to give up their personal weapons and self-defence units, and those engaged in banditry out of a sense of survival, are relieved of that necessity. This will only happen when they are sure that the authorities can provide the necessary security environment and are making every effort to improve their economic conditions. The sub-region is a clear case where assistance in the security field must be integrated with other

forms of development aid.... Democratic structures can only be cultivated and survive when there is a satisfactory level of development. Development in turn requires a stable security environment. One way to achieve that situation is to allocate a proportion of development assistance for security (Eteki 1996, p. 10).

## 7.6 Regional Integration Means Managing Shared Frontiers

The Flame of Peace is already more than one year old as we write these words. The first anniversary on 27 March 1997 was celebrated across the frontiers: in Niger in particular, they celebrated in a most positive way by beginning the cantonment process of their combatants. In his Inaugural Address to the 1997 Week of Peace, President Konaré spoke in Bamako of Mali's shared frontiers as a common space which should be managed jointly to ensure peaceful neighbourliness. These frontiers often cut through cultural and economic unity (as is the case with the Touareg space in the Sahara). Shared frontiers can become a peaceful space; frontiers seen as barriers may be an invitation to conflict. Speaking in Timbuktu, before lighting the Flame with Guest-of-Honour JJ Rawlings, President Konaré had already invoked the idea of shared frontiers:

The logic of proximity pleads for regional integration.... The realities of a common living space, a common space for production, trade and consumption, added to our common historical and cultural heritage, are arguments for unity which are far more concrete than the possession of a national identity card. Should we continue to ignore these truths, which can only help us to improve the success of our local development efforts? We shall be enriched by our frontiers, if we consider them as spaces which we share together, rather than as limits to keep us apart. Mali invites its neighbours to join us in exploring the structures of our frontier zones. We can contribute to the well-being of our communities, by finding new ways to manage these areas in partnership with the local populations (GRM 1997, pp. 47-8).

The Mali conflict has really been a common Mali-Niger conflict. The initial rebel raid on Menaka in June 1990 was actually launched to release from detention, people who had been arrested in Mali on suspicion of having taken part in the first attack at Tchinn Tchabaraden, in the Niger Republic. Conflict in the sub-region is always a shared risk. The agro-pastoral economy engenders occasional herding disputes, which cross all the international frontiers at one time or another. The Touareg troubles forced refugees to leave for Algeria, Mauritania, Senegal, Niger and Burkina Faso. If smaller groups found their way into Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, they usually had independent means of support. Within the broader perspective of conflicts within the sub-region, it is the latter which have the greatest incentive, among Mali's neighbours, to ensure that shared frontiers become a jointly-managed space to promote peace. Both Côte d'Ivoire and

Guinea are in the frontline of illegal Liberian arms exports, which threaten to increase levels of violence right across the sub-region. Both countries are also conscious of the risks to their own stability, of caring for large numbers of refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone which provide an example of how one internal conflict can destabilise a neighbouring country.

Participants at the November 1996 Bamako Conference (on micro-disarmament and conflict prevention), began their Communiqué (UNDP 1996) with the following observations:

1. The participants in the Conference on disarmament, development and conflict prevention in West Africa (Bamako, 25-29 November 1996) are unanimous in their recognition that all countries in the sub-region are concerned by the proliferation of light weapons. Individual countries cannot fight this menace alone, because of long frontiers, insufficient equipment for surveillance, and poor collaboration between the services charged with policing the frontiers. They recognize the necessity of involving civil society in the struggle against the ownership and circulation of illegal light weapons, more especially since these communities often compose the populations on both sides of the frontier.
2. The intercommunal meetings organized inside Mali during 1995 and 1996, have demonstrated the importance of civil society for reestablishing and consolidating peace.
3. Following the same principles, it would be useful to organize meetings between communities in the frontier areas, to discuss how conditions of security could be improved, and how social cohesion could be strengthened throughout these areas.

As a result, the United Nations has found some money to organize three sets of community meetings in each of the frontier areas Mali-Niger, Mali-Burkina Faso and Mali-Mauritania.<sup>7</sup> The populations will be represented by the leaders of "traditional civil society", with government officials taking part as observer-participants, but not as leaders of the meeting. Elected representatives of the people, local officials, and representatives of the National Commission on small-arms will be there, as well as Malian UN observers who will facilitate the meetings: indeed it is the United Nations which has been most active behind the scenes in this peace-building activity, persuading the communities of the usefulness of these cross-border meetings, and convincing local officials on both sides of the border that they should take part. This appears as a most useful opportunity for extending UN preventive diplomacy, and the meetings promise to give a real meaning to the concept of managing shared frontiers.

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<sup>7</sup> Meetings on control of light weapons and joint management of peaceful border lands are being prepared in Menaka and Diré for late October 1997.

## 7.7 A Moratorium on Small Arms: Towards a Shared Democratic Space

The concept of managing shared frontiers was given a new dimension when President Konaré suggested to his neighbours in 1996 that they should agree to a moratorium on the movement of light weapons. In a world familiar with nuclear disarmament, here is an exciting innovation in “micro-disarmament”. The moratorium on small arms is a new idea, a Malian initiative which the United Nations is supporting enthusiastically. This is not a legal treaty, rather a political Act of Faith in which one Nation is inviting its neighbours to share. As the Aide-Mémoire put it during the preparation of the initiative:

The proposed moratorium is one element of a policy on arms control. It is an act of faith, and a manifestation of the political desire to observe for a definite period, an official ban on the transfer and manufacture of light weapons within the geographic space of interested countries (the full text is in Annex 2).

While peace was being negotiated successfully in Mali and Niger, the authorities were keeping one eye on the evolving situation in Liberia and Sierra Leone, countries awash with small arms. Everyone in West Africa fears the spread of guns from the coast. Many have already felt the spreading cancer of violence. Groups of young men arrive as refugees, taking advantage of migrations to practise their trade as drugs peddlars, arms salesmen or occasional bandits. West Africans welcome the arrival of peace negotiations on the coast. They are praying that the gunmen will allow the recent elections in Sierra Leone and Liberia to give democratic governance a chance. Meanwhile they also worry about how to mop up the weapons.

“You must realize,” a Frenchman living in Mali explained to us back in 1994, when insecurity had flared up again in the North, “that the arms salesmen are searching for markets. The war in Chad is ended, Lebanon is quiet and Afghanistan is no longer the market that it was. A nice little war in the Sahara would suit them well. It is unfortunate, *mais c’est comme ça*.” Nigeria’s Olu Adeniji wrote, in the special 40th anniversary edition of the UN Review Disarmament:

The Super-Powers have managed to convince other countries that security is to be equated with armaments, and the more sophisticated the armaments, the greater the security. They have thus hindered disarmament efforts both psychologically and physically. The United Nations, being an assembly of sovereign States, cannot make progress in any area beyond

the willingness of its Members. The consensus of international opinion always has been and continues to be for disarmament (Adeniji 1985, p. 13).

United Nations Members in West Africa are supporting the moratorium idea not only to promote disarmament and a climate of peace, but also as a tool which will strengthen the resolve of customs and police forces across the West African sub-region. At the 1997 OAU summit conference in Harare, interest was expressed by many African countries, even far from the Sahel. The moratorium will give practical force to the idea of shared frontiers. The top leadership of police and customs services are supportive, although the concept has not yet filtered down to the frontier posts. While it is welcomed by the security forces, the moratorium idea has been greeted with less enthusiasm in certain infantry battalions. Yet senior army officers are quick to admit that the first requirement for a strong army is a strong economy, and a stable system of government, and Africa has proved that without these, the process of development cannot take place. Freedom from external aggression is best achieved through good relations with neighbouring countries, and safe well-policed borders. Then again, it takes more than a rifle to make a good soldier. A good soldier—like a good policeman—needs training, understanding and motivation, adequate wages and food and clothing, good boots and decent housing, transport and fuel and good communications equipment, and a pride in his role within the Republic. It is remarkable how few of these qualities were obtained in Mali under the regime of General Moussa Traore. As the country stagnated, so the army declined in quality and equipment and morale.

From the political point of view, the moratorium on small arms can be seen as a crucial instrument for allowing the political authorities to maintain ascendancy over the military, and as a budgetary device to direct resources into areas which are vital for maintaining an army of good quality: more vital than the expenditure on arms. Many West African armies already have generously adequate stocks of arms and munitions. The culture of secrecy—a legacy of Soviet training—makes it very difficult to know whether there are not already such large stocks of small arms, that the moratorium will have little effect on military equipment levels. In such cases, the moratorium should be enforced without delay. Even in countries which appear to have an insufficient number of small arms for their soldiery, the moratorium should be supported because importing additional firearms for the uniformed forces merely stimulates the illicit demand for firearms, while at the same time consuming resources which are needed for training and salaries.... not to mention health and education. Indeed we believe that there is a case to be made for including in calculations of the Human Development Index, alongside health and education criteria, the numbers of small

arms in a country, and levels of expenditures on weapons in general.<sup>8</sup> Africa must avoid squandering scarce resources on firearms, and invest a maximum in the education and training and discipline and morale of its soldiers.

The importance of good training cannot be overemphasized, in the light of bitter Africa-wide experience of ill-disciplined troops (including national armies, private militias, and non-African peace-keeping troops). Colonel Harald Deuschl of Sweden's National Defence College (speaking to us about protecting children from violence) explained his conviction that every soldier in every national army needs to be instructed in peace-keeping: for in the absence of any evident external threat of aggression, a republican army is a peace-keeping army. An army may also, under exceptional circumstances, be called upon to support law enforcement: which implies that soldiers may act as "reserve policemen", among their other functions. They must receive special training for this new role, including basic knowledge of the law. The army must "defend the frontiers of the nation", which may require a gun; but soldiers are more often "managing the shared frontier space", which is a peace-building function based on principles other than violence. Col Deuschl insists that every soldier of every rank should therefore receive information and training about peace-building: which necessarily includes instruction about the civil laws of his country, the laws of peace and the laws of war, and absorbing personal rules of conduct which should be laid down in a Code of Soldiering.<sup>9</sup> The reason for and the application of a moratorium on light weapons would naturally be a part of training for all security and military forces: and similar training should be provided to military, police and customs services on both sides of the shared frontier space.

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<sup>8</sup> This is not about overall military expenditures or budgets, nor does it concern the general cost of maintaining security forces: we are concerned here only with expenditures on firearms.

<sup>9</sup> In Annex 2, we reproduce a draft Code of Conduct for Civil-Military Relations which was adopted in Bamako in July 1996 and which is still being worked upon. A training programme such as we envisage would present the same information to all ranks, with levels of detail appropriate to the educational level of each. Lower ranks require simple materials printed in their mother tongue, while senior officers require more extensive knowledge of the law. The training content should include practical exercises about the basic tenets of the Geneva Convention (and its Protocol of 1977), the Declaration of Human Rights, and the Declaration and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and seek to create a common bond of information-sharing and understanding between the military and security forces of neighbouring countries.

The moratorium alone will not stop the circulation of small arms. What it can do is to contribute to creating a climate of peace-building, where arms are removed from the central place which they occupy in society today. The problems of social violence in South Africa illustrate the stark alternative. Under the terms of the moratorium neither the forces of order, nor the forces of disorder will be able too easily to import and trade arms. Nor is the moratorium an isolated instrument which will serve alone to curb the trade in small arms: the United Nations has encouraged each West African country to create a National Commission to control the proliferation of light weapons; advisory missions may be resumed in favour of other countries in the sub-region; contact has been made with countries supplying weapons, grouped under the Wassenaar Arrangement; the United Nations is proposing a register of small arms in West Africa; in the same spirit, the US Arms Control agency presented at the 1997 Bamako Week of Peace a provisional list of small arms categories; frontier controls are to be strengthened, and common training of frontier and customs guards is envisaged as part of the "security first" doctrine; a data bank on small arms is to be established; and the United Nations is offering its services for the collection, supervision and destruction of small arms.

The idea of a moratorium on the manufacture and trade of light weapons is being pursued through the appropriate channels, by Mali's diplomats and by UN officials. No West African nation has so far (mid-1997) declared the application of a moratorium. Time must be allowed for each part of the State and the armed forces to absorb the idea and to realize its potential advantages. As part of the new systems of decentralized governance in Africa, people must be brought into the process of peace-building and given responsibility for reducing the risks of violence. The moratorium initiated by Mali offers West African leaders the chance to work together, both as States and as people living along shared frontiers, towards a shared democratic space.

### **7.8 United Nations Support for African Democratic Traditions and the Media**

Throughout our discussion of peacemaking and peace-building, education has been a recurrent theme: education and re-training of soldiers, of ex-combatants, of policemen, of administrators, of legislators, of civil society, of children who have not had access to schooling. Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO said in his keynote address to the 1997 Bamako Week of Peace that:

We have a duty to contribute to education, by taking into consideration the specific differences of each country. Education today is not just a means for transmitting theoretical knowledge. Education is also about values: those which refer to peace, to human rights and democracy. Education... should help us learn to live together. Education should teach the values of tolerance, of respect for one another, of sharing. Education must foster the spirit of dialogue, non violence and openness towards other people.... Yet education for peace does not only concern a part of society: it requires the participation of all the actors in society... (Mayor 1997, p. 7).

The Director-General went on to list such key actors as teachers, youth, women, elected leaders and the media, and he condemned violently the misuse of the media in promoting racial, ethnic or religious hatred, pledging that UNESCO “accords an especial importance to the training of journalists with a view to sensitizing and educating the people in favour of peace.” Africa has always been weak in the communications field (apart from communication through music and song, in which Africa leads the world, and West Africa leads the rest of Africa). Telecommunications infrastructure is so poor, that 90 per cent of Africa’s telephones are in South Africa.<sup>10</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, telephoning virtually did not exist outside Bamako. In the North, the line was so painfully bad that most people gave up trying to use the phone altogether. Even in 1997, phoning between Bamako and Gao can be difficult, although the lines to Timbuktu are better. It is easier to call Paris or Melbourne, than Kidal or Ansongo. Before 1991, radio links were entirely controlled by the military and the para-military administrations. Radio communications are more easily available these days, and many NGOs and government development projects have daily communications between their bases: in terms of morale, project workers in distant corners of Mali such as Menaka and Faguibine, Tessalit and Rharous and Youvarou are now much more self-confident and motivated, safe in the knowledge that they can easily contact their supervisors, their suppliers and their families.

Television didn’t reach Timbuktu until 22 September 1996, but its arrival had an immediate and wonderful impact. People in villages south of Timbuktu—places which would be near the road if there were a road—have been provided with government-funded public television sets (18 major villages

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<sup>10</sup> In a 1996 conference in Geneva inaugurated by Mali’s President, the Director of ITU cited some revealing statistics: of 680,000 cellular telephones in Africa in 1995, 580,000 were in South Africa. North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa have an equally small share of the rest (Tarjanne 1996). Apparently there are more telephones in Thailand than in the whole of Africa.

received five sets each).<sup>11</sup> A delighted villager exclaimed, “For the first time we can actually see what is happening in Bamako and in Mali. Now we really feel like Malians!” The search for development must pass through the continuation of these efforts to bring outlying communities into the Nation. The telephone is certainly the single most effective tool for *désenclavement* and for stimulating economic activity. The one-party system favoured a single line to serve the administration: but we need several telephones and solar panels in every community, taking advantage of new technologies which remove the need for thousands of kilometres of telephone wires. The telephone should be an income-generating facility, providing employment for private telephone operators in every village, and generating development as communications promote trade and ideas: strengthening economic activity and social capital and national unity through telecommunications.

The most important thing must be that the people of the North see and feel that development is happening and with the support of national authorities. In a country of poor people, ways must be found to give everybody the chance to improve their life. Mali’s poorest zone is the North, because of its fragile ecosystem. As a senior army officer remarked to us when peace arrived: “It is the economic problems up there which made it feel as if their situation was one of exclusion”.

Africa’s free press is feeble, both in news coverage and in analysis. When we were interviewing people for this study at the end of 1996, the question of communication was raised repeatedly. People argue that the United Nations should play a more significant role in promoting transparency and good communications, in favour of African development and peace-building. We saw in Chapter 4.2 how Mali lost out in the European media. That is a problem which is general for Africa. As we discuss with Western donors the relaunch of Mali’s northern economy, how often do we hear the remark that “money is given to countries which make the CNN news”.

We are not a hankering after UNESCO’s “New Information Order”, replacing the “free-market press” with government-controlled information bulletins. PANA, the pan-African news agency, has failed to make an impact, because a bureaucratic approach to news management has little audience appeal.

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<sup>11</sup> They were actually paid for out of the GRM’s share of the PMU: *pari mutuel urbain* which allows city dwellers in Mali to bet on French horse races. The PMU acts in effect as a voluntary tax on the (hitherto subsidized and untaxed) urban population. Since 1994, PMU profits in Mali have funded schools, police vehicles, public television, and health facilities.

Information should be shared, not concealed. Francophone Africa's "free press" (which of course does not mean "free from manipulation", only "free from government") is inexperienced. Mali's first independent newspaper was published in 1990 by Alpha Oumar Konaré's cooperative press Jamana. Most of the others started only after the fall of the dictatorship. Their survival depends less on the quality of their journalism than on their financial backers.

If the United Nations is an "integral part of the national institutional infrastructure" as we argued in section 7.2, then it should take a pro-active role in changing the national perception of information sharing. In Mali the FAO and UNDP have created a remarkably successful independent film unit, CESP, which is used by all sorts of organizations in the public, private commercial and independent social sectors. The FAO has indeed a long history of building information and extension expertise, which UNDP can now harness and expand in the cause of democratic governance.

While the written press concerns mainly the Francophone urban population, Mali has also developed since 1990 the broadest coverage of local and rural radio in Africa. This huge advance in information-sharing has happened through the influence of NGOs, private individuals, and the policies of the democratic government. Very successful in bringing rural populations into the national debate about health and education, justice and land tenure, the rural radio network is extremely vulnerable on two fronts: financial, and political. There is no way that advertising can maintain the private radio network—this is rural Africa, not commercial America. Most of the radio stations are tiny. Day-to-day survival is the menu. There is no room for the luxury of amortisation funds to replace aging equipment, even if the management had such a sophisticated idea as long-term planning.

The United Nations could protect and expand this local-language radio network. We saw from the example of Gossi's local radio in section 6.3, how inexpensive (and how fragile) local radio stations can be. We must ensure that this precious resource in favour of education and democracy does not wither and vanish. We believe that a communications strategy should develop around the market place. Local radio stations should be provided with quality cassettes on civic education, good governance, conflict resolution, local history and the component parts of social capital. Radio journalists should receive participative training to improve their interviewing methods, getting more people to speak over the radio waves in their own languages. Even if they have a part-time broadcasting schedule, local stations should stay on the air non-stop for the three days of the weekly market, when people come together and have time to listen: the day before the market, when people are arriving and setting up their stores;

the day of the market when thousands of people arrive to pick up goods and (above all) information; and the day of departure when many people are resting before the journey home. In northern Mali the distances may be too vast, for a local language station to broadcast full-time to everybody. Concentrating on the market place offers a relatively high “bang-per-buck” return on investment (although we recognize that most of the travellers are men, so we will miss out on many women and children).

Without impartial United Nations support, there is a grave risk that local radios will be taken over by religious or political interests who have the money. We are not talking big money. Small stations cover a radius of 10-15 km. The larger stations transmit over a range of 50 to 150 km using solar panels for energy. \$20,000 will equip a substantial station. If the equipment were standardized, spare parts would become available. Technicians trained to service equipment, would then be able to help out with second-hand parts and recycled transmitters. The French NGO PANOS has taken a lead in getting journalists to organize, train and lobby together, but radio is an area which needs additional support and leadership, beyond the scope of one NGO. If the United Nations could leverage funds and political clout to sustain the local radio network, it would be protecting of one of the pillars of democratic governance and human development.

There is also a major effort to be made on the side of the administrative authorities to work out ways to work with journalists and to help them. A good journalist should check his sources. But with whom? There is no African tradition of dealing with the press. Ministries shy away from talking to any journalist. Press briefings are superficial. “Deep background” briefings depend on mutual trust between politicians and professional correspondents, which doesn’t exist. Both sides are still in the thrall of the one-party State syndrome.<sup>12</sup> In Mali every week on a Wednesday, there is a Government Cabinet Meeting. Decisions are taken... then silence. Twenty-four hours later there is a formal press briefing. These are frigid, even with a government spokesman as eloquent as Bakary Konimba Traore: the first Malian minister who treated information as a means of communication, not as a bureaucratic function. But listen to the television news on a Thursday evening, and you will seek the journalistic function in vain.

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<sup>12</sup> Our friend Adam Thiam, former Editor of *Le Républicain* and now of *Tarik*, observed with sharp wit (in conversation) that the political landscape is entirely composed of One Parties: every little sub-party behaves as if it was a *Parti unique*. This is variant on the theme of sham multi-party democracy in ex-Zaire, known as *Multi-Mobutuism*.

ORTM<sup>13</sup> newscasters still act like Soviet officials reading out an official government communiqué: a tedious mix of impenetrable jargon and acronyms, using a wooden delivery with administrative vocabulary known as “*la langue de bois*”. This is not journalism.

The United Nations family of agencies could play an important role in oiling the machinery of communication. We have discussed (in 6.2) a role for UNESCO in promoting a better-balanced view of history and civic education for schools and for society as a whole. The new pioneering approach to education is fundamental to restoring confidence in the State, building on local languages, and encouraging decentralized self-government of schools from which most of Mali’s population has previously been alienated. The donor coordinating role which the Malian government is encouraging UNDP to fill is largely diplomatic. We propose that the United Nations should extend this role to the NGOs, civil society and the media. We would like to see UNESCO and UNICEF actively promoting new models of education, helping Mali to rewrite its history and giving value to African peacemaking traditions. UNICEF in Mali has already developed a partnership with civil society through its support of community health centres. The World Bank is trying to follow in a similar direction both in health, and with grants to NGOs. We described (in 4.1.) how the United Nations oiled the machinery of *interpénétration*, adding an international dimension to dialogue between civilians and the military in Mali and across the frontiers. Apparently the advent of democratic governance is facilitating communications even inside *the Great Silent army*. The Flame of Peace was a triumph of communication and flair. The United Nations can surely achieve similar successful partnerships across the broader range of information exchange, expanding the professional use of information in support of peace and education, democracy and development.

We have argued strongly in favour of a more pro-active United Nations position in favour of good governance. Although we feel that the United Nations was too discreet during the 1991-92 Transition, the Resident Coordinator, the late Kya Kayseri Gitera, was a eloquent proponent of democracy, and was himself active in the political struggle for democracy in Rwanda. The United Nations has been a training ground for some of Mali’s most distinguished democrats. Starting with the women: Madam Maimouna Ba of UNDP Bamako became Minister of Agriculture in the Transition Government, and Madam Fatou Haidara of ILO is one of only four Ministers who has served in all the governments of the Third

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<sup>13</sup> Office de la radio et de la télévision du Mali, the State-owned network.

Republic since 10 June 1992 (after the 1997 legislative elections, she was reappointed Minister of Industry, Commerce and Crafts).

After the 1991 revolution, a number of UN people returned to contribute to peace and democracy. Soumana Sacko was given leave from his post in UNDP Bangui, to become Prime Minister during the Transition. He had been Moussa Traore's best Finance Minister, apparently pushed out because he was too efficient, too strict and too honest. UNDP also released Ousmane Sy to become the organizer of Mali's decentralization programme, from where he has also been a strong defender of civil society. Baba Akhib Haidara returned from UNESCO in Paris to accept the difficult post of Delegate for the North during 1991. He was USRDA Presidential Candidate in the 1992 elections, and later became Minister for Education in the first government of the Third Republic.

His rival in the elections, Tiéoulé Konaté of GATT, was beaten by Alpha Oumar Konaré in the run-off.<sup>14</sup> Tiéblé Dramé, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Transition, had been a political refugee who found work with Amnesty International in London. In 1992 the United Nations sent him to Haiti, and later to Burundi to help with negotiations to bring peace. But Tiéblé never left the domestic political arena, founding *Le Républicain* newspaper, being involved in the creation of two political parties: CNID and later Parena, and serving as Minister for Arid Lands.

This is a valuable contribution to Mali's democracy, yet we do not see the United Nations taking a major stand in favour of democratic governance: despite the fact that this appears to be a necessary pre-condition for sustainable human development. After thirty years of working almost exclusively with governments and ministries, the time has come for UNDP and the other specialized agencies to change their working methods, and to collaborate directly with the institutions of civil society in ways which we discussed in the previous chapter (and in Annex 4). Decentralization demands a new approach. The UN Resident Coordinator himself has recognized that the development structures of Mali have changed, and with the advent of democracy there are new opportunities for working at the grassroots:

The democratization of social and political life in the last five years seems to have directly strengthened the ability of the political class, the military class, and civil society to deal with

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<sup>14</sup> Tiéoulé was the son of the late Momodou Konaté, a Founder of the USRDA and Vice-President of the French National Assembly. The USRDA split in two during the 1991-92 campaign. Tiéoulé, Founder of the BDIA political party, was tragically killed in a car accident while campaigning in 1994.

the rebellion, and engage in a finally successful peace process with those who had taken up arms. There appears to be a real consensus in Mali for decentralization; this has been influenced by the rebellion, which made evident the need of the northern populations to take greater charge of their destiny. It now seems to be well accepted that the diffusion of power, into civil society, in fact strengthens and stabilizes the nation.... There has been a deliberate lifting of the heavy hand of central power, so that those directly concerned by and suffering from the conflict could get together, and find a *modus vivendi*.... In the reconciliation process it seems that, particularly at the top and at the grass roots, the actors have been able to tap into the deep reserve of social capital which surely exists in Mali, and which is one of the country's great strengths (Rose 1996, pp. 1-2)

## 7.9 UNHCR and UNICEF in Relief and Reconciliation

The issue of sovereignty, which we discussed earlier, highlights the diplomatic difficulties which confront the UNHCR. In recent years the UNHCR has become less reactive, even becoming involved inside war-torn states, trying to provide assistance to internally-displaced populations. This is a welcome innovation which we applaud on humanitarian grounds, and we recognize that it often causes diplomatic headaches for the UNHCR and its staff. It is often the case that recipient countries are reluctant to see refugees go home, for then they lose the considerable financial benefit of UNHCR camps and food supplies. At the same time we insist that the task of peace-building requires that the refugees should return home as quickly as possible. The UNHCR's mandate should be interpreted broadly to encourage resettlement of refugees with HCR assistance inside their own country: which brings the HCR into contact with the UNDP and the rest of the development community. This has been the case in Mali during 1996-97. By moving positively into the business of preparing resettlement sites and sinking wells, the UNHCR has provided welcome leadership to the development agencies working in northern Mali (mainly NGOs), where UNICEF had acted as the leader in the aftermath of the 1984 drought.

If UNHCR sometimes appears reluctant to get involved in the relaunch of war-torn economies, this may be because officials tend to interpret its mandate too narrowly. There may also be jealousies between agencies, which militate against a frank collaboration in the field. This we deplore! Peacemaking is not enough: it is through peace-building that we can achieve lasting peace. The UNHCR should strengthen its field policies to promote systematic collaboration with UNDP and other agencies, and the progressive handover of HCR relief activities to the development agencies. We are critical of the "relief only" approach. In this regard NGOs such as the Red Cross have also been found guilty. The ICRC in Mali discovered after 1992 that it was not enough to see the

fighting stopped: their delegate returned in 1994, when fighting broke out anew because of the failure of the Malian army and the donor community to back the *Pacte National*. To their credit (as we saw in Chapter 4.2) the ICRC has changed tack and is now involved in peace-building. The sudden appearance of relief agencies like *Médecins sans Frontières* and *Médecins du Monde* is welcomed by suffering refugees, and it makes great headlines in the Western press: but we often wonder whether their actions are adequate to the situation, when they disappear as suddenly as they arrived. This casts no aspersions on the skilful work and personal dedication of their medical volunteers. But building a sustained development process takes fifteen or twenty years. Peace-building requires more than a lightning intervention and a spot on the CNN news. In order to ensure that relief turns into development, that peacemaking becomes peace-building, we believe that UNHCR, UNICEF and the NGOs need to commit themselves to a more collaborative and longer-term approach with the other UN agencies, following development leadership from the UN Resident Coordinator.

Peace-building also involves healing the wounds of war. The worst suffering in time of armed conflict is not that of the armed combatants. They receive wounds if they lose, booty if they win. But the civilian population is always on the losing side. Whatever their ethnic or religious or political affiliation, women and children are the casualties of conflict. Peace-building must therefore include a major effort in favour of women victims, returning refugees and children victims of violence. We would expect to see in Mali and in other countries recovering from conflict, a more obvious collaboration between UNHCR and UNICEF, who could provide jointly the leadership which civil society needs in this sensitive area of reconciliation and peace-building. In particular—and in view of the value of women in Mali's social capital which we have emphasized—we would like to see active grassroots support by the United Nations of local women's groups, in favour of reconciliation and healing.

Mali has been lucky to escape the full horrors of a civil war. There are no child soldiers in Mali, and let us thank God for it. There have been atrocities committed in many directions, but there has been no systematic policy of repression by rape, no ethnic cleansing here. The Malian success is precisely that civil war was avoided. But civilian casualties were not avoided. The years of disruption and violence have left their mark on thousands of victims, especially on the women who have lost husbands and sons, on children left without parents, some of whom have seen their fathers killed before their infant eyes. No child of violence is left unmarked.

How can we heal the wounds of today, to ensure continuing peace tomorrow? Our historical background to the conflict has shown that the violence of 1990-95

had its roots in the unsolved legacy of bitterness from the 1960s and before. The children of the 1990s may be tempted to avenge their parents, if we cannot achieve a healing of the psychological scars of the conflict. The United Nations could help give increased value to local culture and the age-old traditions of peace-making in West Africa. Children who have been victims of violence must be encouraged to participate in discussions about the violence, to achieve an understanding of their situation through the catharsis of group-therapy. Women victims need to find support through mutual-help associations, and this is as urgent for the widows of soldiers as it is for the widows of their victims. “Men make war, let women manage the peace” said one leader of civil society. Small financial and human resources invested in the process of reconciliation will yield huge dividends.

This healing process will be helped by the success of decentralization, by the relaunch of the northern economy, and by the strengthening of the local institutions of civil society through which young people will be able to express desires and work for their realization. Bringing refugees home is a political necessity, and opens economic solutions after conflict. But the social and psychological problems remain. An important part of peace-building is the process of reconciliation. Within the United Nations, UNHCR and UNICEF are the agencies which have the greatest experience in this area. The United Nations should be able to offer innovative support to Malian civil society and the NGOs which are best equipped to heal the wounds of war. It is civil society that can ensure lasting peace, which is why we shall end our case-study with the question of collaboration between the UN agencies and local associations.

### **7.10 Creating a United Nations Development Partnership with Civil Society**

The Malian case-study which we have presented shows more than anything else that it is the internal resources of Malian society which produced peace. It is these same resources which must serve as the building blocks for permanent peace and development and reconciliation: we must rely on the components and leaders of civil society both traditional and modern.

We conclude, therefore, that the UNDP and the other development agencies should work much more strongly with NGOs and civil society: in partnership with—but separately from—sectoral ministries. This does not mean “small grants”. We have stated our opposition to funding of less than three years, which destroys development continuity and ensures that African NGOs are unable to

develop into coherent development institutions. We believe that the United Nations should be developing long-term partnerships with certain key actors in civil society and the social economy, so that there can be a true exchange of experience and a mutual commitment. This is impossible when one side is kept in a position of short-term financial dependency. "Africa has thousands of organizations, and few institutions." In Annex 4, we present a proposal from an African NGO for instituting new partnership mechanisms between the UNDP and civil society.

We made a distinction in Chapter 4, between the leaders of traditional civil society and those of modern non-governmental organizations, many of which are urban-based. Civil society we have defined as non-political: but the democratic process will lead many of the leaders of civil society (traditional leaders especially) into the political arena. Of course, it is important for the United Nations to stay clear of party politics. We believe that long-term partnerships with certain selected organizations offer the best way for the United Nations to get to know the development leaders while keeping clear of political minefields. Familiarity reduces risk. Such a new partnership approach would also allow the United Nations to strengthen the voice of women leaders. The United Nations needs to commit itself to long-term partnerships which strengthen civil society, helping strong apolitical African institutions to emerge.

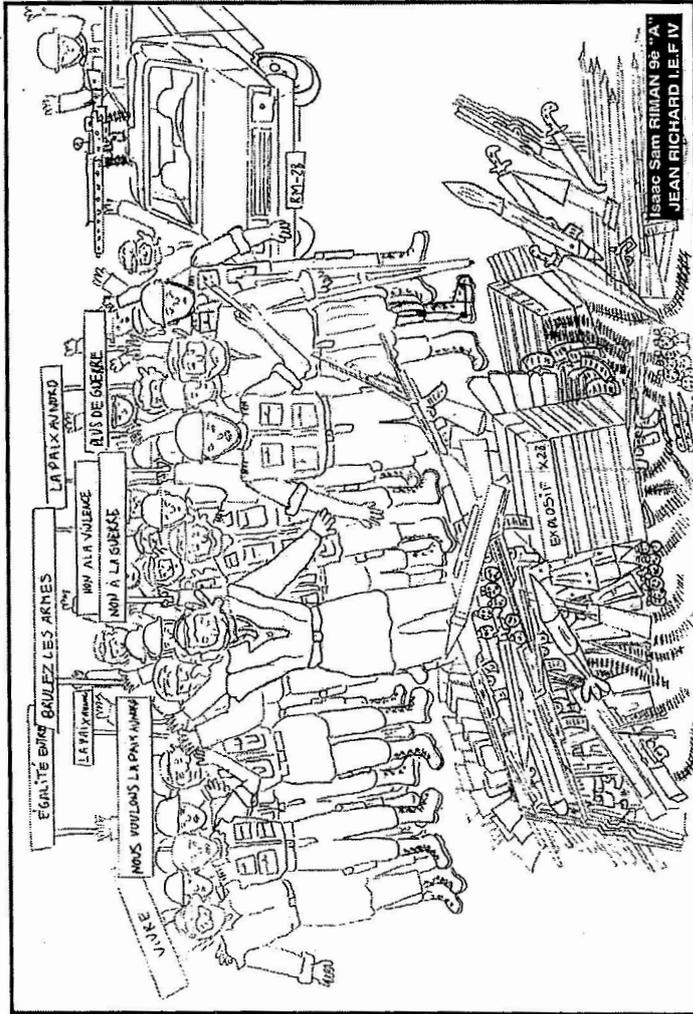
We believe that this long-term commitment to partnership can also provide a means for overcome accounting problems which have often, in the past, caused disappointments on both sides. We are in favour of modest long-term grants to cover the salaries and costs of community organizers (for which accounting is easy) in order to stimulate the mobilization of local resources: savings and credits, commercial bank loans, voluntary contributions, and collective efforts. In line with the *FAR-nord* project whose success we described in 4.5, it is the mobilization of local resources (instead of written account books) which should justify continued support. This approach reduces dependency on external funding. Such a partnership would also encourage local NGOs to concentrate less on pleasing donors in the capital city, and more on development in the regions: reversing the present project mode which forces Malian NGOs to become Bamako-based, when the best of them would prefer to work entirely in the field.

Such a new emphasis on mobilizing local resources would be consistent with United Nations development philosophy and with Malian government policies in favour of decentralization, in which NGOs have a major role to play as development agents. United Nations staff will come to think less about ministries and conferences, and more in terms of grassroots development impact. They will listen to the voice of the regions, instead of hearing only the capital city. The

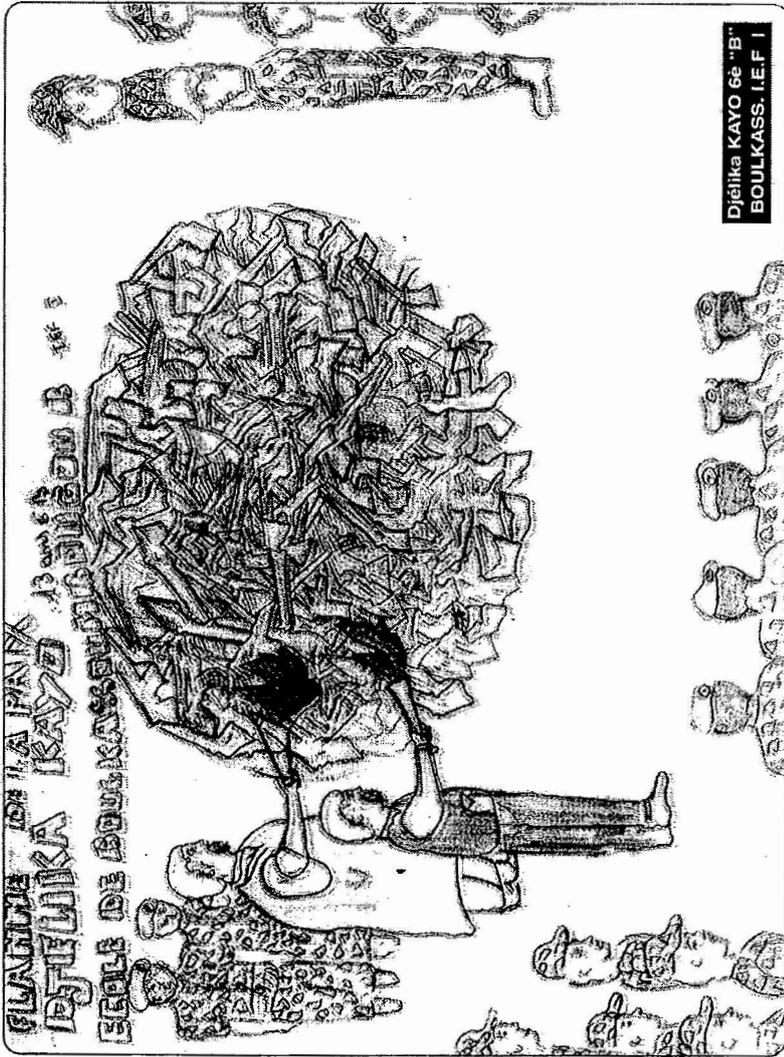
diplomatic and representational costs of UN agencies (which are less and less easy to justify in the age of electronic mail) could be switched to investment in communications with local communities. If the UN agencies commit themselves to working with local associations, both sides will improve their technical skills and experience, and UN staff will find themselves encouraging the local development infrastructure even in regions far distant from the capital. The North of Mali has been neglected in the past. A partnership of the United Nations with local government services and civil society will enable the Peace of Timbuktu to bring a new beginning.

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Our concluding chapter has pulled together the threads of Mali's peace-keeping story, turning them into lessons which can be applied to United Nations policies even beyond Mali and West Africa. We have considered the United Nations family's role as partners of government and of civil society. UN agencies are integral to Africa's development infrastructure, not simply dependencies of technical ministries. We have quoted Malian political leaders who feel that UN agencies should take more initiatives, and we have indicated areas such as education and communications where the United Nations' uniquely neutral position brings comparative advantage for developing innovative policies. Beyond taking micro-initiatives, we propose a role of coordination and leadership for the United Nations in favour of civil society, democratic governance, and conflict resolution: all of which emerge from the Malian experience as conditions for sustainable human development. Another unique role for the United Nations is as facilitator of cross-border collaboration, notably to control illegal flows of small arms. Peacemaking cannot be simply a national affair. Conflicts often originate beyond national frontiers, and population movements always affect a country's neighbours. A wide range of development and diplomatic initiatives have resulted from Malian peacemaking, which together may provide a discreet new model for United Nations preventive diplomacy.



Isaac Sam Riman of Bamako made a dramatic picture of weapons being piled up in the cantonment, with all the armed forces preparing for their role as peace-builders. (Source: Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, Mali, 1997.)



Djélika Kayo of Boulkassoumbougou has made a fine drawing of Presidents Konaré and Rawlings lighting the Flame of Peace in Timbuktu, on 27th March 1996. (Source: Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, Mali, 1997.)



## **Annexes**



## Annex 1: Map of Community Meetings

The list of meetings organised by civil society, stimulated and partly funded by the AEN and FAR-Nord initiative, is taken from Kare Lode (1996 annex 6.1 with the maps from annex 6.2). Map A shows the south western part of North Mali, including Timbuktu and the *Gourma* south of the river. Map B shows the meetings which took place north of the river in Gao and Kidal regions. Many other meetings organised and funded by civil society took place outside the programme initiated by the informal group which included Lode.

Place	Cercle/Région	Date	Support Fcfa
<i>Meetings supported by AEN:</i>			
01. Bambara M	Gourma	14-15.10.95	2.500.000
02. Gossi	Gourma	20-21.10.95	1.000.000
03. Madiakoy	Gourma	30-31.10.95	1.000.000
04. Bahondo	Bourem	10-11.11.95	1.200.000
05. Gabero	Gao	17-18.11.95	2.000.000
06. Hamman Koira	Bourem	16-17.12.95	1.000.000
07. Tin Aouker	Gao	20-22.11.95	1.650.000
08. Almoustarat	Bourem	25-26.11.95	1.500.000
09. Agharous	Kidal	10-11.12.95	1.650.000
10. Amasrakad	Gao	23-24.12.95	1.600.000
11. Anou Zigrène	Menaka	13-14.01.96	1.300.000
12. Tin Kar	Kidal	15-16.01.96	2.000.000
<b>Total AEN</b>			<b>18.400.000</b>
<i>Meeting funded by AEN and Germans:</i>			
13. Talataye	Ansongo	27-28.12.95	1.800.000 <sup>1</sup>
<i>Meetings funded by FAR-Nord:</i>			
14. Inazzar	Gao	05-06.01.96	1.000.000
15. Tedjerert	Menaka	09-10.01.96	1.500.000
16. Ber	Tombouct	15-16.01.96	1.500.000
17. Ouatagouna	Ansongo	20-21.01.96	1.500.000
18. Aguelhok	Kidal	05-06.03.96	1.000.000
19. Diré	Diré	05-06.02.96	2.500.000
20. Ibiket	Bourem	05-06.02.96	2.000.000

<sup>1</sup> Germans and AEN each contributed 900.000 Fcfa.

21.	Iminass	Gao	02-03.03.96	1.500.000
22.	Tinahama	Ansongo	10-11.02.96	1.500.000
23.	Djébock	Gao	27-28.02.96	1.500.000
24.	Tiderméné	Menaka	21-22.02.96	1.500.000
25.	Hamakouladji	Gao	25-26.02.96	1.500.000
26.	Dofana	Niafunke	27.02.96	2.500.000
27.	Temera	Bourem	début juin 96	1.500.000
28.	Atta	Goundam	05-06.03.96	1.300.000
29.	Tamalet	Menaka	09-10.03.96	2.000.000
30.	Eghacher	Gourma	09-10.03.96	2.000.000
31.	Toya	Tombouct	28-30.03.96	500.000 <sup>2</sup>
32.	Agounni	Tombouct	20-03.96	2.000.000
33.	Akirche	Bourem	14-15.03.96	2.000.000
34.	Lerneb	Goundam	15-16.03.96	2.000.000
35.	Tehergui	Tombouct	18.03.96	1.500.000
36.	Sehene	Menaka	24.03.96	2.000.000
37.	In-Tillit	Gao	non-fixée	200.000 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Total FAR-Nord</b>				<b>38.000.000</b>
<i>Follow-up meeting financed by AEN:</i>				
38.	Gossi	Gourma	22.03.96	471.000

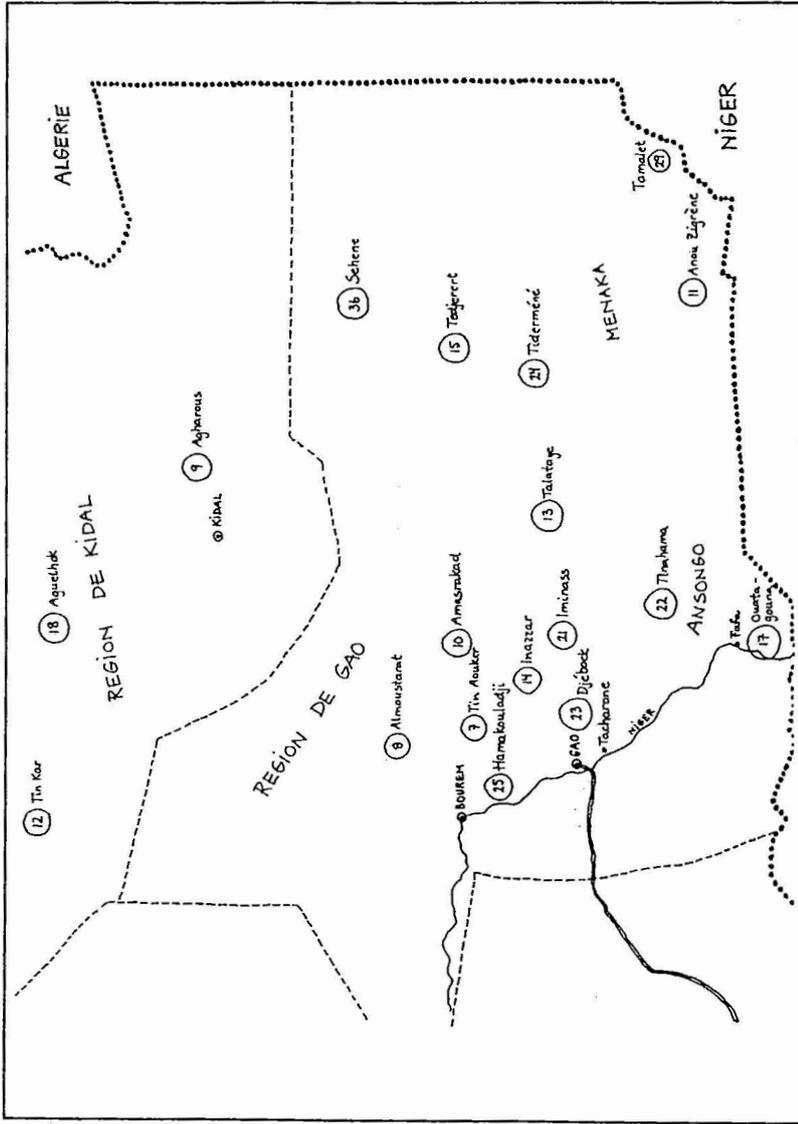
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<sup>2</sup> Mission de réconciliation.

<sup>3</sup> Mission d'information et de sensibilisation.



Map B



Drawn by Sigrid LODE

## Annex 2: Key Texts

### 2.1 National Pact

#### **NATIONAL PACT CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF MALI AND THE UNIFIED MOVEMENTS AND FRONTS OF AZAWAD GIVING EXPRESSION TO THE SPECIAL STATUS OF NORTHERN MALI<sup>1</sup>**

- The Government of the Republic of Mali and the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad, called the two parties within the context of the present Pact,
- Having carried out a deep analysis of the origins of the painful armed conflict in the north of the country, and after having noted all the serious consequences of this situation;
- Desiring to achieve a peaceful, just and final negotiated solution to the painful armed conflict in the 6th, 7th and 8th Regions of Mali called Azawad by the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad, a solution taking into account the cultural, geographical and socio-economic diversity existing in the Republic of Mali, and a solution which, at the same time, helps to consolidate national unity and integrity;
- Reaffirming their adherence to the Constitution of the Republic of Mali dated 12th January 1992;
- Underlining the commitments in the Constitution of the Republic of Mali to the Declaration of Human Rights of 10th December 1948 and to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights of 27th June 1981, and the proclamation of its determination defend the rights of women and children as well as the cultural and linguistic diversity of the National Community;
- At the end of their peace negotiations in Algiers, under the mediation of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria named as Mediator in the context of the present document, have decided as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> The Pact was signed on 11th April 1992 and published as Decree No 92-121/P-CTSP2, between the Transitional Government of Mali CTSP *Comité de Transition pour le Salut du Peuple* and the MFUA *Mouvements et Fronts unifiés de l'Azawad*.

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**TITLE I**  
**GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE PACT**

1. The present Pact provides the framework within which a just and final peace is restored in the North of Mali with national reconciliation between all Malians.
2. The content of the present Pact is a solemn commitment and the terms therein are irrevocable, agreed by the two parties and binding all Malians and their institutions. In this regard, the permanence of the statutory dispositions and the execution of the other terms are guaranteed by the State.
3. The terms of the present Pact constitute a whole, the execution of which shall be carried out in accordance with a timetable defined in the Pact itself.
4. The terms of the present Pact are applicable to the North of Mali, called the 6th, 7th and 8th Regions by the Government and Azawad by the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad.

The Government of Mali is not opposed to the name “Azawad” for these regions. However it respects the right of the people to decide freely on the name of their local territory. Until the people have been able to exercise this right through their elected local, regional or inter-regional representatives, and confronted from the beginning by the need to install peace in this part of the national territory, the two parties decided on the term: the North of Mali, for use in this Pact,

**TITLE II**  
**ON THE FINAL CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES**  
**AND ON THE SETTLEMENT OF QUESTIONS**  
**EMERGING FROM THE SITUATION OF ARMED CONFLICT**

5. A permanent cease-fire will come into force at zero hour on the day following the signature of the Pact.
6. Until the provisions of paragraph 7.A (below) can be put into effect, and under the supervision of the Ceasefire Commission<sup>2</sup>, the forces of the two parties commit themselves to forbid any action or movement that might increase tension or lead to any incident.
7. Within sixty days following the signature of the Pact, a programme will be put into effect comprised of the following measures:

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<sup>2</sup> The Ceasefire Commission was known as CCF *Commission de suivi du Cessez-le-Feu*.

A - Within the framework of measures for restoring confidence, eliminating factors of insecurity, and the installation of a permanent state of security:

- all the combatants of the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad will be integrated into the various uniformed forces of the State, on an individual and voluntary basis and in accordance with criteria for assessing competence,
- special units of the armed forces will be created for one year, composed mainly of integrated combatants from the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad,
- an internal security corps will be instituted (Gendarmerie, Goum Guards, Police) composed of all sections of the local populations including integrated combatants from the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad, which will be provided to local authorities within their police powers,
- special units of the army will be created, open to all sections of the local populations, whose mission will be limited to the preservation of the integrity and external security of the country's frontiers.

Those dispositions which refer to the integration of all the combatants and members of the Movements and Fronts mentioned above, are contingent upon the return of the latter with their arms. This operation will be carried out in conjunction with the Ceasefire Commission;

The security and physical protection of the re-integrated combatants and members of the Movements and Fronts, as well as that of the repatriated displaced populations, will be entirely guaranteed;

B - In addition, and in the same spirit of restoring confidence, eliminating factors of insecurity and installing an atmosphere of permanent security, there will be a substantial, gradual and appropriate reduction of the armed forces presently in the North, leading to the withdrawal of the majority. This operation will be carried out in accordance with:

- the final ending of hostilities, according to the ceasefire determined in paragraph 5 above,
- the organisation of the security mechanisms and arrangements described in paragraph 7.A above,
- the redefinition of the objectives of the national army charged with future national defence: this implies a broad redeployment programme involving military installations and bases outside the urban areas, pastures and grazing areas as well as the transformation of certain army installations into centres and schools for military or para-military training, and the use of some redundant barrack facilities as centres for professional training.

8. The ceasefire and the various arrangements described in paragraph 7 above, will come into force under the supervision of the Ceasefire Commission, which will be composed and organised as follows:

A - The Ceasefire Commission will be composed of 10 representatives each from the two parties and the Mediator. Its mandate will be to put in place the arrangements defined in paragraph 7 above;

B - The Ceasefire Commission will replace the Truce Commission. It will take up its functions in Gao within 48 hours after the signing of the Pact. It will organise its work and its decentralised sub-Commissions;

C - For the period of sixty days, while putting into effect the application of the measures described in paragraph 7 above, the Ceasefire Commission will be in permanent session under the Chairmanship of the Mediator and with the permanent participation of its representatives. If need be, this period may be extended until all the above-mentioned measures are fully operational;

D - Beyond this period, the Ceasefire Commission will be in permanent session for one year, with the participation of Representatives of the two parties and under the Chairmanship of each in turn alternating by month, the first Chairmanship falling to the Movements and Fronts;

E - At the end of the first and second trimesters and the second semester following the signing of the Pact, the Ceasefire Commission will meet, each time under the Chairmanship of the Mediator. These special sessions will permit the examination and settlement of any possible dispute linked to its mission, with the final session serving to proclaim the dissolution of the Ceasefire Commission;

F - The costs, expenses and means of the Ceasefire Commission will be provided by the Government of the Republic of Mali, including the payment of individual allowances to representatives of the Movements to the said Commission.

9. A programme for the repatriation of displaced persons will be prepared before signature of the present Pact. The programme will be started within 60 days of the signing of the Pact, which is to say at the end of the execution of arrangements concerning the ceasefire described in paragraph 7 above, which reads as follows:

Within sixty days following the signature of the Pact, a programme will be put into effect comprised of the following measures:

A - Within the framework of measures for restoring confidence, eliminating factors of insecurity, and the installation of a permanent state of security:

- all the combatants of the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad will be integrated into the various uniformed forces of the State, on an individual and voluntary basis and in accordance with criteria for assessing competence,
- special units of the armed forces will be created for one year, composed mainly of integrated combatants from the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad,
- an internal security corps will be instituted (Gendarmerie, Goum Guards, Police) composed of all sections of the local populations including integrated combatants from the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad, which will be provided to local authorities within their police powers,
- special units of the army will be created, open to all sections of the local populations, whose mission will be limited to the preservation of the integrity and external security of the country's frontiers.

B - In addition, and in the same spirit of restoring confidence, eliminating factors of insecurity and installing an atmosphere of permanent security, there will be a substantial, gradual and appropriate reduction of the armed forces presently in the North, leading to the withdrawal of the majority. This operation will be carried out in accordance with:

- the final ending of hostilities, according to the ceasefire determined in paragraph 5 above,
- the organisation of the security mechanisms and arrangements described in paragraph 7.A above,
- the redefinition of the missions of the national army charged with future national defence missions, which implies a broad redeployment programme involving military installations and bases outside the urban areas, pastures and grazing areas as well as the transformation of certain army installations into centres and schools for military or para-military training, and the use of some redundant barrack facilities as centres for professional training.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the repatriation programme will be completed within 60 days after its launch.

10. The repatriation programme will be carried out jointly by the Government and the Movements in collaboration with the authorities of the host countries, together with friendly countries and international humanitarian organisations which will be contacted to this effect.

11. The reinsertion of displaced populations and the assistance to victims of all the consequences of the armed conflict in Northern Mali will give rise to the creation of two Funds:

- a Fund for development and reinsertion, which will support the creation of small and medium-sized industries, and small and medium-sized enterprises, and the insertion of the displaced populations into production systems,
- a Fund for assistance and compensation to civil and military victims of the two parties and their heirs, for all the consequences of the armed conflict. This Fund will compensate as a priority, victims identified by the Independent Commission of Enquiry.

A permanent mechanism will be instituted to assist military victims of the two parties and their heirs.

These two Funds will be created within thirty days of the signature of the present Pact.

12. In accordance with the decision reached between the two parties at the Mopti Conference in December 1991, confirmed in their Algiers meeting of January 1992 and repeated at their meeting in March, the Independent Commission of Enquiry will be set up in Mopti within 15 days after signature of the Pact.

13. In case the two parties should not have been able to agree within the period specified in the previous paragraph, on the full composition of the Independent Commission of Enquiry, the Commission for Supervision of the Pact - whose creation is included in the present document - meeting under the Chairmanship of the Mediator at the end of the first month after the signing of this Pact, will consider the question and will search out ways and means to overcome this difficulty so that the Independent Commission of Enquiry may be able to function within the terms agreed between the two parties and recorded in the paragraph below.

14. The Independent Commission of Enquiry will work according to the arrangements decided by the two parties which are as follows:

### **MANDATE OF THE COMMISSION:**

The Independent Commission of Enquiry will enquire into all the events which have taken place in Mali with relation to the problems of the North, specifically: crimes committed against the civil populations in their physical and moral persons as well as their properties, violations of the environment and destruction of livestock, theft, pillage and every act of vandalism and damage. The Commission will work to define the responsibility for such acts, their consequences, to evaluate the damages and compensations due to victims.

### **ORGANISATION OF THE COMMISSION:**

A - The Commission shall be composed as follows:

- five (5) representatives of the Government of the Republic of Mali,
- five (5) representatives of the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad,
- a maximum of seven (7) and a minimum of five (5) independent experts, chosen by common accord by the two parties from the following countries, there being just one expert by nationality: Algeria, Burkina-Faso, France, Libya, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal;

B - the two parties will determine the names of the members of this Commission during their next meeting;

C - the Commission will be Chaired by an independent expert elected by his peers;

D - the Commission will begin its work within three weeks after its installation;

E - the functioning costs of the Commission will be covered by the Government of the Republic of Mali: the latter will also do everything to facilitate the Commission's tasks through its full administrative and material cooperation.

The two parties commit themselves to ensure that the necessary conditions of security are achieved to allow the Commission to function.

### **FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMISSION**

A - the Commission will carry out its mandate independently and impartially;

B - the members of the Commission will be granted immunity. This immunity shall be extended to any person the Commission decides to hear, within the framework of their testimony;

- C - the Commission will take decisions by simple majority, the President's vote serving to determine the majority in case of stalemate;
- D - the Commission will establish its own rules and will organise its own work;
- E - the Commission's conclusions shall be made known within three months after it begins work. If need be, this deadline may be extended by common accord between the two parties, and at the request of the Commission;
- F - the deliberations and the report of the Commission shall be confidential;
- G - the report of the Commission shall be addressed to the President of the Republic of Mali, and copies shall be sent to the Unified Movements and Fronts of Azawad, and to the Mediator.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE COMMISSION**

- A - the two parties commit themselves to respect the decisions and recommendations of the Commission;
- B - the Malian State commits itself to refer to the appropriate judicial and other authorities for execution, the decisions and recommendations of the Commission, within 45 days of the report being submitted to the President of the Republic of Mali.

### **TITLE III SPECIAL STATUS OF THE NORTH OF MALI**

Recognising the importance of the organisation and management of the affairs of the populations within the framework of the peaceful and permanent settlement of the armed conflict in the North of Mali, the two parties have agreed on a special status for the North of Mali.

In the spirit of the management by the populations of their inter-regional, regional and local affairs, and with a view to bringing them closer to this management, the two parties are agreed on the principle of a new administrative reorganisation of the territory in the North of Mali, and at every level. This new administrative reorganisation shall be proposed by the appropriate local authorities and confirmed by Law.

15. This statute defines and consecrates the competence of local, regional and inter-regional Assemblies.

These elected Assemblies are competent to:

A - organise the urban and rural life of their communities;

B - determine and promote the economic, social and cultural development programme of their choice. Such specific or general programmes, whether local or regional, may cover activities such as agriculture, livestock, water management, urban development, habitat, protection of the ecosystem, industry, transport, communications, health, education, culture, tourism, research and promotion of local languages, handicrafts, improvement and protection of historic sites, the management of land and land tenure and incentives to explore and exploit natural resources;

C - ensure through their elected officials, the control of local and regional policing forces and actions of law enforcement;

D - participate fully and effectively in the maintenance of security in the region, and defend national frontiers which is a patriotic duty;

E - ensure concertation, cooperation, and coordination of actions between representative bodies of the various council areas at every organisational level, on the horizontal as well as vertical planes, and between differing levels of collective organisation at the grassroots right through to the inter-regional level which covers the whole of Northern Mali;

F - organise and animate exchanges and complementary activities between local and regional councils in the North and those in the other Regions of Mali;

G - Organise exchanges of experience and assistance with the populations of other localities and countries, and through the twinning of localities and regions of Northern Mali with similar entities in other countries, as well as through the coordination of exchanges and initiatives between neighbouring regions in cross-frontier areas, as well as seeking assistance from developmental non-governmental organisations (NGO), and gaining advantage from this cooperation in accordance with the legal agreements concerning their activities.

16. In this respect the respective local, regional and inter-regional instances are:

- the inter-regional Assembly,
- the Region,
- the Commune, Arrondissement and Cercle.

17. At the level of each council area there are:

- an elected Assembly,
- an Executive identified from among the elected members of the Commune, Arrondissement, Cercle or Region,
- a representative of the State participates at the Regional level,
- the inter-regional Assembly will have a permanent secretariat.

## **CHAPTER I AT INTER-REGIONAL LEVEL**

18. In order to respect the unity of the State and the Nation of Mali, and with the goal of encouraging the policy of development within an area of the national territory which shares very similar geographical, climatic, socio-economic and cultural parameters, an inter-regional Assembly shall be created between the Regions of the North of Mali, for the benefit of the populations concerned and of the Republic of Mali as a whole.

19. Membership of this inter-regional Assembly by the Regions of the North of Mali shall be voluntary.

20. The inter-regional Assembly shall be elected by the Regions belonging to it, and for a term of 5 years. Each member Region shall have 5 seats. The inter-regional Assembly shall elect its own President.

21. The inter-regional Assembly shall have a permanent secretariat, run by a Secretary-General chosen by the President of the Assembly. The elected members of the inter-regional Assembly shall receive a fee paid by the State. Officials in the permanent secretariat and the Secretary-General will be paid by the State.

22. The inter-regional Assembly shall have an annual budget for its functioning costs which will be funded by the member Regions and augmented by the State.

23. The inter-regional Assembly shall have competence in the following areas:

A - elaborating all developmental, socio-economic or cultural activities or programmes with an inter-regional vocation;

B - coordinating any activity or project of mutual interest to the associated Regions;

C - putting in place, in concertation with the Government and on the basis of the expressed wish of the Regions and their local councils, any suggested adjustment of regional boundaries;

D - proposing to the Government any action or proposal for initiatives or developments which go beyond the limits of a single Region;

E - initiating in conjunction with the relevant national authorities, and supervising the execution of, any project in the areas of training and education, health or culture with a dimension which is common to all the Regions involved, and which will improve response to the needs of the populations (eg university hospital or faculties, radio or television stations with an inter-regional audience....);

F - participating in consultation with the relevant national authorities in any programme concerning member Regions of the inter-regional Assembly in matters concerning national or civil defence, and protection against natural disasters;

G - contributing to the promotion and animation of cross-frontier development activities with neighbouring countries.

## **CHAPTER II AT REGIONAL LEVEL**

24. Each of the Regions in the North shall have an Assembly democratically elected by the local populations. This Assembly shall be elected by indirect suffrage for a period of five years. The number of members will correspond to the number of electoral constituencies, defined with relation to the population density and the geographical extent, with a minimum of one elected member per Cercle.

25. The Assembly shall elect its Bureau and its President.

26. The Bureau of the Assembly shall select the Chief of the Regional Executive, who shall answer to the Assembly. He shall be assisted by a Secretary-General selected by himself.

27. The Government will appoint a Representative of the State in the Region. In his quality as representative of the Government, he will ensure, together with the President of the Regional Assembly that the decisions of the Regional Assembly are not in contradiction with national rules and legislation.

28. Elected members of the Regional Assembly shall enjoy immunity in the exercise of their duties. They will receive a fee paid by the State.

29. The Regional Executive shall be assisted by officials representing the various deconcentrated services of the State, supporting the regional administration. Notwithstanding the unity of the national Administration, particular priority shall be accorded during recruitment to people who were born in the Region.

30. The Regional Assembly is competent to:

A - undertake any action which will promote the development of the Region;

B - promote investment in the Region;

C - offer an informed opinion on any national development programme;

D - manage through the Executive, credits which are allotted by the Government of the Region;

E - define, conduct and carry out the Regional infrastructure programme and supervise its execution;

F - define and promote a policy in favour of rural development, notably in the areas of land tenure use and management, habitat, the fight against desertification, water management, livestock and the preservation of the ecosystem;

G - encourage and promote industrial and craft development in the Region, notably through the creation of industrial zones and the creation or expansion of local handicraft and artisan units, or any other initiatives which may satisfy local needs;

H - take any measures needed to promote tourism and improved transport facilities;

I - contribute to social and cultural development in the Region, through:

\* promoting of harmonious educational and health policies in the Region,

\* proposing actions to the Government,

\* promoting local social and cultural activities which will expand the cultural traditions of the Region, ensuring its distribution across the whole country, and bringing into the Region other riches of the national cultural heritage. In this regard, any possibility for creating decentralised radio or television stations shall be put into operation.

J - encourage the coordination of efforts and actions between local councils inside the country, and between them and their counterparts beyond the frontiers;

K - study and propose, in concertation with local grassroots organisations, any programme for changing the boundaries of local council areas in the Region.

31. Through its President, the Regional Assembly shall ensure that sufficient numbers of people from the Region are made available to the State, to staff the internal security forces. The Assembly shall exercise a power of control over the police forces and the maintenance of civil order at the regional level.

32. The Regional Assembly is competent to promote a policy of cross-frontier development and a programme of cooperation and exchange with equivalent

institutions in neighbouring countries, save only respect for national sovereignty and the commitments of the State.

33. The Regional Assembly votes the Regional budget. The latter is funded from local rates and taxes, by annual or exceptional subsidies from the State, and by donations and legacies. It also votes to authorise borrowing at the national level, decided by the Region in support of regional development.

### **CHAPTER III AT THE LOCAL LEVEL**

34. With the aim of bringing the populations closer to the management of their local affairs, the Communes, Arrondissements and Cercles shall have an organisation similar to that of the Region:

- a Council elected for five years, the number of seats being determined by the density of the population, taking account also of the geographical extent. Each Council will elect its President and Bureau, and select a local Executive who will answer to the Council.

- the Secretary-General of the local council area will be selected by the President, and he will ensure that the decisions of the Council are consistent with national rules and legislation.

35. The Councils at the level of the Cercle, Arrondissement and Commune shall exercise powers equivalent to those of the Regional Assembly.

36. The budget of the of the Cercle, Arrondissement and Commune shall be voted by its Council. It will be funded from local rates, by subsidies allocated by the Region on the basis of credits from the State, and by donations and legacies.

37. This policy of bringing the citizen closer to the management of local affairs will be consolidated by a programme to reinforce the network of urban and rural communes in the North of Mali. The new communal boundaries will be determined through studies and proposals to be carried out and elaborated by each of the Regions in consultation with the lower levels (Cercle, Arrondissement and Commune), which proposals shall be submitted to the appropriate national authority for final approval.

38. In addition to these elected civic structures, any group of citizens acting together or any professional association, whether at the local, regional or inter-regional level is authorised in the North of Mali, consistent with national rules and legislation.

39. Communes, Arrondissements and Cercles shall be able to initiate programmes of exchange or partnership with equivalent organisations in other Regions of Mali.

40. Communes, Arrondissements and Cercles are authorised to initiate programmes of cooperation and exchange with similar organisations in other countries.

#### **CHAPTER IV ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRESENT STATUTE**

41. In order to respect the irreversible nature of the spirit and the letter of the present Statute, all legal and reglementary measures will be taken to speed implementation.

42. The calendar for implementation of this Statute is detailed in the general calendar for the implementation of the National Pact, which is presented under Title VI below.

43. Notwithstanding the participation of the Regions in the High Council of Local Councils foreseen in Title XII of the Constitution of the Republic of Mali, there will be created the post of Commissioner for the North, to advise the Head of State for a period of five years (renewable), who will have responsibility for implementing the present Pact.

#### **TITLE IV ON THE CONSOLIDATION OF SOLIDARITY AND NATIONAL UNITY IN THE NORTH OF MALI**

##### **SUB-TITLE A MEASURES TO CONSOLIDATE NATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

44. As mentioned in paragraph 11 title II, the reinsertion of displaced populations and assistance to victims of all the consequences of the armed conflict in the North of Mali, will give rise to the creation of two Funds:

- a Fund for development and reinsertion,
- a Fund for assistance and compensation to victims of all the consequences of the armed conflict.

45. These two funds will be created and funded within thirty days of signature of the Pact, and will remain active for a full year. They will be managed by a

bilateral commission including representatives of the Government and the Movements.

46. In order to succeed with the running of these funds, the two parties will launch a joint appeal to the generosity of the Malian Nation and an appeal for humanitarian and financial assistance to the international community.

47. A special development programme for the North of Mali will be approved for a period of ten years, and launched with two successive five-year funding tranches.

48. The purpose of this programme will be to redress the economic, social and cultural inequalities between the North of Mali and the rest of the country. It will have the further goal of improving the infrastructure in the North of Mali, in order to render the Region more attractive to investors.

49. The special development programme will be designed, and its financing planned, within six months of signature of the present Pact. The Regional and inter-regional Assemblies will make submissions to the Government on this subject.

50. The special development programme will be approved by the Government. The resources allocated will be announced as five-year amounts. These credits will be allocated in annual tranches to each of the Regional Assemblies, which will be responsible for management and execution of the programme.

51. A preferential fiscal regime will be created for the North of Mali. This will be designed so as to encourage and attract investment. It will be announced within three months of the signing of this Pact, and will remain in place for a period of ten years.

#### **SUB-TITLE B**

#### **MEASURES TO CONSOLIDATE NATIONAL UNITY**

52. While taking account of the necessary minimum qualifications, the Government will make an especial effort to ensure the exceptional integration into the National Defence General Staff and other security corps, of officials from the Movements and individuals originating from the North of Mali. This measure shall be executed within two months of the signing of the Pact so as to reinforce confidence, and to associate an important segment of the Malian population in the task of national defence.

53. Furthermore, and in the same spirit, the Government will make an effort - while taking account of the qualifications required - to integrate officials from

the Movements and people from among the populations of Northern Mali, into the various organs of the public and semi-public services.

This measure, which shall be executed within two months of the signing of the Pact, is also aimed at consolidating the spirit of reconciliation and reinforcing confidence, and will help to ensure a fair representation of the populations of each Region inside the State apparatus.

54. In order to ensure that they are fully represented within the National Assembly, and with the goal of ensuring a real participation of the northern populations, including the displaced populations, there will be created - as an exception during the first legislature - a total of four seats to be filled by people displaced from the North of Mali.

55. These seats will be filled through elections to be held at the end of the repatriation programme in favour of displaced persons, and in any case no later than 130 days after signature of the present Pact.

56. There will be, furthermore, one or two additional seats to ensure a fair representation of Malian populations essentially from the North but installed outside the country, which will be part of those seats in the National Assembly which have been reserved for Malians living abroad. These seats, to be filled through by-elections, shall be additional to the seats mentioned in paragraph 54 above.

57. Since national unity demands equality of rights and obligations between all Malian citizens, it can best be guaranteed through a programme of teaching and training being equitably applied throughout the national territory. To this end, a special programme of teaching and civil and military training will be undertaken for the benefit of the populations of the North of Mali. This programme will be pursued through the implementation of an organised policy of school provision according to criteria of equality, and with respect for the respective competencies of authorities at the local, regional and national levels. In addition, the Northern populations shall have access to training grants awarded within the framework of international cooperation agreements, whether these be grants offered to the State, or programmes involving cross-border cooperation agreements between similar area councils.

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**TITLE V**  
**SUB-REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**  
**IN THE SERVICE OF PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

58. Convinced that national unity and solidarity have their natural extension in African unity and solidarity, the Government of the Republic of Mali has repeated its determination to maintain its actions in support of national peace and reconciliation through an effort to promote sub-regional cooperation and development.

59. To this effect, the Government of the Republic of Mali will redouble its actions to relaunch cooperation between the States and peoples of the Organisation of Saharan States, which it sees as an essential complement to those other sub-regional Organisations of which the Republic of Mali is a member.

60. The Republic of Mali commits itself furthermore to request actively the support of relevant international Organisations (UNDP, IFAD, WFP, UNESCO, ADB, IDB...) to help redress the economic, social and cultural disadvantage of the North of Mali.

61. Finally the Republic of Mali will request friendly countries to join it within a framework of intergovernmental cooperation, to train or retrain young people from the displaced populations of Northern Mali who have not had the opportunity to receive training, or who have been obliged to interrupt it, or who have received training abroad.

**TITLE VI**  
**ON THE TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE**  
**ARRANGEMENTS OF THIS NATIONAL RECONCILIATION PACT**

62. The two parties are committed to respect the inseparable nature of the totality of the clauses in the present Pact. In order to ensure an smooth implementation, free from disagreement or misunderstanding, the two parties have agreed to the following timetable for implementation:

63. 72 hours after its signature on Malian soil by both parties, the present Pact shall be published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Mali by the President of the Transitional Committee for the Salvation of the People (CTSP).

64. The ceasefire shall start at zero hour on the day following the signature.

65. The whole of the arrangements pertaining to the final cessation of hostilities, described under Title II of the present Pact, shall be put into effect at the same time and within 60 days of signature, under the supervision and control of the Ceasefire Commission.

66. The Independent Commission of Enquiry will be put in place within 15 days after the signature of the Agreement. As agreed, the Commission will submit its findings less than four months after its installation. The appropriate judicial and other authorities will be informed of its conclusions within 45 days after the report reaches the Head of State. In case there should be delays in finalising the composition of the Commission, the arrangements outlined in paragraph 13 of the present Pact will come into effect, in order to allow the Independent Commission of Enquiry to begin its work.

67. Within 60 days after the signing of the Pact, an appointment shall be made, in consultation with the Movements, to the post of Commissioner for the North of Mali, responsible for the implementation of the present Pact for a period of five years.

68. Within 30 days after signature of the Pact, shall be created and financed the Fund for development and reinsertion of displaced populations, and the Fund for assistance and compensation to victims of all the consequences of the armed conflict.

69. The programme for voluntary repatriation of Northern populations displaced within the countries of the sub-region, will be launched 60 days after signature of the Pact, with the assistance of the host countries as well as of friendly countries and international humanitarian organisations, and in coordination between the State and the Movements. This programme shall be completed within 60 days with the assistance for reinsertion provided from the Funds cited in paragraph 68 above. During this period, assistance will also be provided to persons displaced within the country and who have suffered because of the conflict.

70. 130 days after the signing of the Pact, which will be 10 days after the completion of the repatriation programme, by-elections shall be organised for the seats in the National Assembly which have been created ad hoc for the first legislature, in favour of those populations from the North of Mali which have been displaced.

71. The exceptional integration into the National Defence and public and semi-public Administration, of officials from the Movements and populations of the North of Mali, shall be completed two months after signature of the Pact. A period shall be allowed for those selected to take up their posts.

72. Three months after the signing of the present Pact, the appropriate executive and legislative authorities shall begin to prepare the necessary measures for the creation of the Assemblies, and the specific mechanisms pertaining to the Communes, Arrondissements, Cercles, Regions and to the inter-regional Assembly. These measures shall be drafted in accordance with the irrevocable clauses of the present Pact. They shall be prepared in close collaboration with the Commission for Supervision of the Pact and the Commissioner for the North of Mali.

73. Elections shall be organised 6 months after the signature of the present Pact, for the Commune, Arrondissement, Cercle, Regional Assemblies. The inter-regional Assembly shall be constituted one month after the election for the Regional Assemblies. The installation of the Executives and Permanent Secretariats attached to the Assemblies and described under Title V of the present Pact, shall take place within one month of their respective creations.

74. In the interval between the signing of the present Pact and the coming into effect of the new local institutions for the North of Mali, the Commission for Supervision and the Commissioner for the North will jointly ensure that the arrangements of the present Pact are enforced, in particular insofar as these concern the security of the populations and the territory of the North of Mali, the reinsertion of displaced persons, assistance to victims, and the preparation of measures outlined in the Pact.

75. 6 months after the signing of the present Pact:

A - the special army units will be created which will be open to all sections of the local populations, whose mission will be limited to to the preservation of the integrity and external security of the country's frontiers, and which are described in the last line of paragraph 7.A. above;

B - the special programme for the development of the North of Mali will be launched, in accordance with the arrangements under Title IV paragraph 47 to 50;

C - the preferential fiscal regime to attract investment will be announced and applied in the North of Mali in accordance with the arrangements under Title V paragraph 51;

D - the process of redefining communal and administrative boundaries in the North of Mali will be launched, as described under paragraph 37 above, and shall be completed at the end of the year following the signature of the present Pact.

**TITLE VII**  
**ON GUARANTEES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PACT**

76. The two parties have stated that the primary guarantee for respecting the implementation of the present Pact, lies in the fundamental interest of peace, unity and stability which the present document aims to restore: this in the good faith which inspires them and in their irrevocable commitment to the permanent restoration of national harmony and stability in the country and in the sub-region.

77. The Governmental party recalls that the Constitution of the Republic of Mali dated 12th January 1992, expresses the will of the Malian people to seal national harmony and reconciliation between all the children of Mali.

78. On their side, the Unified Fronts and Movements repeat their desire, and that of the populations whom they represent, to take up once again their place in the Malian Nation, assuming their rights as citizens within a permanent peace founded on the application of the present Pact.

79. This is why the two parties have solemnly expressed their irrevocable commitment to ensure that all the arrangements in the present Pact are implemented sincerely, complete and unchanged.

80. Conscious of their national and sub-regional responsibilities, the two parties call as witness to their solemn commitment, the Malian people, the Mediator, the countries which are friends and brothers of Mali, and the personalities whom have been invited as friends to the ceremony for the signing of the Pact.

81. In order to avoid any misunderstanding concerning the sincere and loyal implementation of the present Pact, and in addition to the Ceasefire Commission described under Title II paragraph 8, the two parties have decided to install a Commission for Supervision and Implementation of the Pact.

82. The said Commission shall be installed within 15 days after the signature of the Agreement, and will carry out its task for one year. The Commission for Supervision shall be permanently composed of the representatives of the two parties, in the number of four from each side. The permanent chairmanship shall be held by each of the two parties, alternating monthly, with the first chairmanship falling to the party of the Unified Movements and Fronts of the Azawad.

83. The Commission for Supervision shall hold special sessions in the presence of and under the chairmanship of the Mediator who shall designate representatives to the Commission. These sessions will examine and resolve any problems which may arise, linked to the implementation of the present Pact. They shall be convened at the end of the second and third months

following signature of the Agreement, and again at the end of the second trimester, and at the end of the second semester following the signature. These sessions shall give rise to official Minutes and to Press Releases.

83 bis As agreed during their meeting in Algiers, during which the two parties announced their intention to consult with their constituents concerning the Agreement reached, the two parties confirm that these consultations have taken place.

As a result, the two parties confirm their acceptance of the National Pact. Furthermore they have agreed that arrangements and practical organisation for implementing the approved text shall be fixed during the first meeting of the Commission for Supervision under the Chairmanship of the Mediator, two months after the signing of the National Pact.

On the side of the MFUA, these arrangements and practical details shall be approved by Secretaries-General of the MFUA during the first meeting of the Commission for Supervision of the Pact.

### **FINAL ARRANGEMENTS**

84. The present Pact for national reconciliation has been established in three original copies in the French language, signed by both parties. One original copy shall be kept by each of the two parties and by the Mediator.

85. The observers invited to the signing ceremony and requested to act as witnesses, shall each receive one copy of the present document.

86. The present Pact shall be published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Mali by the President of the Transitional Committee for the Salvation of the People (CTSP).

Signed in Bamako, on 11th April 1992

For the Government of the Republic of Mali, the Minister for Territorial Administration responsible for relations with the CTSP and with associations,  
Colonel Brehima Siré Traoré

For the Coordination Bureau of the Unified Movements and Fronts of the Azawad,  
Zahabyould Sidi Mohamed

The President of the Transitional Committee for the Salvation of the People  
(CTSP),  
Lt Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré

## 2.2 A Code of Conduct for Civil-Military Relations

*Henny VAN DER GRAAF<sup>1</sup>*

In October 1993 the President of Mali, Alpha Oumar Konaré, requested the Secretary- General of the United Nations to provide assistance in the collection of illegal light weapons said to be proliferating in the country. Not only in Mali but in the whole region the proliferation of these weapons is considered as a serious threat to stability. This proliferation is influenced by a great number of factors such as the political climate in a specific country, porous borders, insufficient control of weapons in the hands of ill-disciplined factions and the existence of a traditional arms culture in the region. All this is strengthened by poverty criminality due to bad economic conditions and a restless military, often poorly equipped and underpaid. Consequently, the uniformed forces responsible for the maintenance of law and order are not able to perform their duties and are sometimes becoming part of the problem by committing unlawful acts themselves such as toll collection on main roads, extortion of the population, and selling their weapons and equipment on the black market. In turn, citizens are acquiring arms to protect themselves and are taking the law into their own hands.

These phenomena are in varying degrees common practice in a number of countries on the African continent. One of the main findings of a UN mission sent to the region at the request of the President of Mali was that governments in the region have insufficient means and resources to guarantee a sufficient degree of security and stability needed for sustainable economic and social development, and that without external assistance in the security field the situation cannot be alleviated. But it was also concluded that the countries involved should start taking measures that are within their capabilities. In this context a seminar on civil-military relations in Mali at the request by the Malian Ministry of Defence was organized in July 1996 in the capital of Mali, Bamako. The major justification for such a seminar is the need to impress the armed forces with democratic culture in a society that has been profoundly marked for

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. (Ret.) Henny van der Graaf is Director of the Center for Arms Control and Verification Technology at Eindhoven University of Technology in the Netherlands. This text was first published in *UNIDIR NewsLetter on Conflict Prevention in West Africa: Curbing the Flow of Arms*, No 32/96, 1996, pp. 22-25.

decades by military dictatorship. The Malian political leadership views such a seminar as a timely activity which can contribute not just to enabling the armed forces to win the “hearts and minds” of the people in the fledgling Malian democratic society, but also as a medium for enriching military training curricula at a time when about 2,000 former Tuareg rebels are being trained for subsequent integration into the uniformed forces.

The elaboration of military/civilian relations thus is an integral part of the Malian peace process initiated by the 1992 *Pacte National* but also part of the “security first” assistance approach.

The seminar, under shared auspices of the UN and the Malian government, was a great success. Chaired by the Minister of Defence, H.E. Mamadou Bah, and opened by the President of the Republic of Mali, Alpha Omar Konaré, high ranking officers of the uniformed forces, civil servants, members of parliament, representatives of women’s associations and of other civil society groups, engaged in lively discussions on civil/military relations in Mali.

The audience was briefed on foreign experiences with civil/military relations by experts from the United States, Canada, Germany and South Africa. *Acte de presence* was also given by representatives of the United Nations, the Organization for African Unity (OAU), *Accord de non-agression et d’assistance en matière de défense* [Accord on Non-aggression and Assistance in Defense Matters (ANAD)] and the Geneva-based United Nations Centre for Human Rights, as well as representatives of neighbouring countries. The discussion centered ultimately on a draft code of conduct prepared by this author along the lines of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security adopted by the OSCE States in December 1994.

After lively discussions the seminar adopted a number of elements for a code of conduct which could form the basis of further action by the Malian government.

These elements will also be discussed during a regional conference on conflict prevention in West Africa to be held in Bamako in November 1996. This workshop will be organized by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and sponsored by the Netherlands. This workshop has been suggested by the Secretary-General’s Advisory Mission on light weapons as a vehicle for closer inter-regional cooperation in the combat against the proliferation of illicit light weapons.

During the seminar there was broad agreement that a code of conduct on civil-military relations should not only ensure that the armed forces will not endanger the basic liberties that they are meant to protect, but also that the civil government is not unduly interfering in military matters which are the

professional property of the military. On the other hand it was stressed that civilian control over the military presupposes a sufficient degree of civilian expertise on defence and security matters.

It was also understood that a code on politico-military security aspects cannot fully guarantee stability of the civil-military relationship. It can only formulate a set of constitutional requirements which in everyday practice of policy making might deviate from the established norms. Therefore, democratic control is a *sine qua non* in order to avoid disruption of the democratic model of civilian control by individuals. In this respect it was understood that a clear, legal constitutional framework defining the basic relationship between the State and the armed forces would be the basic requirement for a code of conduct. It was recognized that the parliament would play a significant role in legislating on defence and security matters such as the formulation of the national strategy, budget approval and control of spending. Some participants stressed the importance of stimulating public debate on defence and security policy. Last but not least, it was recognized that politico-military relations are strongly influenced by the presence of a well-trained, experienced, and politically neutral military establishment that is respected by the civil society and sufficiently funded by the political authority. This was in particular highlighted by the President of Mali who, in his opening address to the seminar, reminded the audience of the important role the uniformed forces had played in the establishment of a civilian-controlled democratic system in Mali.

As a result of the three days of lively discussions, the following elements for a possible code of conduct for the Malian security forces were adopted by the seminar. The workshop proposes the following elements to constitute the substance of a Code of Conduct for the Armed Forces and Security Forces.

1. The military is at the disposal of political authorities. This clearly asserted political subordination must be understood and accepted by all.
2. The rights and duties of all armed and security forces personnel must be codified in national law.
3. The recruitment and mobilization of armed and security forces personnel will be in accordance with obligations and commitments with regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms.
4. The founding texts on human rights, international humanitarian law and the law of armed conflict will be taught and disseminated throughout the

country. The content of these texts will be woven into military training programmes and into existing rules and regulations.

5. The armed and security forces personnel will receive specific instruction on the law, rules, conventions and commitments pertaining to armed conflict. They will have to be aware that they are individually held accountable for their own actions with regard to national and international law.
6. All military personnel vested with command authority will exercise such authority in accordance with the relevant laws. They will be held individually accountable under those laws. No order shall be given in contradiction with national or international law. Moreover, the responsibility of superiors does not exempt subordinates from any of their own individual responsibilities.
7. The armed and security forces personnel will be able to enjoy and exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms as defined by international law and by relevant constitutional and legal provisions.
8. The armed and security forces personnel will be incorporated, commanded, trained and equipped in conformity with the provisions of international law and with commitments regarding the use of force in armed conflicts, including the Hague Conventions of 1907 and 1954, the Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Additional Protocols of 1977, and the 1980 Convention on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, as well as with the requirements of the services.
9. The State will ensure that its defence policy is in accordance with international law pertaining to the use of force (including in internal conflicts) and with the provisions to be elaborated in the present Code.
10. The State will ensure that any decision to assign its armed and security forces to internal security missions is in conformity with constitutional and legislative procedures and regulations. Such missions will be carried out under the effective control of political and parliamentary authorities, and subject to the rule of law. If the resort to force cannot be avoided for preserving internal security, the State will ensure that it remains strictly commensurate with the requirements of the assigned mission. The armed

and security forces will take all due care to avoid injury to civilians or damage to private property.

11. Except for cases defined by constitutional and legislative provisions and regulations, no use will be made of armed and security forces to restrict the peaceful and lawful exercise of individual and civil rights, either by individuals or by group-representatives, nor to deprive them of their national, religious, cultural, linguistic or ethnic identity.
12. The maintenance of order being essentially the task of the security forces, it is recommended that the role of the army in internal order be kept to a strict minimum.
13. The military profession must be held in high regard, with due recognition of its usefulness, competence and efficiency. Despite their high qualifications, the military are little assimilated into society, and civilians owe them all due consideration. Enhancing the image of the military in our evolving and modernizing society indispensably requires a role played by the State.
14. This evolution and modernization of society entails increasing requirements both for internal and external security. The State will thus have to carry out a modernization of the armed and security forces and provide them with effective equipment to match their new missions.
15. Such an enhancement of the military profession and the necessary modernization of the armed forces will require the State to elaborate texts defining the rights, responsibilities, incentives and advantages granted to the armed and security forces.
16. In order to preserve the political neutrality of the armed and security forces, it is advisable that the State should not nominate military personnel to political office.
17. The armed and security forces will observe the strictest political neutrality. Their individual members will exercise their civil rights within the limits of legal restrictions.

18. The whole of the armed and security forces will in all circumstances be under the effective control of the constitutionally established political authorities.
19. In order to harmonize relations between civilians and the whole of the armed and security forces, and in order to promote stability, national information and awareness programmes will be organized in pursuit of mutual confidence between the military and the civilian population.
20. By means of constitutional authorities vested with democratic legitimacy, the society will in all cases be able to exercise effective control over the armed and security forces.

Such full control over the armed and security forces will be an indispensable element of internal stability and security.

Awareness of the necessity for effective control of the armed and security forces by the civilian authorities entails the need for a clear definition of missions, and strict respect for the existing constitutional framework of the use of force. It also requires observance of a number of recommendations:

- non-involvement by the civilian population or by political authorities in the specifically internal management of the military sector;
- the implementation of regulations on conscription to enhance the blending of all elements of society into the military;
- the organization of regular debates between civilians and military personnel to enhance mutual understanding;
- a consensus among political parties and all other components of society on respect for the neutrality of the armed and security forces;
- information and awareness initiatives aiming to prevent such behaviour as might cause a deterioration in civil-military relations; and
- the workshop strongly recommends the elaboration of a Code of Conduct for the Armed Forces on the basis of the elements comprised in the present document.

## 2.3 Text of the Certificate at the Timbuktu Flame of Peace

### CERTIFICATE

**Mr President of the Republic of Mali,**

**We:**

**Prvoslav Davinic**, *Director of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs,*

**General Henny van der Graaf**, *Member of the Secretary-General's Consultative Council on Questions of Disarmament,*

Do solemnly swear that we have carried out a careful and exhaustive verification of the weapons which have been presented to us by the Sub-Commission for the Control and Destruction of Weapons at the "Flame of Peace".

We certify, Mr President, that these weapons are in conformity, both in quality and in quantity, with the Register prepared by the Sub-Commission for Weapons Collection, which received weapons handed in by the ex-combatants.

We have of course checked, Mr President, before laying placing them on the bonfire, that none of these weapons contains any ammunition and that they can be burned without danger, to make a true "Flame of Peace".

(signed)

Timbuktu, 27th March 1996



## 2.4 Speech of the Representative of MFUA and MPMGK

### Speech of the representative of MFUA and MPMGK on the occasion of the “Flame of Peace” in Timbuktu, 27th March 1996

Spokesman Zeidane ag Sidalamine started with a long list of salutations which we summarize as:

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The *Mouvements et Fronts Unifiés de l’Azaouad* (MFUA) and the *Mouvement Patriotique Malien Ganda Koy* wish to renew their sincere thanks to all the participants, and especially to His Excellency the President of the sister Republic of Ghana, for his pan-African presence at this “Flame of Peace” ceremony in Timbuktu.

His presence shows the commitment of Ghana to consolidate and deepen the political inheritance of the Father of Ghanaian and Pan-African independence, the late Kwame N’Krumah.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I request you -- in the name of reconciliation, forgiveness and Peace, to observe with me a minute of silence in memory of all those who have been victims of violence and insecurity.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is in order to reassert the African tradition of palaver and consensus, that the MFUA and the MPMGK have charged me with the responsibility of reading to you a joint declaration and a special motion.

**Joint declaration of the  
Mouvements et Fronts Unifiés de l'Azaouad (MFUA)  
and of the  
Mouvement Patriotique Malien Ganda Koy (MPMGK)  
on the occasion of the "Flame of Peace" in Timbuktu**

1. The *Armée révolutionnaire de libération de l'Azaouad* (ARLA) represented by its Secretary-General Abdourahmane ag Galla;
2. The *Front islamique arabe de l'Azaouad* (FIAA) represented by its Secretary-General Boubacar Sadeck ould Mahmoud;
3. The *Front populaire de libération de l'Azaouad* (FPLA) represented by its Secretary-General Zeidane ag Sidalamine;
4. The *Mouvement populaire de l'Azaouad* (MPA) represented by its Secretary-General Iyyad ag Ghali;
5. The *Mouvement Patriotique Malien Ganda Koy* (MPMGK) represented by its leader Captain Abdoulaye Hamadahmane Maiga

- Considering that Mali is one and indivisible;
- Considering that the problems of the north are national in character;
- Considering that the wish of the Malian people and the political authorities is to achieve a final and definitive settlement of this problem through dialogue, custom and tradition;
- Considering that the National Pact provides an appropriate framework for solving the crisis in the north;
- Considering that it is necessary to preserve national unity and territorial integrity, and to ensure the safety of all populations irrespective of race or ethnicity;

**the Mouvements et Fronts Unifiés de l'Azaouad and of the Mouvement Patriotique Malien Ganda Koy:**

1. Proclaim their unreserved support for the Constitution of the Malian Republic in all aspects, for national unity and territorial integrity
2. Congratulate the entire Malian nation and its government for the efforts they have invested in the search for a peaceful resolution of the conflict;
3. Commit themselves, alongside the rest of the nation, to defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Mali and to preserve national unity;

4. Commit themselves individually and collectively to work to consolidate the Peace, and reconciliation between all parts of the nation, so as to recreate the former spirit of exchange, alliances, brotherhood and tolerance;
5. Condemn and reject all forms of violence and intolerance to express political, social and economic demands;
6. Recommend for the stability and security of Mali, that the National Pact and its complementary agreements should be applied correctly, diligently and fairly in favour of all the populations of the North;
7. Thank the whole of the international community for its support to the process of peace;
8. Recommend that everything should be done to create the moral, material and psychological conditions which will facilitate the return and reinsertion of populations, who were forced by the insecurity to move away from their homes, whether inside or outside the country;
9. Recommend that development activities should be continued and intensified, to facilitate the socio-economic integration of the northern Regions with the rest of the country;
10. Seek a vote in the National Assembly in favour of an amnesty law to cover all acts committed during the period of armed conflict, in the spirit of reconciliation between all children of the nation;
11. Exhort their brothers in the Peoples and Governments of Africa, especially in: Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan, to celebrate their own Flame of Peace;
12. And finally proclaim, solemnly and irrevocably, the dissolution of their Fronts and Movements.

May the Flame of Peace burn forever in Mali and in the world!

Signed:

- For the *Armée révolutionnaire de libération de l'Azaouad* (ARLA), Abdourahmane ag Galla (Secretary-General);
- For the *Front islamique arabe de l'Azaouad* (FIAA), Boubacar Sadeck ould Mahmoud (Secretary-General);
- For the *Front populaire de libération de l'Azaouad* (FPLA), Zeidane ag Sidalamine (Secretary-General);
- For the *Mouvement populaire de l'Azaouad* (MPA), Iyyad ag Ghali (Secretary-General);
- For the *Mouvement Patriotique Malien Ganda Koy* (MPMGK), Captain Abdoulaye Hamadahamane Maiga (leader of the Movement)

## SPECIAL MOTION

**On the occasion of this historic ceremony of the “Flame of Peace” in Timbuktu**, the *Mouvements et Fronts Unifiés de l'Azaouad* and the *Mouvement Patriotique Malien Ganda Koy* address their sincere thanks to the **People and Government of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria** in their role as mediator for the peaceful solution of the “Problem of the North”, for the sole benefit of the Malian Nation in its unity and its diversity.

## 2.5 Amnesty Law

PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC

REPUBLIC OF MALI  
ONE PEOPLE - ONE AIM - ONE FAITH

### **LAW No 97 - 016 of 7th March 1997 CONCERNING AMNESTY**

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS DEBATED AND ADOPTED DURING ITS SESSION OF 20TH FEBRUARY 1997:

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC PROMULGATES THE LAW OF WHICH THE TEXT FOLLOWS:

#### **ARTICLE THE FIRST:**

The infringements hereafter enunciated, as well as any attempt or complicity thereto, covered by and punishable under the Law, the Labour Code, or specifically under Law No 60-4 / AL-RS dated 7th June 1960 controlling the circulation of firearms and ammunition modified by Law No 85-52/AN-RM dated 21st June 1985, committed inside the national territory during the period 21st June 1990 until 27th March 1996 in relation to the rebellion, are subject to amnesty:

attacks on the internal security of the State; destruction of buildings; opposition to the legal authority; violence and violations against agents of the forces of public order; obstruction of the public highway; association with intent to break the law; hiding of fugitives from the law; crimes and infractions of a racist or regionalist nature; intentional homicide; accidental homicide; deliberate attempts to cause bodily harm; armed robbery with violence; kidnapping of persons against their will; illegal arrest of persons and detention against their will; rape; untruthful and libellous denunciations; arson; causing deliberate damage to property whether buildings or furnishings; pillage; extortion and fraudulent dispossession of persons; larceny; theft; breaking of trust by the revelation of secrets; threats; wrongful usurpation of titles or functions; infringement to the freedom to work; possession or carrying of illegal weapons, firearms or munitions.

**ARTICLE THE SECOND:**

The Amnesty extends to all those faults which might otherwise be sanctionable as infringements of rules of discipline or professional misconduct.

**ARTICLE THE THIRD:**

Are excluded from this Amnesty Law, all crimes and infractions which have been committed against persons present inside the national territory for the purposes of development co-operation, and who are covered by diplomatic immunity;

**ARTICLE THE FOURTH:**

In the absence of definite condemnation, any disagreements relating to actions which fall under the Amnesty shall be referred to the competent jurisdiction for a decision concerning further action.

Signed in Bamako on 7th March 1997  
The President of the Republic,  
Alpha Oumar KONARE

## **2.6 Note on a Regional Moratorium on Small Arms**

### **A MORATORIUM ON IMPORT, EXPORT AND MANUFACTURE OF LIGHT WEAPONS**

#### **I. BACKGROUND**

The moratorium proposal outlined in this document originated from a succession of events and initiatives over the 1993-1997 period.

Acting upon an initial request from the President of the Republic of Mali, the United Nations Secretary-General established an Advisory Mission on the control and collection of small arms in the Sahara-Sahel region. The Mission visited Mali (1994) as well as Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Chad (1995).

A major lesson from these missions was that curbing the dissemination of small arms within each country and throughout the region was an essential factor in establishing the minimal security prerequisites for future development efforts to be undertaken effectively.

Hence, a proportional and integrated approach to security and development (known as "security first") was elaborated and endorsed at a ministerial meeting held in New York on 21 October 1996.

In this spirit, a conference on Conflict Prevention, Disarmament and Development on West Africa was convened in Bamako on 25-29 November 1996. Delegations from 12 West African countries sought common ground on options for future regional cooperation. The idea of a moratorium on imports, exports and manufacturing of light weapons attracted particular interest throughout the Conference. Delegates undertook to convey the suggestion to their respective governments for further consideration.

As participants in the Bamako Conference, both ECOWAS and ANAD took an active part in discussions on the moratorium idea. Subsequently, the secretariat of the Organization of African Unity was briefed on the proposal.

Moreover, in February 1997, the Friends of the Chair of the Vienna-based Wassenaar Arrangement<sup>1</sup> were likewise informed of the moratorium proposal, in order to address the issue from both the supplier and recipient perspectives.

A genuine opportunity thus exists for the countries of West Africa to make an innovative contribution to their common security and development prospects.

## **II. OBJECTIVES**

A moratorium on light weapons has not been tried before. A dialogue between recipients and suppliers of arms—asking the latter to respect the provisions of the moratorium and assist in its implementation—is another novel idea. The objective is to create a framework within which a secure environment for socio-economic development can be obtained. The moratorium would be shaped with due regard to the legitimate defence needs of the countries concerned, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.

## **III. SCOPE**

The moratorium is in essence a confidence-building measure covering import, export and manufacture of light weapons. It would include weapons such as handguns, rifles, machine guns, land-mines, grenades, portable rocket launchers and mortars as well as their ammunition.

Initially, the moratorium would be a declaratory measure of a duration to be determined by the participating states. Towards the end of the declared period, a consultative meeting may be called to consider an extension of the moratorium.

If a moratorium country finds that it has a legitimate need for new weapons in the course of the moratorium period, it would have to give prior notification to the consultative mechanism to be set up by the moratorium countries. The notification should be submitted together with a justification for the planned acquisition. The other participating states may then request further information, or ask for a consultation on the matter.

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<sup>1</sup> The Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies entered into being on 12 July 1996. The new regime has been set up to replace the defunct COCOM (Co-ordinating Committee on Multilateral Export Controls), which restricted the export of arms and arms related goods from OECD countries.

#### **IV. ASSOCIATED MEASURES**

In order to enhance the effectiveness of a moratorium as a long-term confidence-building measure, and to strengthen the ability of the Governments concerned to exercise greater control over illicit trafficking in light weapons, these Governments may wish to supplement the moratorium with various associated measures.

As regards future acquisitions of weapons, the Governments may wish to establish a sub-regional arms register. The register would contain the relevant information on the procurement of the weapons needed for their uniformed forces, taking into account the existence of the global arms Register of Conventional arms maintained at the UN by the Secretary-General.

Regarding the problem of illicit trafficking, the Governments concerned may undertake, unilaterally or jointly, a number of supplementary measures.

They include but are not limited to the following:

- Organise with assistance of the UN and other interested States an intensive sub-regional training programme for police forces to enhance their ability and skills to intercept and confiscate illicit shipments of light arms.

- Establish border-crossing “hot-lines” for fast and reliable communication with national authorities and those of the neighbouring States.

- Introduce a strict licensing of weapons permits to individual citizens and establish a register of those individuals possessing such weapons.

- Develop an appropriate education programme for the civilian sectors of society.

Participating States will need a small coordinating mechanism for notification, technical assistance, harmonisation and implementation of associated measures.

In the implementation of the moratorium and its associated measures, a dialogue should be encouraged between suppliers and recipients of light weapons with a view to the fullest possible cooperation of supplier States.

**NOTE ON THE STRUCTURE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
MORATORIUM AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURBING  
THE PROLIFERATION OF LIGHT WEAPONS**

In order to ensure a regular follow up of the implementation of the moratorium on the export, import and manufacturing of light weapons, but also and furthestmost to efficiently ensure the implementation of the recommendations made in the framework of the struggle against insecurity, a prerequisite for any development policy, the member States agreed to set up a structure called: "Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED)".

With the help and assistance of the UN System, this structure is aimed at:

Co-ordinating the efforts of the member States in the field of security and disarmament;

Providing technical assistance for the implementation and harmonization of the member States' disarmament and security policies;

Supporting member States' efforts in establishing and revitalizing national commissions in charge of controlling the proliferation of light weapons;

Promoting the creation and functioning of data and information banks on the circulation of weapons in the sub-region;

Providing technical support to the efforts of sensitization by member States in order to secure the adherence of other States to the moratorium;

Supporting member States' efforts aimed at harmonizing their national laws governing the carrying, use and manufacturing of light weapons;

Supporting the creation and functioning of a sub-regional register on light weapons;

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Assisting member States in their border control actions.

Generally, the structure will ensure the collection and dissemination of information on insecurity and disarmament issues, and provide necessary assistance to member States in implementing programmes partaking in the control of the proliferation of light weapons.

In the event of an agreement on the setting-up of such a structure, its creation, its headquarters and mode of operation will be discussed further.

Document emanating from the  
Ministerial Consultation in Bamako,  
26th March 1997,  
concerning a  
Moratorium on the import, export  
and manufacture of light weapons



## Annex 3

### List of Projects Which are Supposed to Contribute to Peace and Development in Northern Mali

Source of Funds	Remaining	% (\$US)
ADB/FAD	17,336,815	8.11
BADEA	7,811,599	3.65
Abu Dhabi Fund	251,946	0.12
OPEC Fund	9,556,559	4.47
Kuweit Fund	15,090,223	7.06
Saoudi Fund	5,378,223	2.52
IDB	23,707,306	11.02
IFAD	22,982,354	10.75
EU-FED	16,671,794	7.82
KFW	19,567,386	9.16
GTZ	3,998,317	1.87
France	2,542,685	1.19
UNCDF	3,123,480	1.46
UNSO	1,873,757	0.88
Canada	7,380,982	3.45
Netherlands	4,293,472	2.00
CFD	18,020,869	8.43
UNICEF	706,696	0.33
USAID	15,051,000	7.04
Norway	3,240,000	1.51
FAO	360,000	0.17

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BOAD	1,576,000	0.74
Belgium	3,733,906	1.75
Libya	200,000	0.09
UNDP	3,360,000	1.58
World Bank	5,987,725	2.81
Total	213,803,094	100,00

Source: Ministry of Finance, 1996.

## List of Ongoing Projects in Northern Mali

Projects	Sectors	Source of Funds	Amount (\$US)	Spent	Remaining
	<b>I. RURAL ECONOMY</b>				
	<b>I.1 Agriculture</b>				
1	Water and land improvement at DAYE	FAD, Mali	12,209,636	8,584,174	3,625,462
2	Land improvement at Hamadja	BADEA, BID, Mali	9,974,228	7,335,228	2,639,000
3	Irrigation in Gao Region (Phase I)	BADEA, Mali	5,960,000	0	5,960,000
4	Agricultural development at Goubo	BID, FSAOD, Mali	7,338,191	0	7,338,191
5	Project for local development in 7th Region—PADL	CFD, FAC	12,823,596	459,143	12,364,453
6	Integrated development of Lake Horo	GTZ	3,507,295	1,052,188	2,455,107
7	Agricultural development of Timbuktu Lakes (PDZL), Phase I	FIDA, OPEC, PAM, Mali	10,093,299	8,657,243	1,436,056
8	Rice improvement in Gao and Timbuktu (ARGT)	FENU	3,333,338	209,858	3,123,480
9	Improvement of agriculture systems of Lake Faguibine	UNSO	4,254,661	4,140,835	113,826
10	Rural development, Timbuktu	USAID/CARE	1,403,000	1,302,000	101,000
11	Local initiatives support, Gao	USAID/W. Vision	2,589,000	2,289,000	300,000

12	Support to rural associations, Timbuktu	Netherlands	1,075,265	837,268	237,997
13	Agricultural development of Timbuktu Lakes (PDZL), Phase II	FIDA, BOAD, FSB	17,731,742	0	17,731,742
14	Rice irrigation	Belgium/ONG	381,500	0	381,500
	<b>Total Agriculture</b>		92,674,751	34,866,937	57,807,814
	<b>I.2 Livestock</b>				
1	Programme for food and revenue security in Kidal (PSARK)	FIDA, BID, OPEC, Mali	19,799,855	2,868,331	16,931,524
2	Livestock development, Mali north-east	FAD, FED, Mali	17,948,894	6,671,608	11,277,286
3	Development of Timbuktu Lakes (Phase III)	UNSO	2,506,397	746,466	1,759,931
	<b>Total Livestock</b>		40,255,146	10,286,405	29,968,741
	<b>I.3 Environment (water and trees)</b>				
1	Campaign against encroaching sand dunes and development of forest resources in the North	FED	8,990,598	3,803,815	5,186,783
2	Natural resource management, Niafunké	USAID/ONG	2,029,000	1,744,000	285,000
	<b>Total Environment</b>		11,019,598	5,547,815	5,471,783

	<b>TOTAL RURAL ECONOMY</b>		143,949,495	50,701,157	93,248,338
	<b>II. SECONDARY SECTOR</b>				
	<b>II.1 Water</b>				
1	Water programme for Liptako-Gourma	FKDEA, BID, Mali	15,979,748	4,612,732	11,367,016
2	Water for villages and livestock in Niafunké and Youvarou circles (CEAO II)	FKDEA, OPEC, Mali	10,743,306	213,537	10,529,769
3	Feasibility study for supplying water in Kidal	BADEA	350,000	0	350,000
4	Drinking water supply, Timbuktu	CFD	4,213,753	548,208	3,665,545
5	Water supply, Kidal	French Government	144,265	144,265	0
6	Drinking water supplies for rural and semi-urban centres in Northern Mali	KFW	10,030,864	0	10,030,864
7	Assessment and rehabilitation of Belgian pumps	Belgium	78,200	0	78,200
	<b>Total Water</b>		41,540,136	5,518,742	36,021,394
	<b>II.2 Energy</b>				
1	Electricity supply for Timbuktu city	KFW	3,507,295	1,212,074	2,295,221

2	Study of the feasibility and impact of the Tossaye dam for irrigation, energy production and navigation	FKDEA, BID, Mali	1,506,775	0	1,506,775
3	Emergency investment in electricity for Gao	CFD	2,825,198	80,897	2,744,301
	<b>Total Energy</b>		7,839,268	1,292,971	6,546,297
	<b>TOTAL SECONDARY SECTOR</b>		49,379,404	6,811,713	42,567,691
	<b>III. HUMAN RESOURCES</b>				
	<b>III.1 Health</b>				
1	Renovation of 4 health centres	FAD, Mali	15,074,663	6,324,826	8,749,837
2	Strengthening the health infrastructure of Timbuktu	FAD	12,711,604	12,614,937	96,667
3	Building and equipping health centres in Mopti-Timbuktu-Gao	BID, Mali	5,180,000	19,662	5,160,338
4	Health action programme in the North (UNICEF integrated health system)	UNICEF, FED	1,444,644	1,152,448	292,196
5	Protecting food and nutrition in 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th regions	UNICEF	3,036,100	2,621,600	414,500
6	Health and population programme	USAID	1,481,000	0	1,481,000
7	Basic health, Goundam	USAID/Africare	2,580,000	180,000	2,400,000

8	Child survival support	USAID/SC	2,447,000	323,000	2,124,000
9	National campaign against AIDS	USAID	3,750,000	300,000	3,450,000
10	Emergency medical assistance in Kidal Region	FAC	52,703	0	52,703
	<b>Total Health</b>		47,757,714	23,536,473	24,221,241
	<b>III.2 Education</b>				
1	Basic education: building 270 classrooms	OPEC, Mali	2,805,792	60,000	2,745,792
2	Rehabilitation of schools in the North of Mali	FED	2,553,276	1,431,102	1,122,174
3	Building and equipping 45 primary schools	BID, Mali	2,935,519	119,480	2,816,039
4	Emergency rehabilitation in Timbuktu (PURT), Phase I	Netherlands	2,222,222	2,222,222	0
5	Rehabilitation of classrooms in Gao	FAC	240,442	240,442	0
6	Expanding basic education	USAID	2,940,000	0	2,940,000
7	Emergency rehabilitation in Timbuktu (PURT), Phase II	Netherlands	3,899,348	0	3,899,348
	<b>Total Education</b>		17,596,599	4,073,246	13,523,353
	<b>III.3 Various</b>				
1	Regional development in the North	GTZ	5,470,138	5,470,138	0
2	Regional development project for the North	KFW	3,296,857	0	3,296,857

3	Infrastructure for the elected communes AGETIPE	Canada, KFW, World Bank	14,749,877	3,101,708	11,648,169
4	Humanitarian action and emergency aid in the Gourma AEN	FED, FAO, USAID, AEN/Norway	3,974,205	0	3,974,205
5	Special fund for the North-support for initial credit	FED	852,852	0	852,852
6	Programme of structural adjustment- support for the North	FED, CFD	7,489,690	6,657,282	832,408
7	Contribution to UNDP Special Fund (updated in chapter 5.6)	Canada, USAID, PNUD, Netherlands, Libya, Norway	3,545,273	491,226	3,054,047
8	Support for CTAs, for security and for the Ministry of Justice	Netherlands, FAC, Belgium	408,683	302,603	106,080
9	Technical assistance coordination for the EU-FED in the North	FED	283,844	0	283,844
10	Food aid	FED, USAID	1,144,445	158,000	986,445
11	Support for the programme of Special assistance in the North	FAO	180,000	0	180,000
12	Aid in trade	KFW	4,910,213	2,034,231	2,875,982
13	Micro-projects	FED, FAC, USAID	1,877,536	500,275	1,377,261

	<b>Total various</b>		48,183,613	18,715,463	29,468,150
	<b>TOTAL HUMAN RESOURCES</b>		113,537,926	46,325,182	67,212,744
	<b>IV. INFRASTRUCTURES</b>				
	<b>IV.1 Roads</b>				
1	Study and emergency work on the GAO-Tilabery road	FED	3,300,513	0	3,300,513
2	Maintenance on the Sévaré-Gao road	GTZ, OPEC, FSAOD, FKDEA, Abu Dhabi	40,133,757	35,063,341	5,070,416
3	Study for a Gao-Kidal road	BID	65,000	0	65,000
4	Rehabilitation of Timbuktu airport, Phase I	BID	7,802,300	6,761,132	1,041,168
5	Technical and economic studies of roads in the Liptako-Gourma	Belgium	414,800	0	414,800
	<b>Total Roads</b>		51,716,370	41,824,473	9,891,897
	<b>IV. 2 Telecommunications</b>				
1	Domestic satellite network for telecommunications ( DOMSAT)	CFD	6,411,798	5,529,374	882,424
	<b>Total telecommunications</b>		6,411,798	5,529,374	882,424
	<b>Total infrastructures</b>		58,128,168	47,353,847	10,774,321
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		364,994,993	151,191,899	213,803,094



## **Annex 4: Civil Society and the Social Economy: How to Make Them Stronger**

There are four parts to this annex, which is concerned with mechanisms to promote non-governmental peace-building institutions. The ideas which we develop here, were introduced in our chapter 6 called “The Winning of the Peace”. Good governance is a necessary condition for development, and it is a strong, well-organised civil society which can best defend the rule of law in the countryside. We have shown through our study of the origins of the Malian conflict, that strengthening the economic foundations of northern society is necessary to achieve sustainable development and therefore lasting peace.

**Our first section concerns relations between UNDP (or indeed any other donor), and the institutions of Civil Society in Africa: proposing a new approach towards the concepts of “partnership” and “accountability”.** Having worked with and for donors, we have a pretty clear understanding of the ways in which the rules and bureaucracy work. The CAPSDH letter which was sent to UNDP’s Administrator, Mr Speth, proposes two changes to the rules which would transform the relationships between donors and NGOs, we believe for the better. More importantly, these would also change the relationships between NGOs and grass roots associations, particularly in regions far from the national capital city -- such as northern Mali -- where UN agencies and other donors find it difficult to keep a permanent presence.

**The second section takes the question of self-sustaining long-term development for Civil Society, and proposes the creation by donors of Community Capital Funds** which would work along the lines of western trust forms of endowments. There already exists in Mali the *Fondation du Nord*, as well as other foundations which have not so far been supported by donors in the sense of creating a permanent capital base. This section is based on work done in 1992-1993 by US and Malian lawyers and some 40 different organisations in the Malian social economy (including cooperative groups from Timbuktu, Niafunké, Tessalit, Bourem, Gao, Douentza and Mopti in northern Mali), while Robin Poulton was working with USAID on strategies for the strengthening of democratic governance and local grass roots institutions in civil society.

**The third section goes beyond the donors, in the search for alternative mechanisms for funding the organs of the social economy.** We present a mechanism by which the community funds described above can invest their capital in the banking system, and leverage commercial bank credits. In this way their money can increase its value. The idea is based on the work in Mali and elsewhere in West Africa of the Geneva-based RAFAD Foundation, which starts from the fact that there are huge supplies of financial capital, so-called “hot money” looking for a profitable investment. Meanwhile farmers in the third world remain in the hands of money-lenders who charge usurious rates of interest up to 200% per annum. Donors encourage farmers to join the associations, mutual funds, cooperatives and other components of the social economy, but these groups find it extremely difficult to access commercial cash assets: even though it is often in the social economy that the financial returns are the greatest. Nowhere are productive investments more strapped for cash, than in remote areas such as northern Mali, where distances are huge and communications are weak. RAFAD has designed an international credit guarantee mechanism for the social economy, which facilitates business relations between commercial bankers and end users. The mechanism has worked well in other areas of the world, and we believe that it is a way forward to strengthen the grass roots economy of the Sahel.

**The final section deals with adult education and capacity building. Finance is not enough without training....** and training the public service is not enough! We need to build up the organisational, management and analytical capacities of civil society, and their access to information, including in the remote parts of northern Mali. One of the original demands of the armed Movements was for a “development university” in the North. Traditional university models have proved (in the North and in the South) to be expensive and theoretical, whereas Africa needs practical models to expand educational and human capacity. The campaign for capacity building takes on a new urgency, as Mali approaches decentralization and the exciting choices which will be made about investments in regional development. We discuss briefly certain concepts for adult education in the social economy, and describe how the NGO Philanthra (within the network of the International Cooperative University) is addressing the need for an open university to answer some of the development demands of the North of Mali.

#### **4.1 Creating a New Partnership between UNDP and Civil Society: Letter From CAPSDH to UNDP Administrator, Mr James Gustave Speth**

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His Excellency Gus Speth  
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United Nations  
Development Programme  
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Geneva, 25 June 1996

##### UNDP collaboration with NGOs as partners in development

Your Excellency,

We are writing to you at your personal suggestion, to present ideas for strengthening partnership between UNDP and NGOs in the field. But first we would like to congratulate you on your forthright initiative in organising the NGO meeting on May 15th in Geneva, with you and your senior colleagues in UNDP present in Geneva during the annual meeting of the UNDP Board. The seniority of your delegation and the open-minded debate augur well for future collaboration.

The CAPSDH<sup>1</sup> fully supports UNDP's partnership with NGOs and CSOs at the grassroots and national levels. In the struggle for Peace and Justice in Africa, however, it is the strengthening of local NGOs and Civil Society organisations which will do most to promote sustainable human development and the rule of law. Our Members are working in 18 countries<sup>2</sup> in sub-Saharan Africa, and we therefore have first-hand knowledge of the abuse of Human Rights, and also of the signs of hope.

The proposed collaboration and partnership with NGOs and related Civil Society organisations should aim to involve these organisations in UNDP's country programming activities. This will facilitate NGO implementation of UNDP projects and the promotion of maximum involvement of NGOs from conception through to final evaluation of impacts, for the benefit of both sides. We propose that UNDP should envisage local partnership at three levels:

**1. Overall co-ordination of NGO development activities in each country.**

This is a role which UNDP is uniquely able to play, as Kurt Jansson explains in his book on the Ethiopian Famine (Zed Books 1985). Governments have an administrative relationship with NGOs which is often uncondusive to good programme co-ordination (and which is sometimes conflictual).

At present UNDP seldom plays a co-ordinating role, except in certain emergency situations, or in function of the local interests of a Resident Representative. We believe that a regular UNDP-hosted consultation would be welcomed by NGOs, and would prove acceptable to technical ministries and to other donors including UN agencies. Our suggestion would be to make these consultations six-monthly and thematic: each meeting would cover one topic (such as drinking water, community health care, credit and savings, agricultural technologies, promoting democratic governance, etc.). Lead papers of 30 minutes each might be given by three key-note speakers (Government, UN and NGO), after which group work would be appropriate, by sub-theme or by region. A plenary session would hear conclusions of the groups, which would

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<sup>1</sup> African Commission of Health and Human Rights Promoters (ACHHP), active since its creation in 1989 in rehabilitating victims of torture and repression in Africa and promoting health for all.

<sup>2</sup> These 18 countries are classed among the 24 poorest by the indicators of development organisms such as UNDP.

be presented by NGO rapporteurs. A summary document would record each meeting.

## **2. Small grants to local NGOs.**

In this regard the AFRICA 2000 programme could be a model. During our meeting of May 15th, one of your collaborators assured us that UNDP procedures would become less cumbersome in the future. The AFRICA 2000 programme is a mechanism which can help local NGOs achieve impact focused both locally and thematically: both conditions stimulate local NGOs to develop as professional organisations. However, it appears that UNDP needs to give more autonomy to local managers to this end.

## **3. Long-term partnership with local NGOs.**

Small grants by themselves are not sufficient to develop strong Civil Society organisations. They can, moreover, promote inefficiency and increase donor dependency, as NGOs hike their begging bowl from one small grant to another. We believe that UNDP should develop a programme relationship with a small group of local NGOs. This would be an alternative to the “fatality of failed projects”. UNDP has the opportunity to seek in each country an alternative method of working with NGOs. It is through the group of NGOs that your Resident Representatives can gain a new understanding of Civil Society, the complementarity of Government and Non-Governmental, the ways in which UNDP can promote democratic governance and human development.

This would be a mutual programme partnership for the long-term. The NGO partners could sign a long-term Memo of Partnership with UNDP in which mutual obligations would be made clear.

The extended partnership of UNDP with NGOs could cover global initiatives such as UNAIDS, and strengthen collaboration at the country level on small-scale projects. We submitted this scenario for discussion during the May 15th meeting. We are convinced that such long-term partnerships, based on complementarity between the NGOs and donors such as UNDP, represent the best way to reinforce the capacities of civil society.

Our activity in CAPSDH has been to create national sections in 18 African countries, within the programme CARVITORE.<sup>3</sup> In other African countries, we have stimulated the already-existing organisations, to engage in the prevention of torture, and the medical/psychological treatment of victims and their families (within their own social/cultural environment, to achieve more efficacy). These programmes include an objective to reinstall refugees and displaced persons within their home villages, so as to implicate them anew in the development process.

It is evident that such objectives cannot be realised merely through small project grants. They require long-term partnerships, with one objective being the establishment of mechanisms permitting the integration of these national associations within Civil Society.

This brings us to the important question of accountability. We believe that partnership with UNDP could give us a unique opportunity to redefine the responsibility of NGOs beyond that of simply receiving small grants and performing good bookkeeping. The role of NGOs must be to bring the population into the democratic development process. This should therefore be one measure of their accountability.

In this context, for example, \$20,000 invested in salaries of a local NGO, should be able to leverage at least \$20,000 of local resources: membership fees; volunteer work; community contributions in cash or kind; mobilisation of government employees; creation of job opportunities for unemployed graduates; professional training; training in civil responsibility; translation and publication in local languages of human rights literature; stimulation of local savings; guarantees for credits which can mobilise unused bank deposits; stimulation of technological innovations; attraction of further financial support from donors or from national emigrants in other countries; support for local social welfare agencies; dynamisation and protection of popular African technologies which create employment and stimulate solidarity in modes of production, etc.

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<sup>3</sup> African Centre for Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and Repression, one of two programmes initiated by CAPSDH in order to rehabilitate victims of torture and repression within their own social and cultural environment.

Finally, we propose a further element of accountability. One of the most important measures of accountability should be the adherence to democratic governance of the NGO partners, and of their community partners. This is important to an organisation like ours which fights against torture and its social implications in the development process.

We would be happy to continue to collaborate with UNDP in the field, in the concretisation of these few ideas, which are the fruit of our experience. It is hardly necessary to convince you that our primary objective is the protection of human rights and a promotion of development based on healthy citizens.

Yours sincerely,

Djely Karifa Samoura  
Representative of the UN  
Co-ordinator of Programmes

cc. Dr Ousmane Kéita  
President of CAPSDH  
B.P. 250 Conakry  
Republic of Guinea

## 4.2 Community Capital Funds, and the Creation of Self-sustaining Development Institutions

In 1992-93, USAID Mali commissioned a team of specialists to analyse the opportunities in Mali for the creation of endowments and community development foundations. USAID had been involved in setting up major endowments for the Puerto Rico Community Development Foundation and the Community Development Foundation of Mozambique. The Mali report (Thiam et al 1993) in two volumes, includes details of visits to around 40 Malian civil society institutions, several of them in the North, and a consultative conference which brought their representatives together to meet the US and Malian lawyers who were leading the study: Mohamed Thiam, Ellen Tipper, and USAID's chief advisor on democracy, John Rigby, together with leading actors in the Malian social economy including consultants Korotoumou Ouedraogo, Mary Allen Ballo, Soumana Doumbia, Idrissa Maiga and Mariam Touré. We quote a few salient passages from the Executive Summary and the Introduction.

*“This study examines the key factors in the establishment of foundations and endowments in Mali. In particular, the study focuses in on the Malian legal system and climate for supporting foundations and endowments, noting both the obstacles and the enabling factors .... The study's focus on the mechanisms of foundations and endowments grows out of a contemporaneous experience globally of the US Agency for International Development and other international donors (including private philanthropic institutions in the US and Europe). Over the past five years, donors have paid increasing to the following:*

*-- support of foundation-like organisations in developing countries as a means of (a) promoting local philanthropy and (b) providing greater national and local decision-making in the development process; and*

*-- support of endowment or long-term trust fund mechanisms as a means of sustaining non-governmental development activities beyond the limited time horizons of most external donors.*

*“There are many impressive, well-organized and effective village associations operating in Mali. Representatives of these groups express a great interest in establishing direct relationships with donors and are currently examining ways in which they can organize themselves to inspire confidence from international*

*and national donors to contribute to their activities. A community development foundation is one promising option currently worth considering in Mali for more self-reliant, participatory approaches to development at the village level.*

*“Endowment funds as a means of reliable support for non-governmental organizations are increasingly favored by donors.... Preparing an organization to be able to monitor and manage an endowment is a valuable exercise... include requirements of legality, legitimacy, transparency and effectiveness.... Mali’s local investment sector is substantially undeveloped, and does not encourage local endowment management. However endowments **for** Mali do not need necessarily to be managed **within** Mali for the time being. The trust department of a foreign bank can be retained to manage an endowment for a Malian institution..... endowment establishment should be viewed as a long-term strategy and could be more seriously considered as the legal and financial sectors in Mali become more developed.*

*“Examining the French system is critical in trying to apply or adopt the concept of foundations in Mali, which still relies heavily on the French system of law in its formulation of laws and legal practices, and whose non-profit sector resembles the French very closely. .... Until 1990, the French courts did not recognize foundations as having a status in law. Rather, foundations were given a legal personality on a case-by-case basis by decree .... for what the French call “public interest foundations”.<sup>1</sup> However, Loi No 90-559 du 4 juillet 1990, which was adopted by the National Assembly and the Senate, recognizes Enterprise Foundations as having legal status..... set up as a non-profit organization by one or more for-profit enterprises .... to engage in activities which are undertaken in the public interest. ....*

*“Most institutions in Mali would be better served at the current time with a trust form of endowment rather than a capital fund. With a trust, the donor chooses the trustee and the bank in which the fund is to be set up. This is an important factor, in light of Mali’s weak financial investment market and restricted access to international capital markets. “While current endowment opportunities in Mali are limited, the time is ripe for donors (including USAID)*

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<sup>1</sup> Which means “recognized” as being of benefit to the public, therefore eligible to receive support from the public purse. Mali’s former Head of State General Amadou Toumani Touré is President of such a foundation: *Fondation pour l’Enfance*; and the wife of the current Head of State, Madame Adame Ba Konaré is President of another: *Fondation Partage*.

*to encourage institutional development in Mali to the point where endowment funding is feasible.”*

In the context of decentralization, the Community Capital Fund seems particularly attractive. An association or a *commune rurale* would greatly benefit from ownership of a capital sum, delivering interest on an annual basis. A village association might generate a capital sum from community savings, which might then be matched by a donor or through a “twin city” arrangement, and the latter might organise banking (in section 3 below we elaborate further on the potential advantages of external banking).

Even if the bank deposit produced interest as little as \$5000 per annum, such a guaranteed annual sum would enrich negotiation in newly decentralized Mali. A *commune* wishing to build a bridge could approach a Ministry or a donor, offering (say) three years of interest as their financial contribution to the costs: and leverage matching funds. If they build a toll bridge, generating income from passage charges, the *commune*'s capital sum might guarantee a bank loan covering the entire cost of the bridge. We believe that the community capital fund can give a real economic content to decentralization, and help to restore confidence to the regions of northern Mali.

### 4.3 Alternative Mechanisms for Funding the Organs of the Social Economy: The RAFAD Model

Self-sustaining development institutions need independent sources of finance, if they are to develop autonomy and profitability. Without solid economic foundations, there is little chance that civil society will develop the strength it needs to fulfil the tasks of installing good governance and protecting the rule of law, tasks which we laid down for it in chapter 6. The social economy is the economic side of civil society: faced with a declining public economy and a stagnant private sector (at least until very recently), the social economy has provided most of Mali's economic dynamism and employment opportunities during the past few years. Denied the right of association until the revolution of 1991, and with the *de facto* incorporation of the cooperative movement into the public sector under Mali's First and Second Republics of Modibo Keita and Moussa Traore, the social economy was also held back for many years.

**We define the social economy** as the economic image of civil society: being composed of all economically active associative, mutualist and cooperative enterprises (including village associations, associations of livestock producers and fishermen, women's production groups, development NGOs, mutualist insurance, savings or credit groups, social enterprises (such as *groupements d'intérêts économiques* GIE), trades unions, professional associations concerned with economic matters (such as the artisans' federation, the association of women traders). In other countries than Mali, the Chamber of Commerce and the cooperatives should be key parts of the social economy: but in Mali these are still under the control of the administration (which explains their poor performance). The social economy does not include private companies, unless these are associative enterprises (not just partnerships) having both a social and an economic objective. Nor does it include the non-economic organisations which are important components of civil society: such as human rights associations, or professional associations for doctors, lawyers or journalists.

The social economy and the world of NGOs have tended to be dominated by social programmes at the expense of the economic: especially since the cooperatives were incorporated into the public economy. We are therefore concerned with mechanisms for getting civil society institutions away from dependence on small grants, and giving small-scale producers access to locally

available bank credit. With appropriate local currency amounts and reasonable credit terms, local groups will be able to mobilise savings, promote their own development and reduce their dependency on donors.

There are vast sums of money available in the commercial banks, and there are highly profitable opportunities at the grass roots which need funds. But banks live in buildings with square corners in the bigger towns: which discourages visits from rural women or even their husbands who live in houses which are not square, and in communities where life is based on flexible consensus. If they do contact a banker, villagers are inevitably bewildered by the piles of written papers and statistics, and the obscure language of finance.... while few farmers own anything which would meet a banker's requirement for "collateral". What is lacking is a mechanism for bridging the gap between the holders of money and small-scale but potentially profitable investments.

**How can we make the poor bankable by giving value to their experience and knowledge? How can we mobilise social capital in such a way that we can turn West African peasant farmers into reliable customers who are able meet the demands of commercial lenders?** These are persistent questions which arose through the work of the IRED network, and the result was RAFAD: "financial engineering at the service of the people's economy".<sup>1</sup>

RAFAD is an international Geneva-based Foundation whose work in Mali and in neighbouring countries (as well as in Asia and Latin America) offers solutions to the problems of credit-worthiness, economic organisation and profitability (Vincent 1995) The group's objectives are summarized as:

- to create mechanisms and financial tools adapted to the grass roots, people-oriented organisations;
- to accompany, train and inform entrepreneurs by strengthening their capacities and their efficiency through relevant training and support;
- to undertake research and disseminate the results, encouraging study of alternative financing systems and exchanges between regional and international agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> IRED: Innovations et Réseaux pour le Développement, BP 13457, Niamey, Niger. RAFAD: Research and Applications of Alternative Financing for Development, BP 117, Geneva.

RAFAD's main activity is the provision of loan guarantees to organisations in the social economy, allowing them to obtain credit from local banks which refuse loans without a recognised collateral. Applications to RAFAD are considered according to banking criteria: but in addition to financial balance sheets, RAFAD studies the past history of the organisation, its participatory structures and management transparency, its credit and savings experience and its previous history of collaboration with other organisations. Unlike the traditional urban commercial banker, RAFAD recognises as elements for determining credit-worthiness and risk such things as the value of social solidarity, prior success in generating savings and obtaining credit-reimbursements, transparent democratic decision-making, previous NGO collaboration, ongoing training, and supervision by recognised NGO partners. (RAFAD 1995).

Once a guarantee is approved and an agreement signed, RAFAD requests its bank to send a letter of guarantee or stand-by letter of credit to the grassroots organisation, which can then present this to their local bank. The producers are suddenly empowered in their negotiation with their bank (in Latin America, certain RAFAD partners have been able to negotiate loans up to six times greater than the face-value of the guarantee). Once they have repaid the loan to the bank (and thereby improved their credit rating), RAFAD is freed from obligation and can use its capital for further guarantees. The beauty of the system is that it mobilises funds which are available locally but for which no other profitable investment is available. The transactions remain local. RAFAD transfers no money, unless its partner organisation defaults on the loan (they budget for losses of 5% but actually keep losses below 3%). The value of the guarantee remains constant in Swiss francs or US dollars, which is especially valuable for countries which suffer from high inflation or political instability.

And this monetary stability makes the system doubly attractive in the context of the community capital funds which we discussed in our previous section. If the community fund (constituted in part by the savings of the local association, or from the profits of its members, or from the taxes collected by the *commune*) is held in foreign currency under a system such as RAFAD, it can be used in any one of a number of ways (and the local Treasurer cannot go off with the money!). This is a very flexible development tool.

The bank guarantee mechanism has allowed more than 80 of RAFAD's partners in 22 countries to mobilise more than \$10 millions of credit from local banks,

all of it in local currency. Guarantees vary from as little as \$10 000 to as much as \$100 000 or more. A parallel stimulus is achieved to local savings, which encourage organisations to negotiate further credits with other donor and banking funding sources. In Mali, a guarantee of \$50,000 allowed a women's mutual credit organisation to release its own savings for lending, which attracted further local bank credits for the members: increasing sixfold the value of the RAFAD guarantee. In Senegal and The Gambia, a much larger guarantee enabled farmer organisations to finance their own warehousing and export of crops, thereby obtaining better producer prices than was possible through existing monopolies.

RAFAD's Board is composed not only of bankers, but also of people who know the grass roots organisations and how they work. The demand for funding at the grass roots is increasing annually. In the Peace of Timbuktu case study we have met any number of potential customers: such as the wheat farmers and traders who need credit to serve the Bamako market, and a whole new generation of ex-combatants funded by the PAREM who will want funding to expand their rice perimetres, their market gardens and their leather exports. The RAFAD mechanism offers a way to link up profitable opportunities in the social and informal economies, with professional banking so that funds may be invested in real national and local development. This is an important mechanism for strengthening the economic foundations of Africa's civil society.

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#### 4.4 Building Human Capacity and Developing Professional Training Throughout the Economy: The Philanthra Model

While such financial mechanisms as capital and endowment funds, and bank guarantees have excellent potential for strengthening the economic foundations of civil society, they will not bear fruit in an educational desert! We need to build up capacities in the regions, so as to increase the potential for productive investment and capital accumulation. Mali has neglected not only the formal education sector (as we described in chapter 6), but also adult education. Facilities for continuing education are few: and despite the Third Republic's efforts to support the private sector and to expand professional training since 1992, continuing education opportunities remain almost non-existent outside the capital city. The donor "project dynamic" has produced many one-off training courses, but very few coherent training programmes. Most donor training activities take place in the cities.

Adult literacy in Mali remains below 25%. During the 1970s, the DNAFLA<sup>1</sup> was a pioneering organisation experimenting with adult literacy, but its energy went into research. It is true that literacy rates have been raised in many areas, especially in the Bambara language, but this has been thanks mainly to NGO programmes, and to the CMDT<sup>2</sup> in the cotton-growing regions. The officially expressed support for universal adult literacy was sabotaged in effect by the previous regimes' discouragement of associative life, the suppression of basic education in the mother tongue, the absence of newspapers and other reading materials. As a result literacy rates remain low, especially in the north and west of Mali, far from the capital city.

One of the original demands of the rebel movements in 1990, was for a university in the north. In response to parallel calls for an "alternative" university, for a "development university" or for an "open university", a group of field-workers and teachers came together in 1992 to propose the creation of an independent university Institute which would work alongside the soon-to-be-created University of Mali (which mimics the traditional sedentary European model). This Institute would be a "window of the world of work". Thus

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<sup>1</sup> *Direction nationale de l'alphabétisation fonctionnelle et de la linguistique appliquée*: the National Directorate for functional literacy and applied linguistics.

<sup>2</sup> *Compagnie malienne des textiles*, a mixed Malian State and private French company.

*Philanthra* was born in 1993, a private institute with NGO status which is determined to bring training to the farmers and artisans and technicians of rural Mali, using the training methodology of research-action or RAF: *recherche-action-formation*. Learning through action-based research in the professional workplace.

This methodology was originally developed in Africa in response to a declaration by UNESCO at its 19th session in Nairobi (26th November 1976) that: “Access to continuing education for adults is one fundamental aspect of the Right to education. ... Achieving such an objective implies the creation of opportunities which allow the adult to choose from among a variety ... where he will be able to help define the objectives and the content, and select those which respond best to his or her needs.” The International Cooperative University (UCI) came into being one year later in 1977 (Desroche 1984).

One of many groups across francophone Africa and Europe and Canada, *Philanthra* is part of the UCI network of Institutes and NGOs and research-action groups, bringing university-style teaching and the skills of analysis to development practitioners of all levels. For *Philanthra*, work experience is as valuable as theoretical study, and the two complete one another. Workers should be encouraged to carry out research in their fields of activity, and examine their condition in life. The UCI allows practitioners to benefit from higher level certification, and it thereby restores “universality” to the idea of “university”. Why should diplomas in West Africa be available only to young francophone students? The UCI is an anti-elitist network for working people who want to improve themselves and their performance; it is not for individual students with grants and no practical experience, but for groups of hands-on development practitioners including agro-pastoralists and artisans. There is a specific higher diploma *Diplôme des Hautes Etudes en Pratiques Sociales* (DHEPS) awarded by institutions in the UCI network across France and Canada and Africa and Latin America, emphasising the practical nature of the studies and the action-research on which it is based.

The research-action philosophy starts from the hypothesis that each person in the group carries skills, which all can share. There are no “ignorant students”, nor are there omniscient professors: everyone shares and discovers together. RAF is a participatory group activity. Working adults do not need to learn *everything* -- unlike children in primary school, they do not need a rigid, comprehensive curriculum of “things they must learn”. Adults need to study

only “what they need to know”. They may find it in books; or they may find it by visiting other workplaces, and analysing their own problems through comparative study and discussion with other professionals. In this way, the RAF research-learning process can involve intelligent, inquisitive people who do not even have a sophisticated mastery of reading and writing.

If we are seeking ways for developing and strengthening civil society, only this type of approach can counter the dominance of the colonial language, and the assumed superiority of the school diploma. There is a mistaken idea in Africa that “intellectual” means “literate”: whereas Africa’s ancient intellectual tradition is primarily oral. We have made it clear in our Chapter 6.2 on education that we are supporters of the “language of new horizons” which may be French or Arabic; but we are also convinced of the profound educational value of each person’s cultural heritage expressed in their mother tongue, their “language of awakening”. The research-action-training dynamic (RAF) is the only one we have found which can develop the capacities and the confidence of civil society in places such as northern Mali. To do so, it must use the best available combination of languages, awakening, and new horizons.

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## Annex 6: Index of Special Terms, Abbreviations and Institutions

### Special Terms

Item	Definition	Chapter
ag	“son of” in Tamacheq; Ibrahim ag Youssouf is the son of Youssouf	1.4
ahnammu	“belonging to the house of the same mother” (derived from <i>ehan n ma</i> meaning “mother’s house”) as meaning “competition, rivalry”. In Touareg matrilineal society, inheritance is through the mother and therefore her sons are in competition	1.4
alamadiou	Dogon environmental community police	2.1
amenokal	Touareg Chief	2.3
ardo	Fulani Chief before and under the Dina	2.1
arma	descendants of Moroccan invaders in 16th century	1.1, 3.5
askia	king in Songhoy language	1.1
azawa	Tamacheq word for an eating bowl, and also for the geographical depression north of Timbuktu	2.1
bââ-din	children of the same mother in Bambara	1.4
baba izé	children of the same father in Songhoy	1.4
ba	river, mother, goat, or big, in Bambara	1.4
balimaya	loyalty, especially between bââ-din, trust, brotherhood, social cohesion	1.4
bamanankan	farmers’ language or “Bambara”	1.1, 6.2
bay’ah	classical Arabic voting system	1.4
Bella	Touareg serfs or former captive slaves	2.3, 3.5

Bobo	Malinké people on the Mali-Burkina border, a by-word for hard work and honesty	6.3
bourgou	thick-stemmed floating grass in the Niger prized for dry-season grazing	1.2
bourgoutière	field of bourgou	1.1
Bozo	fishermen's group, language	1.1, 3.5
Cercle	colonial administrative unit	4.3
Chef de Canton	local chief appointed to be the colonial tax collector	2.1
civil society	defined	4.4
désenclavement	reducing remoteness through communications	2.1, 6.6
Dina	19th century theocratic state of Macina, founded by Sekou Amadou Bary, whose capital was at Hamdallaye, near Mopti	1.1
djeli, djoli	blood, griot (Bambara-Manding languages)	1.1
djerma, zarma	Songhoy language spoken in Niger	1.4
Djingerai Ber	the Great Friday Mosque of Timbuktu	6.3
djoli ba	Niger River in Bambara, the Great Life-giving Artery, where the word ba means both Big and Mother, and djoli is "blood"	1.1
Dogon	Malinké people on the Bandiagara plateau near Mali's eastern border with Burkina, famed for hard work and careful farming	1.1, 6.3
dugu	village in the Manding languages	1.1
dugu tigi	village chief	1.1, 5.1
faa-din	children of the same father in Bambara	1.4
fadenya	rivalry, especially between faa-din	1.4

Fulani	nomadic Nilotic cattle-herders who crossed the Sahara when it was grassland 2500 years ago and settled from Senegal to Cameroon...and perhaps to Somalia	1.1, 2.4, 3.5, 6.3
Fulfuldé	language of the Fulani or Peul	1.1, 4.5, 6.2
Gabero	Songhoy-speaking semi-sedentary Fulani	1.1
Ganda Koy	Masters of the earth, in Songhoy, name of political movement MPGK created 1992-94	3.5, 4.1, 4.6
gourma	south, south bank of the Niger	1.1, 4.5
griot	praise singer, historian (word of Arab origin)	1.1, 6.3
haoussa	north, north bank of the Niger	1.1
hogon	eldest man in a Dogon village, who transmits to the elders the wishes of the Ancestors	1.4
holloy	Songhoy religious cult, including possession and treatment of the possessed: venerates creative spirits (ancestors) and especially Haraké, Mistress of the Waters and Patron of the Sorkho fishermen (she may also be the mother in our story of Tawsa in Chapter 1.1)	6.3
i	you (singular) used in Manding greetings: thus “i Tall”, “i Keita” or “i nin barra” (meaning “I salute your work”)	1.4
imghad	free Touareg vassals	2.3
imouhar or imajeghan	Touareg nobles	2.3
inaden	Touareg blacksmiths	2.3
ineslemen	Touareg religious clans	2.3
issa ber	the Great River (Niger) in Songhoy	1.1

ishumar	unemployed ex-migrants (Tamacheq from the French word chomeur)	2.3, 3.1, 6.5
Journées de Concertation	Notably after the 1991 National Conference, a series of sectoral meetings were organised in order to broaden consultation and deepen debate. These were known as “Concertation Days” on such-and-such a theme...	3.2, 4.4, 7.5
kel	Tamacheq word for clan	1.1
koy	Songhoy official	1.1
kuma	speech, the Word, the magic of griots’ power, in Manding languages	4.4
laafiya, laafya	peace, happiness in Manding languages, also the name proposed for a Peul defence group	3.5
madersa	official Arabic Islamic college	6.2
Manding	the space occupied by the Malinké diaspora between the desert and the ocean, and the many related languages spoken there	1.1
mansa	king in the Manding languages	1.1
marabout	purveyor of Islam and Islamic amulets	3.5
méhariste	military desert units on camels	6.5
namakalan	blacksmiths (priests and magicians), the initiated and initiators (in bamanankan)	2.3
nomenklatura	politico-economic élite (Russian)	3.1, 3.3
nya izé	children of the same mother in Songhoy	1.4
ogokana	Dogon environmental community police	2.1
Pacte National	treaty signed 11.2.92 between Mali and the rebel movements	3.3, Annex 2.1
Peul, Pular, Fulfuldé	language of the Fulani, or Peul (“p” changes to “f” in the plural)	1.1, 4.5, 6.2
pogrom	organized massacre (Russian word)	5.2

pooh-bah	character in Anglo-Japanese operetta	5.7
social capital	defined	1.4
social economy	defined	Annex 4.3
Somono	fishing group on the upper Niger (eg Segou)	1.1
Songhoy, sonrai	people and language and empire on the Bend of the Niger, called djerma or zarma in Niger	1.1, 6.2
Sorkho	fishing group often founders of Songhoy villages	4.2
Tall	patronymic of the clan from Senegal which created the Tijania in Mali	1.4
Tamacheq	language of the Touareg	1.1, 6.2
Targui	singular of Touareg or Tuareg	1.1
tigi	chief in Bambara bamanankan language	1.1
Tijania	19th century theocracy established by El Haj Oumar Tall, who wanted to spread the Tijani version of Sunnite Islam	1.1
tirailleurs sénégalais	French army regiment of West Africans which included many Malians	3.1
tonjon	professional soldiers of the Bambara kingdoms, famed for their pillage	1.1
toubab	West African word for “white man” or now “someone having a foreign urban life-style”, possibly from the French “toubib” = doctor	2.4
tranche	slice (French, as in slices of funding or cake)	4.8
tumast	Libyan ideology of equality (Arabic)	3.1
waaldé	age-group association in Fulfuldé	6.3
zaqat	alms, or philanthropy in Arabic, one of the five Pillars of Islam	5.6

zarma	alternative transcription of djerma, the songhoy of Niger	1.4
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### Abbreviations and Institutions

Item	Definition	Chapter
ACF	Action Contre la Faim, Paris	5.1
ACOPAM	Association coopérative/ programme alimentaire mondial: ILO programme funded by Norway (mutating 1997-98 into AFAR)	5.1, 5.7, 6.6
ACORD	Association for Cooperation and Research for Development, London: NGO consortium	2.4, 5.1, 5.7, 4.5, 6.6, 6.4
ADB	African Development Bank, Abidjan	5.1, Annex 3
Adema	Alliance pour la Démocratie au Mali, association which left clandestinity in 1990, later winning the elections of 1992 as a political party	3.3
AEN	Aide des Eglises Norvégiennes, Oslo and Gossi (Norwegian Church Aid)	5.1, 4.2, 5.7, 4.5, 6.3, 6.6
AETA	Association d'étude des technologies appropriées NGO, Bamako	5.1
AFAR	Ass'n de formation et animation rurales, Malian successor NGO to ILO's ACOPAM programme	5.1
AFC	Association des femmes commerçantes, women traders' association, Bamako	4.4, Annex 4.3
AFJ	Association des femmes juristes, women's lawyer association, Bamako	4.4
Africare	African-American NGO, Washington, Bamako and Timbuktu Region	6.6

AFVP	Association française des volontaires du progrès, volunteer organisation, Paris	5.1, 5.7, 6.6
AGEMPEM	Association des missions protestantes au Mali, Protestant church	4.4
AGRONORD	Malian NGO working in Gossi, Rharous, Diré	3.3
AMADE	Association malienne pour le développement NGO, Bamako and Goundam	5.1
AMI	Aide Médicale Internationale, Paris	5.1
AMRAD	Association malienne de recherche-action pour le développement NGO Bamako and Niafunké	5.1
AMUPI	Association malienne des associations islamiques	4.4
ANAD	Accord de non-aggression et d'assistance en matière de défense, Treaty organization, Abidjan	Annex 2.2
AOK	Alpha Oumar Konaré elected President in 1992, re-elected 1997 for a second 5-year term	1.3, 3.3, 3.4, 4.4, 4.7, 5.3, 7.6
APIF	Association pour la promotion et l'information des femmes, women's association, Gao	4.5
ARLA	Armée révolutionnaire de libération de l'Azawad	2.3, 3.5, 4.4, 4.6, Annex 2.4
ATLAS	ONG française	5.1
ATT	Amadou Toumani Touré, President of CTSP and Head of State 1991-92	3.2, 3.7, 5.3, Annex 2.1-4.2
BAD	Banque africaine de développement (ADB)	5.1, Annex 3
BADEA	Banque arabe pour le développement économique en Afrique	Annex 3

BDIA	Malian political party created after a split within the USRDA	7.8
BID	Banque islamique de développement	5.1, Annex 3
BOAD	Banque ouest-africain de développement, Lomé	5.1, Annex 3
CAFO	Coordination des associations et organisations féminines, Bamako	4.4
CAPSDH	Comission africaine des promoteurs de la santé et des droits de l'homme, international African NGO Conakry and Geneva	5.1, 6.6, Annex 4.1
Care	International and US NGO, Atlanta and Bamako	5.5, 6.4, 6.6
CCA-ONG	Comité de Coordination des Actions des ONG: NGO coordinating group, BP1721, Bamako, Mali Fax: (223) 22 23 59	5.1, 5.5
CCCE	Caisse de coopération économique now CFD	2.3
CCF	Commission de suivi du Cessez-le-Feu, Ceasefire Commission	3.3, Annex 2.1
CECI	Centre Canadien d'Etude et de Coopération Internationale, Montréal	5.1
CEDEAO	Communauté économique des états de l'Afrique de l'ouest, created in 1975 with 16 member states and 195 million inhabitants (ECOWAS)	4.7
CENI	Commission electorale nationale indépendante	5.1
CESPA	Film-making Centre started by FAO and UNDP, Bamako	7.8
CFA	communauté financière africaine: issuing the cfa franc since 1945; devalued by 50% on 12.1.94	Annex 3

CFD	Caisse française de développement (the financial investment arm of French cooperation)	2.3
CICM	Comité International Catholique pour la Migration, French NGO in Mauritania	5.2
CICR	Comité international de la croix rouge (ICRC)	4.2, 5.1, 5.5
CMDT	Compagnie malienne des textiles	Annex 4.4
CMLN	Comité militaire de libération nationale, Junta 1968-79	1.3
CNID	Comité national d'initiative démocratique, first non-clandestine Malian association to demand democracy in 1990, now in political opposition	7.8
CNLPAL	Commission nationale de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères: National Commission on Light Weapons	4.6, 5.3, 7.7
CNN	Cable News Network, Atlanta, USA	7.8, 7.9
COFEM	Coopérative féminine, Bamako	5.1
CPL	Comité pour Léré, Lyon	4.4
CTA	Collèges transitoires d'arrondissement	4.2, 4.4, 6.6
CTSP	Comité de Transition pour le Salut du Peuple, 1991-92	3.2, 3.3, 4.1, Annex 2.1
DNAFLA	Direction nationale de l'alphabétisation fonctionnelle et de la linguistique appliquée: Literacy department, Bamako	6.2, Annex 4.4
DWHH	Deutsche Welthungerhilfe: German freedom from hunger NGO, Bonn	5.1
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa, UN	2.4

ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office, EU, Brussels	5.1
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Military Observer Group: the West African peacekeeping force in Liberia	4.1
ECOWAS	Economic community of West African states (CEDEAO)	4.7
EEC	European Economic Community, now EU	2.2
Equilibre	French NGO in Lyon	5.1
ERNWACA	Education research network for West Africa and Central Africa (ROCARE), international NGO	6.2
EU	European Union (since 1996)	2.2, 5.1, 7.3
FAC	France's fonds d'aide et de coopération	Annex 3
FAD	Fonds Africain de développement of ADB-BAD	Annex 3
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation	2.3, 5.1, 5.7, 6.2, 7.3
FAR-Nord	Fonds d'aide pour la réconciliation et la consolidation de la paix dans le Nord du Mali	4.5
FED	EU's development fund: fonds européen de développement	Annex 3
FENU	Fonds d'Equipement des NU (UNCDF)	5.1, 5.7
FF	franc français	5.6
FIDA	Fonds international pour le développement agricole (IFAD)	5.1, 3.2, 4.2, 5.7
FIAA	Front Islamique Arabe de l'Azawad	3.1, 3.5, 4.5, 4.6, Annex 2.4
FIS	Front islamique du salut (Algerian party)	3.1

FKDEA	Fonds koweïtien de développement économique en Afrique: Kuwait	Annex 3
FNAM	Fédération nationale des artisans du Mali-craft association	4.4, Annex 4.3
Fondation du nord	Development foundation created by Ibrahim ag Youssouf and other members of civil society in northern Mali	5.1, Annex 4.2
Fondation pour l'Enfance	Children's foundation created by Mali's former Head of State General ATT	Annex 4.2
Fondation Partage	Charitable foundation created by the wife of the current Head of State, Madame Konaré	Annex 4.2
FPLA	Front populaire pour la libération de l'Azawad	2.3, 3.4, 4.5, 4.6, Annex 2.4
Frères des Hommes	French NGO in Goundam and Paris	5.7
FSAOD	Fonds saoudien de développement: Saudi Arabia	Annex 3
GARI	Groupe des artisans d'Interdeni, NGO in Menaka	5.1, 4.4
GARD	Groupe d'action dans la recherche et le développement, NGO, Paris	5.1
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, UN Geneva	7.8
GDP	Gross domestic product	2.2
GIE	groupe d'intérêt économique	4.4, Annex 4
GRM	Government of the Republic of Mali	3.1, Annex 2.1
GTZ	German bilateral Gesellschaft fur technische Zusammenarbeit	5.1
Gua Mina	Malian NGO, Bamako, Léré and Douentza	5.1
IARA	Islamic Agency for Relief in Africa, Khartoum	5.1

IBK	Ibrahim B. Keita, Prime Minister 1994-98	3.4, 4.4
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva (CICR)	4.2, 4.8, 5.1, 5.5
IDB	Islamic development bank (BID)	5.1, Annex 3
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development, Rome (FIDA)	3.2, 4.2, 5.1, 5.7
Ile de Paix	Belgian NGO in Timbuktu	5.7
ILO	International Labour Office, UN Geneva (BIT)	4.8, 5.1, 5.7, 7.8
IMF	International Monetary Fund of the United Nations, Washington DC	3.3, 4.6, 5.7
IMRAD	Institut malien de recherche appliquée au développement, éditeur de Cauris hebdo	6.1
Inter Pares	Canadian humanist NGO, Ottawa	5.1
IOM	International Organization for Migrations, Geneva (OIM)	5.7
IRAM	Institut de recherche et d'applications de méthodes de développement, 49 rue de la Glacière, Paris 13, French NGO	5.1, 3.3
IRED	Innovations et Réseaux pour le développement, BP 13457, Niamey, Niger, international NGO	Annex 4.3
ISFRA	Institut supérieur de formation et de recherches appliquées, Université du Mali, Bamako	Annex 4.4
ITU	International Telecommunication Union, Geneva	7.8
Jamana	publisher of Mali's first independent newspaper, Bamako	7.8
KFW	German development bank Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau	Annex 3

MdM	Médecins du Monde NGO, Paris	7.9
Misereor	German Catholic NGO	5.1, 5.7
MFAAC	Ministère des Forces Armées et des Anciens Combattants, Bamako (Defence Ministry)	4.6
MFUA	Mouvements et Fronts unifiés de l'Azawad	3.2, 3.5, 4.2, 4.6, Annex 2.4
MNFSPUN	Mouvement National des Femmes pour la Sauvegarde de la Paix et de l'Unité Nationale, Bamako and Gao, women's peace movement	1.4, 4.4, 6.3
MPA	Mouvement Populaire de l'Azawad, women's peace movement	1.3, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5, 4.6, Annex 2.4
MPGK	Mouvement Patriotique Ganda Koy	3.5, 4.1, 4.6, 4.8, Annex 2.4
MPLA	Mouvement Populaire de Libération de l'Azawad	3.1
MPR	Mouvement patriotique pour le renouveau, political party descended from Moussa's UDPM	3.7
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières NGO, Paris	7.9
NEF	Near East Foundation, New York and Douentza	6.7
NEF	Nouvelle école fondamentale malienne	6.2, 4.1
NCO	non-commissioned officer (military)	3.5, 4.1
NGO	non-governmental organization (ONG)	5.1, 5.5, 4.4, 6.6, 7.3, 7.10
NICOS	Belgian humanist NGO, Brussels	5.1
NOVIB	Dutch humanist NGO, The Hague	5.1, 6.6
OAU	Organization of African Unity, Adis Abeba	4.4, 5.3, 7.7 Annex 2.2

OCRS	Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes, proposed in 1957 but never created	1.3, 2.1
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris	6.6
OIM	Organisation internationale pour les migrations, Geneva (IOM)	5.7
OMAES	Oeuvre malienne d'Aide à l'Enfance du Sahel, Bamako, Goundam, Niafunké, Malian NGO	5.1
OMS	Organisation mondiale de la santé (WHO)	5.1
ONG	organisation non-gouvernementale (NGO)	5.1, 5.5, 4.4, 6.6, 7.3, 7.10
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries	Annex 3
ORSTOM	Organisation de recherches scientifiques d'outre-mer, French research institute	2.2
ORTM	Office de la radio et de la télévision du Mali	7.8
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Vienna	Annex 2.2
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for famine relief, NGO in Oxford and Bamako	4.5, 5.1, 6.6
PAM	Programme alimentaire mondial (WFP)	5.1, Annex 3
PANA	Pan-African News Agency	7.8
PANOS	International journalism NGO, London and Paris	7.8
PAREM	Programme d'Appui à la Réinsertion socio-économique des Ex-combattants du nord Mali	2.3, 3.7, 4.8, 4.6, 5.6, 7.1
Parena	Parti pour la renaissance nationale, Malian political party founded 1995	7.8

Philanthra	Malian university institute for research-action RAF	6.2, Annex 4.4
PMU	Pari mutuel urbain, horse-racing betting syndicate	2.1
PNR	Programme de normalisation et de réhabilitation au Nord (UNDP Trust Fund)	5.6
PNUD	Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (UNDP)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Polisario	Organisation for the liberation of the Saharaoui Republic (former Spanish Sahara)	4.2
PRMC	Programme de Restructuration du Marché Céréaliier, a Mali donor cooperation success story	2.2
PRODEC	Projet décennal d'éducation, Mali	6.2
PSARK	Programme de sécurité alimentaire et des revenus dans la zone de Kidal (IFAD-FIDA)	2.2, 3.2, 5.1, 4.6, Annex 3
RAF	recherche-action-formation, a participative training methodology for adults in the workplace	Annex 4.4
RAFAD	Fondation RAFAD: Research and applications of alternative financing for development, 1 rue Varembe, BP 117, CH-1211 Geneva 20	Annex 4.3
RDA	Rassemblement démocratique africain, party of African independence. In Mali: US-RDA	1.3
RFI	Radio France Internationale, Paris	3.2, 4.2
ROCARE	Réseau ouest et centre africain pour la recherche en éducation (ERNWACA), NGO coordinated from BP 1775, Bamako, Fax: (223) 23.21.15	6.2, Annex 4.4

SC	Save the children federation (US NGO), Kolondiéba, Bougouni	6.2, 6.6, Annex 3
SCF	Save the children fund (UK NGO), Douentza	6.6
Secama	Secours catholique malien NGO, Bamako and Gao	5.1
SNV	Dutch volunteer programme, The Hague	5.1, 6.6
Swiss Cooperation	bilateral aid programme, Bern and Bamako	3.5, 5.5, 5.6
Tassaght	Malian NGO in Gao	4.5
Terre des Hommes	French NGO in Timbuktu and Paris	5.7
UCI	International Cooperative University (Université coopérative internationale), an NGO “open university” research-action network	Annex 4.4
UDPM	Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien, the One-Party founded in 1979 by Moussa Traore	1.3, 3.1
UN	United Nations, founded in 1945	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
UNCDA	UN Centre for Disarmament Affairs, New York	4.7, 5.4, 7.4, Annex 2.2
UNCDF	UN Capital Development Fund, New York (FENU)	5.1, 5.7
UNCHR	UN Centre for Human Rights (Geneva)	7.4
UNDP	UN Development Programme, (PNUD) New York and Bamako	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
UN/DPA	UN Department for Political Affairs, New York	5.5, 7.4
UNEP	UN Environment Programme, Nairobi	1.2
UNESCO	UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Paris	5.7, 6.2, 6.3, 7.2, 7.4, 7.8, Annex 4

UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees, Geneva	3.7, 5.1, 5.2, 5.5, 5.7, 7.2, 7.3, 7.9
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund, New York	5.1, 5.5, 7.3, 7.4, 7.8, 7.9
UNIDIR	UN Institute for Disarmament Research, Geneva	5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 7.2, 7.4, Annex 2.2
UNIDO	UN Industrial Development Organization, Vienna	5.7
UNOPS	UN Office for Project Services, New York	5.7
UNSO	UN Sahelian Office, New York	2.2, 5.1
USAID	US Agency for International Development	5.1, 5.5, 6.1, 6.6, Annex 3, Annex 4.2
USRDA	Union soudanaise - rassemblement démocratique africain, Malian branch of RDA. Modibo Keita became party leader after Mamadou Konaté's death	1.3, 7.8
UNV	UN Volunteers, Bonn and Geneva	5.7
VIP	Very important person (like Presidents and Generals)	5.3
World Bank	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development of the UN, Washington	5.7, 7.8, Annex 3
WCC	World Council of Churches, Geneva	5.1, 5.7
WFP	World Food Programme, Rome	5.1, 7.3, Annex 3
WHO	World Health Organization, Geneva	5.1
WMO	World Meteorological Organization, Geneva	5.1
WVI	World Vision International, Monrovia, California	5.1, 5.5, 4.5, 6.6

