III. The Mali peace process and the 2015 peace agreement

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Mali faces a number of challenges in its ongoing peace process to address the political and security crisis that began in 2012. These include the political armed conflict in the northern regions of the country, poor governance, violent extremism and transnational organized crime perpetrated by extremist Islamist groups such as Ansar Dine, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (Mouvement pour l'Unicité et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (MUJAO) (see section II). Three key steps in the peace process have been: (*a*) the installation in April 2012 of an interim government that ensured the country's leadership until August 2013; (*b*) the conclusion on 18 June 2013 of a preliminary peace agreement that enabled the holding of free and transparent elections leading to a new legitimate government; and (*c*) the negotiation of a comprehensive peace agreement that was officially endorsed by the parties to the political conflict on 15 May and 20 June 2015. This section examines how and to what extent these steps have contributed to addressing the root causes of the conflict and some of the other challenges hindering peace and security in Mali.

The 2013 preliminary peace agreement

On the 18 June 2013 the transitional government concluded a preliminary peace agreement with the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad, MNLA) and the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (Haut Conseil pour l'Unité de l'Azawad, HCUA). This was in order to achieve a ceasefire and a certain level of security necessary for the organization and holding of free and credible presidential elections. Malian citizens across the country, including the three northern regions at the centre of the conflict, were able to register for and take part in the elections in July and August. According to an October 2013 report by the United Nations Secretary-General on the situation in Mali, the voting process was unhindered and free of election-related violence in all regions, with the exception of the Kidal region.[1] Attempts to enable the participation of Malian citizens in refugee camps in neighbouring countries had little success and a very low rate of participation.

In addition to the temporary ceasefire, deliberate efforts to ensure a smooth electoral process and the re-establishment of legitimate authority were made by other key internal actors, such as political parties and civil

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[1] United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali, S/2013/582, 1 Oct. 2013, para. 17.

society organizations, by engaging in inclusive dialogue and conducting civic education campaigns.[2] Democratic competition was maintained with more than two dozen presidential candidates, in spite of the need for peace and security. One analysis of the presidential elections suggests that most of the candidates who did not make it to the second round called on their supporters to vote for Ibrahim Boubacar Keita—both for personal interests and because they believed a victory for President Keita presented the best option for the country.[3] The involvement of the various political groupings was of crucial importance given the widely shared perception (in relation to previous peace processes) of rewarding belligerent groups and neglecting peaceful voices.

Although both presidential and parliamentary elections took place without violence in most of the country, state authority remained absent in the region of Kidal, which has remained under the control of the rebel groups since the start of the rebellion in 2012.[4] The 2013 French intervention that drove away the extremist groups from the northern regions of Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu created an opportunity for the MNLA and the HCUA to re-establish their control over Kidal and make it their stronghold throughout the peace process.[5] State authority also remained fragile in Gao and Timbuktu, but it was only in Kidal that rebel groups barred access to government forces and representatives until the signing of the peace agreement in June 2015. For example, in May 2014 the Malian armed forces and the rebel groups clashed over an attempted visit to Kidal by the Prime Minister, Moussa Mara. The violence that ensued left 36 people dead and more than 3000 displaced.[6]

The preliminary peace agreement also contributed to the identification of the key issues and the various relevant stakeholders in the political conflict. Thus, although the agreement was only signed by two rebel groups, the MNLA and the HCUA, Article 24 of the agreement formally recognized the existence of other movements and called for their adherence to the terms of the agreement. This identification and recognition—aspects that underlie the foundation of an effective peacebuilding process—were further reinforced through the negotiation of the comprehensive peace agreement con-

[2] National Forum for Civil Society in Mali (FOSC), 'Démarrage du Cadre d'Interpellation des candidats à la présidentielle 2013' [Discussion campaigns with aspiring candidates to the 2013 presidential elections], [n.d.].

[3] Bah, B. and Boås, M., 'The Mali presidential elections: outcomes and challenges', Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, 14 Oct. 2013.

[4] Koepf, T., 'Stuck in the desert: negotiations on northern Mali', European Union Institute for Security Studies, Alert no. 42, 13 Dec. 2013.

[5] Tardy, T., 'Mali: restaurer la paix dans un pays en guerre' [Mali: restoring peace in a country at war], European Union Institute for Security Studies, Alert no. 8, 6 Feb. 2015.

[6] UNICEF Mali, 'Unrest in Kidal', Situation Report no. 1, 22 May 2014.

cluded in March 2015 and formally endorsed by the parties to the political conflict on 15 May and 20 June 2015.

The 2015 Algiers peace agreement

Mali's 2015 peace agreement built on the achievements of the 2013 preliminary peace agreement, notably the commitment by two of the Azawad movements—the MNLA and the HCUA—to pursue a political settlement of their self-determination claim within a unitary state respecting the territorial integrity of Mali. The negotiation process was decisively set in motion by the ceasefire agreement on 23 May 2014 between the Malian Government and three Azawad movements—the MNLA, the HCUA and the Arab Movement of Azawad (Mouvement Arabe de l'Azawad, MAA)—following clashes on 17–18 May 2014 in relation to the prime minister's attempted visit to Kidal (see above).[7] This agreement broke the status quo that had developed between the elected government and the rebel groups, and prompted a resumption of the political process for a negotiated resolution of the conflict. Although the ceasefire was negotiated by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Mali together with the chair of the African Union (AU), which was at that time assumed by President Abdel Aziz of Mauritania, the Algerian Government was instrumental in reaching a common platform between the three Azawad movements and their recommitment to negotiations.[8] This step initiated the formation of the coalitions that were party to the peace agreement.

The negotiations, which were to start on 1 September in Algiers, were tasked with a broader and more comprehensive mandate for addressing the conflict in Mali—beyond the narrower self-determination issue. Accordingly, the 24 July 2014 Consensual Roadmap for the Algiers negotiations also included other actors, such as the self-defence groups. These groups espoused the poor governance and socio-economic marginalization grievances shared by most of the population in the northern regions, but opposed the separatist aims of the Azawad movements. Therefore, in a quest to include all the relevant stakeholders, two main coalitions of non-state armed groups were identified as parties to the Algiers negotiations, in opposition to the Malian Government. The Azawad movements engaged in the negotiations as the Coordination of Azawad Movements (Coordination des Movements de l'Azawad, CMA), and the self-defence groups and movements as 'the Platform'.

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[7] United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Mali, S/2014/403, 9 June 2014.

[8] United Nations, Security Council, Briefing to the Security Council by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations in Mali, SC/11443, 18 June 2014.

Table 5.1. The two coalitions of non-state armed groups in Mali's 2015 peace agreement

Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA)	Platform
National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA)	Coordination of Patriotic Movements and Fronts for the Resistance–I (CMFPR–I)
High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA)	Tuareg Imghad and Allies Self-defence Group (GATIA)
Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA)	Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA)–splinter
Coalition of Azawad People (CPA)–I	Coalition of Azawad People (CPA)–splinter
Coordination of Patriotic Movements and Fronts for the Resistance–II (CMFPR–II)	

Source: United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali, S/2015/426, 11 June 2015.

The building of these two coalitions was a significant achievement by the mediation team, which was headed by Algeria and included the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Mali and head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), representatives of the AU, the European Union (EU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OCI), as well as representatives of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Niger, and Nigeria. In addition to increasing the inclusiveness of the negotiations, the formation of the two coalitions reduced the fragmentation among the non-state actors and helped to frame issues into clear and negotiable political claims.

By the time of the conclusion of the 2015 peace agreement, the CMA was comprised of the MNLA, the HCUA, the MAA, a faction of the Coalition of Azawad People (Coalition du Peuple de l'Azawad, CPA) and a splinter group of the Coordination of Patriotic Movements and Fronts for the Resistance (Coordination des Mouvements et Fronts Patriotiques de Résistance, CMFPR–II). The Platform was comprised of the Coordination of Patriotic Movements and Fronts for the Resistance (Coordination des Mouvements et Fronts Patriotiques de Résistance, CMFPR–I), the Tuareg Imghad and Allies Self-defence Group (Groupe d'Autodéfense Tuareg Imghad et Alliés, GATIA) and splinter groups of the CPA and the MAA.[9] The two coalitions are shown in table 5.1.

Additional efforts to broaden the negotiation process were made by involving civil society consultations on each side of the three respective parties to the negotiations: the Malian Government, the CMA and the Platform. Some

[9] Malian Government, *Feuille de Route des Négociations d'Alger* [Roadmap for the Algiers negotiations], July 2014. See also, United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Mali, S/2015/426, 11 June 2015.

popular consultations were also undertaken by the government prior to the launch of the negotiations, with the objectives of debating issues related to: (*a*) national reconciliation, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence; (*b*) local governance and decentralization; and (*c*) the issue of an accelerated development programme for the northern regions.[10] Although these consultations provided some legitimacy to the negotiation process, the brief nature of the meetings raised questions as to whether they allowed for a proper debate of the issues. At best, they emphasized the need for a broad and structured framework for popular consultations that could be implemented as part of the peace process. Within the new government structure, the Ministry of National Reconciliation offers the potential for the realization of such a framework, in collaboration with civil society.

However, despite the inclusiveness that characterized the Algiers negotiations and the involvement of a broad range of non-state actors, some domestic groups were still excluded. One such group was Ansar Dine, which is both locally and internationally considered to be a violent religious extremist group. AQIM and MUJAO were also excluded from the negotiations despite having a presence in Mali, but these two groups are transnational and thus not entirely circumscribable to Malian internal dynamics. The context of excluding violent religious extremist groups raises serious theoretical and practical questions about the inclusiveness principle and the implications for building sustainable peace in Mali. The prevailing complexity of the conflict appears to have led to a two-pronged approach, with differing means to address the internal political and human security challenges, on the one hand, and the violent extremism and other transnational criminal challenges that threaten Malian, regional and international peace and security, on the other hand. More specifically, and with regard to violent extremism, whether locally based or transnational, articles 29 and 30 of the 2015 peace agreement stipulate measures for combatting terrorism and related organized crime and drug trafficking. These measures include the setting up of special units and the development of regional mechanisms and strategies.

Some neighbouring states, such as Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger, are directly affected by the same transnational conflict dynamics and have therefore committed additional resources in support of the Malian peace process. A special regional cooperation mechanism, the G5 Sahel (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger), was initiated on 16 February 2014 to coordinate efforts in tackling security and development challenges that underlie the conflict dynamics prevailing in the Sahel. The G5 Sahel is endowed with a permanent secretariat based in Mauritania,

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[10] Malian Government, Ministry of National Reconciliation and the Development of Northern Regions of Mali, *Les Assises Nationales sur le Nord* [National Conference on the North], Bamako, 1–3 Nov. 2013.

with the responsibility for elaborating a priority investment programme and a portfolio of development projects. These are meant to give high priority to security and the consolidation of democracy, including participatory processes in the development of less-developed areas within the respective countries.[11] Hence, the G5 Sahel objectives intersect very closely with those of Mali's 2015 peace agreement, and offer a much-needed constructive and systemic approach to addressing the root causes of conflicts both in Mali and in the Sahel region as a whole.

Addressing the root causes of conflict

The May and June 2015 peace agreement offers opportunities to address pervasive governance and socio-economic inequities that have been hampering the political development of the Malian state since its independence in 1960. In particular, it stipulates the following objectives:

(a) To address the root causes of conflicts and promote a national reconciliation premised on a national unity respectful of the human diversity of the Malian nation; (b) To undertake an accelerated economic development strategy for northern Mali; (c) To establish a governance system that takes into account the geo-political and socio-cultural dimensions of the northern regions; (d) To restore security and translate into reality the rules of good governance, including transparency in the management of public affairs, respect for human rights, justice and fight against impunity; and (e) To combat terrorism and transnational organised crime.[12]

Self-determination and other governance-related aspects

On the crucial issue of self-determination, the 2015 peace agreement provides for a deeper decentralization of local governance through directly elected local representatives endowed with decision-making powers within the economic and social development of their respective regions, the management of collective goods and taxation, and the development of partnerships with other regions.[13]

Decentralization was a prominent goal in earlier Malian peace processes, especially the National Pact signed in April 1992. However, insufficient financial and human resources appear to have prevented adequate implementation. For example, a 2015 World Bank report on Mali indicates that 'capacity especially outside Bamako and the few urban centers is very weak, and decentralized entities as well as deconcentrated services, which in theory should support the communes, have little financial and technical means to

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[11] G5 Permanent Secretariat, 'Le G5 Sahel' [The G5 Sahel], [n.d.].

[12] Malian Government, *Accord pour la Paix et la Réconciliation au Mali issu du processus d'Alger* [Accord for Peace and Reconciliation emanating from the Algiers process], May and June 2015.

[13] Malian Government (note 12), Article 8.

operate'.[14] Moreover, while the actual level of decentralized powers would theoretically enable a reasonable degree of self-determination, including collecting local taxes, the same report finds that 'communes receive very little public resources and are not able to collect much partly because of "incivisme" [civil disobedience], as the population perceive municipalities as corrupt, although there are strong local variations'.[15] Both past experiences and the prevailing context suggest the need for civil society to be strongly involved, not least for citizenship education but also to enhance technical skills and promote more collaborative relationships between public institutions and citizens.

Furthermore, and in spite of commendable provisions concerning local governance and the increased inclusion of northern Malians in public institutions, the 2015 peace agreement does not clarify how different social groups will be represented in local governance institutions, or how the northern regions will be represented in central government institutions. Given the prevailing diversity, and the inter- and intra-community conflicts emerging from a competition for economic and political opportunities, more concrete specifications are needed in order to facilitate implementation and avoid furthering conflict and exclusion.[16]

Addressing the military–civilian power relationship through security sector reform

Besides poor local governance and the marginalization of northern regions, another problem is the governance of security, and the relationship between civilian authorities and the military and security forces. Whereas democratic rule was introduced in 1992—with the first elected government and national assembly in office in June 1992—Mali's political development since independence has been dominated by authoritarianism and the involvement of the military in the political process. A generally low availability of technical expertise in the country has also led to an accumulation of responsibilities, with military officers serving as governors and in other public administration positions, often resulting in the abuse of power.[17] Thus, while the political and security crisis that has affected Mali since 2012 is complex and multifaceted, long-standing internal governance inequities persist as a significant cause of conflict. These dynamics are reflected in the 2015 peace agreement, which is characterized by a strong focus on reforms of the gov-

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[14] World Bank, *Priorities for Ending Poverty and Boosting Shared Prosperity—Systematic Country Diagnostic: Mali*, Report no. 94191-ML, June 2015, p. 53.

[15] World Bank (note 14).

[16] Nyirabikali, G., 'Mali peace accord: actors, issues and their representation', SIPRI Essay, July–Aug. 2015.

[17] Poulton, R. and ag Youssouf, I., *A Peace of Timbuktu: Democratic Governance, Development and African Peacemaking*, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), UNIDIR/98/2 (UNIDIR: Geneva, 1998), p. 13.

ernance system and of the security sector, with emphasis on the inclusion and participation of citizens in the management of public affairs, including civilian oversight of the security sector.

Security sector reform (SSR) involves, among other things, the setting up of a national council for SSR with the responsibility for conducting an inclusive and deep review of national security and defence, taking into account the prevailing local, regional, national and international factors. Another innovative SSR mechanism is the establishment of local consultative committees on security, comprising state, local authority and community representatives, as well as representatives of traditional leaders.[18] Conceived to facilitate inclusion and informed policymaking within the security sector, these mechanisms may also reinforce civilian control of the security forces, which has remained weak within the emerging democratic process. They are also part of the local governance reform process as they seek to involve various representatives of the local population.

The relevance of the proposed SSR reforms will depend on their successful implementation. Among other things, this will depend on the abilities and involvement of citizens in taking advantage and making use of the participatory mechanisms. In this regard, civil society organizations have an important role to play in mobilizing engagement and enhancing citizen capacities to make an informed contribution to these new mechanisms.

National reconciliation and national unity

References to national reconciliation and national unity have been prominent both in the domestic discourse and in policy recommendations of many international organizations intervening in Mali since the 2012 rebellion. While the first two months of the rebellion were characterized by confusion and a lack of adequate information on the internal political dynamics, the 22 March 2012 coup revealed the extent of fragility, corruption and insecurity facing the Malian state and prompted quick reactions by ECOWAS, the AU and the UN to support the re-establishment of constitutional order and the democratic process.

The coup exposed the poor state of Mali's democratic project, which had been undermined by pervasive corruption, a lack of political inclusiveness and the lack of an effective political opposition. Recent research suggests that the achievements of the participatory democratic period of the 1990s were eroded by the politics of consensus that characterized President Amadou Toumani Touré's 10-year rule from 2002.[19] Against this back-

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[18] Malian Government (note 12), articles 23–27.
[19] Chauzal, G. and van Damme, T., *The Roots of Mali's Conflict: Moving Beyond the 2012 Crisis*, Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, Conflict Research Unit Report (Clingendael Institute: The Hague, Mar. 2015), p. 13.

ground, the national dialogue and reconciliation discourse that pervades the peace process may be interpreted as a call for and a commitment to a renewal of relations between the state and the society, especially in the light of the 1991 national conference that led to the first democratic elections.[20] Moreover, Article 5 of the 2015 peace agreement suggests the organization of a similar national conference during the interim period of its implementation.

The purpose of the envisaged national conference is to enable a debate among the various segments of the Malian nation on the root causes of the conflict, including the Azawad issue. This national political dialogue is expected to produce key elements for a solution that could help to transcend the country's painful past and value the contributions of its diverse identity groups in the promotion of a genuine national reconciliation. The realization of this national conference therefore constitutes an important step in the implementation of the 2015 peace agreement, given the level of expectations it raises among the Malian population and its significance in relation to other mechanisms to be developed as part of the peace process, especially the reform of local governance.

Pending its realization, some steps towards national reconciliation have been undertaken by both the interim government and by the elected government, in power since September 2013. One step is that a Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation (CDR) was established by the interim government on 6 March 2013, with the purpose of facilitating dialogue for reconciliation among all the communities within Malian society. This institution has been carried forward by the elected government, albeit with a broadened mission, following its transformation in January 2014 into a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (CVJR).[21] In contrast to the CDR, the CVJR comprises a transitional justice dimension that emphasizes legal retribution, in addition to the promotion of community dialogue and understanding that was the main focus of the CDR.[22] Although the CVJR mandate incorporates a community mediation dimension, its emphasis on retributive justice may militate against national unity and peacebuilding, especially in the event of one-sided legal pursuits—so called 'victor's justice'.

The re-establishment of national territorial integrity

Acceptance of the principle of national territorial integrity was a precondition set for the non-state armed groups in order for them to engage in negotiations with the Malian Government. This principle also constituted an aim

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[20] Wing, S. D., 'Briefing Mali: politics of a crisis', *African Affairs*, 29 May 2013.
[21] Malian Government, Decree no. 2014-0013/P-RM, Bamako, 15 Jan. 2014. See also 'De la CDR à la CVJR: ce qui va changer' [From the CDR to the CVJR: what will change], MaliActu, 10 Feb. 2014.
[22] Bratton, M., Coulibaly, M. and Dulani, B., *Malians Want a United Country, Post-Conflict Justice*, Afrobarometer Policy Paper no. 13 (Afrobarometer: 2014).

of the peace process, both under the transitional government and through the 2015 peace agreement concluded by the elected government.

Up until the end of 2015, however, national territorial integrity was not completely recovered. The government did not fully control the northern regions that were previously occupied by the rebels, nor did it hold the monopoly of force on the national territory. Since the signing of the peace agreement, terrorist attacks by violent extremist groups have intensified both in the north—including in areas controlled by the CMA and the Platform—and in the south of the country. The two rebel coalitions had also continued fighting each other, particularly in the Kidal and Gao regions, so the achievement of a ceasefire between them constitutes an important step forward in the peace process.[23]

Notwithstanding the security threats caused by violent extremist groups, improved cooperation between the three signatories of the agreement—the Malian Government, the CMA and the Platform—is needed in order to at least facilitate the reopening of public administration and the provision of basic services throughout the country. As a result of the conflict, shortages in education, health and justice-related services have heightened, and this has reinforced the sentiment among the population of a lack of progress in the implementation of the peace agreement.

Prioritizing socio-economic development for the northern regions

The Malian Government and many other stakeholders have recognized the socio-economic neglect and marginalization of Mali's northern regions. As previous peace agreements have, the 2015 peace agreement includes measures to accelerate the development of these regions and to raise them to the level of other regions in the country. Yet despite both national and international commitments in this regard, a number of reports stress a continued pattern of prioritizing traditional security over social and economic development, while deteriorating welfare conditions and a lack of livelihood opportunities (especially for the youth) reinforce insecurity.[24]

The EU's Sahel Strategy for Security and Development, for example, highlights three important but still 'hard' security-oriented initiatives: (*a*) the EU Training Mission Mali (EUTM Mali); (*b*) the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Mission in Mali (EUCAP Sahel Mali); and (*c*) the EU CSDP Mission in Niger (EUCAP Sahel Niger).[25] While acknowledging the interconnectedness between security and development, a field-based study on the Special Programme for Peace, Security and Development of Northern

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[23] United Nations, Security Council, Secretary-General's Report on the Situation in Mali, S/2015/1030, 24 Dec. 2015.

[24] Helly, D. and Galeazzi, G., 'Making sense of the funding and implementation of Sahel strategies: part 2', Blog post, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), July 2014.

[25] European Union, 'The European Union and the Sahel', Fact Sheet, [n.d.].

Mali (PSPSDN)—a flagship multilateral development project launched in 2011—highlights a lack of effectiveness of projects already initiated and suggests that overcoming insecurity could be best achieved through enhanced socio-economic development.[26] The World Bank also indicates that implementation of the PSPSDN disproportionately supported military projects rather than development ones.[27] Given the extent of the socio-economic challenges faced by ordinary citizens in Mali, a more robust socio-economic focus is needed in order to achieve a visible peace dividend for the population.

The implementation of the 2015 peace agreement

Six months after the signing of the peace agreement, the implementation process has mainly focused on establishing the different institutions aimed at facilitating the implementation of the agreement and the reinforcement of security, including mediation and reconciliation between the three signatory parties.[28] For example, the CMA and the Platform engaged in direct talks in September and October 2015, which resulted in a common 'roadmap comprising the cessation of hostilities between the two groups, joint initiatives for inter- and intra-communal reconciliation, and the establishment of interim local administrations in the northern regions of Gao, Kidal and Tombouctou'.[29]

Achieving a permanent ceasefire and collaboration among the belligerent parties constitutes a significant positive step towards national reconciliation, which is a key objective of the peace agreement. Peaceful relations between the two main rebel coalitions will also facilitate understanding and peaceful coexistence in their respective communities and constituencies. Furthermore, collaborative relationships between these two parties will help to facilitate the implementation of other planned mechanisms, as exemplified above by their collaboration in the establishment of interim local administrations.

Despite this progress, however, a December 2015 report by the UN Secretary-General on the situation in Mali underlines complaints by the two coalitions about the continued lack of inclusivity regarding the integration of northern citizens in government and other public institutions, as well as insufficient consultation on institutional reforms. While the 2015 peace agreement offers opportunities for adequate redress of the inclusivity and participation issues that have marked all episodes of violent conflict in Mali,

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[26] Ag Youssouf, I. et al., *Étude sur les Stratégies de Développement Économique et Social des Régions Nord du Mali (mai 2011–mars 2012)* [A study on economic and social development strategies for northern regions of Mali (May 2011–Mar. 2012)], Malian Government, Bamako, 2013.

[27] World Bank (note 14), p. 54.

[28] Malian Government (note 12), articles 57–62.

[29] United Nations (note 23), para. 5.

it also presents serious weaknesses as to the representation modalities that should accompany and facilitate the targeted inclusion and participation of the diverse groups of Malian society. As mentioned above, clearly defined modes of representation within the agreed governance reforms could facilitate the implementation of such reforms and reduce the risk of the re-emergence of rebel movements.

Finally, while some steps have been taken towards the elaboration of a specific socio-economic development strategy for the northern regions—in accordance with Article 36 of the 2015 peace agreement—the Joint Evaluation Mission in northern Mali (Mission d'Évaluation Conjointe, MIEC/Nord Mali), conducted from July to October 2015, stresses the need for an adequate response to the immediate needs of the population alongside the strategic planning for longer-term interventions.[30] It indicates that public administration prioritizes infrastructure and the reinforcement of capacities, while a quick recovery for local populations, particularly in rural areas, requires improvement in the delivery of basic social services such as water and health services. Although much policy research has highlighted the negative effects of compartmentalized and fragmented interventions on recovery, the prevailing context in Mali points to the persistence of this challenge. National and international actors alike need to incorporate both short-term and long-term perspectives in their interventions, in ways that provide relief and create resilience for the Malian population.[31]

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[30] MIEC is one of the institutions planned in Mali's 2015 peace agreement to support its implementation. Article 36 stipulates that MIEC's role is to identify both the immediate needs, in terms of rapid recovery and poverty reduction, and the medium- to long-term development needs of the three northern regions. MIEC is comprised of representatives of the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank and the United Nations. OECD, [Findings from the Joint Evaluation Mission in Northern Mali] (MIEC: African Development Bank, World Bank, Islamic Development Bank), July–Oct. 2015 (in French).

[31] Mosel, I. and Levine, S., *Remaking the Case for Linking Relief, Rehabilitation, and Development*, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Commissioned Report (ODI: London, Mar. 2014); and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Transition Financing: Building a Better Response* (OECD: 2010).