



**UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIRD REPORT OF THE SG
ON HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH
HUMAN SECURITY BY MALIAN CSOs
JUNE 18, 2014**

Good morning everyone- thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me an opportunity to address the General Assembly on the thematic debate on Human Security in light of the third report of the Secretary-General and the post-2015 development framework. I am from Mali and am an advisor on the board of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP). Through gathering data and conducting root-cause analysis, WANEP has developed a region-wide early warning mechanism, which has now been incorporated into the region's official multilateral early warning system, implemented by ECOWAS. WANEP is also a member of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) and in Mali, both organizations are working on developing a human security approach to tackling the national and regional crisis.

- Mr. Chairman as you know the Sahel region has become one of the most challenging regions in sub-Saharan Africa because of the multiple effects of conflict, insecurity, humanitarian crisis, human rights abuses and democratic consolidation across the region and that include Mali, which since March 2012 has been engulfed with multi-dimensional crisis (military, security, humanitarian, cultural, socio-economic, political and institutional)
- Those who lived or worked in Mali noticed that there were serious lingering problems early 2010 despite the façade of an example of a stable and democratic country in West Africa. Using WANEP's data and analysis, the ECOWAS Early Warning System captured early warning signs as early as 2011 - it was clear since then that the country was a living time-bomb. The elements we identified as causing the instability were: extreme corruption, high unemployment, deteriorating educational system, food insecurity, conflicts between communities, dysfunctional judicial system, tension in the army, weak institutions, lack of inspiring leadership, poor engagement with the rebel groups in the north. This suggested to us in civil society, that there was a glaring need for us to develop a human security approach to dealing with these issues, as they could not be neatly compartmentalized into the usual humanitarian, economic, security boxes.
- Despite the early warning signs which included specific attention to issues of proliferation of heavy weapons brought by the ex-combatants from Khadafy's regime without a

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration process, the reorganization of the rebel groups in the north (with growing support from extreme jihadist groups), drugs smuggling, human trafficking, sexual exploitation and slavery, all the ingredients for human *in*security were happening in the corridors from Kidal, Timbuktu, Gao, and Mopti, and unfortunately we didn't pay much attention because we were not thinking through the lens of human security.

- Mr. Chairman, as a result of the impasse in resolving the Malian crisis there's now complete distrust among the population with their own government, with the rebel groups, with the bilateral foreign interventions and with the international community itself. *In*security reigns throughout the country as people living in poverty, constant fear, no real rule of law, and no real prospect for peace in the near future
- It hurts me to remember that Mali was an example of democracy in West Africa just a few years ago. Now my country is faced with the worse kind of multi-dimensional crisis of its history; Mali is fighting multiple wars, a war on poverty, and a war on the lack of basic infrastructure and basic services, a war on terrorism and a war of liberation. There are multiple actors involved, each with its own agenda - rebel groups (the Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad, the newly created High Islamic Council of the Azawad, Ansar Dine, Mujao, some of whom have the backing of international jihadist groups such as Al-Qaida in the Maghreb), Malian military, international troops from MINUSMA and the French army, SERVAL.
- With the highly celebrated and popularized "liberation" of the French army in January 2013 and the replacement of the AU-ECOWAS African Standby forces (AFISMA) by the UN Multidimensional and stabilization Mission (MINUSMA) last July-the Malian crisis is still far from being resolved; in fact Kidal is still under the full control of the rebel and jihadists despite the presence of MINUSMA and the French Army
- Despite all these military efforts, the crisis in Mali still persists- this goes to show that military approach alone has not been able to solve the Malian problems.
- Any military intervention has to go hand-in-hand with political dialogue, intra and inter-communal dialogue and the full involvement of the population as drivers of change.
- Therefore, to realize the goal of sustainable peace and development in Mali, we have to engage in the promotion of human security; Hence WANEP's Human Security Project is indeed timely and brings a regional perspective into the conflict resolution and peacebuilding as the Malian crisis is a regional crisis involving other countries and needs to be treated as such if we really want peace in the Sahel region.

- It's the only project of its kind currently where CSOs after a mapping process gathered together and formed the Malian Human Security Network, representing all the 8 regions of the country with Focal Points spearheading the activities in each region.
- After organizing a national workshop, the Focal Points have developed an operational workplan on human security that is being implemented in various communities within the 8 regions.
- Women - representing 56% of the Malian population - are a central part of this Human Security project. Mali will only be able to build the foundations of peace and development only with the full participation and empowerment of women.
- In this project women are not regarded as victims of discrimination who must somehow be rescued through special measures, rather the human security approach provides a platform for women to design and decide the framework of dialogue and they are treated as the mainstream of society and as the real agents of change. The human security project invests in the empowerment of women as it is necessary for sustainable peace and development and not as a guilty compensation for past discrimination.
- This empowerment of Malian women is vital because they will be at the fore front of the intra-inter communal dialogues, bringing belligerents together from both government and rebel forces so they can talk to each other, state facts, admit wrong doing, go beyond their differences, forgive each other and find common ground; they will conduct these dialogues in their respective communities with the end goal of participating in a national reconciliation process and the rebuilding social cohesion.
- Malian women must play an active role in the development of their future and in building an edifice of peace in their societies. This kind of investment in human capacity is what makes a human security approach one that reaps higher returns for humanity than any other alternative.
- This human security project is driven by Malian civil society who traditionally worked on socio-economic development projects related to health, education, food security, water and sanitation have now shifted their focus on human security fighting for human rights promotion, good governance, restoring rule of law, transitional justice and human security approach, all in the hope of ensuring sustainable peace in Mali. Malians need to be reconciled as a community, as a people living in harmony in one nation where social cohesion is the common ground for all people and where people live free from fear and free from want.

- Mali was a de-facto peaceful nation. Traditionally, Malians are used to only using dialogue and mediation as a means of conflict resolution. We have traditionally cultivated a culture of peace throughout our history. This makes a human security approach even more appropriate and the ultimate choice for Malians, especially in this in-between time of semi-conflict/ semi-post-conflict environment.
- Mr. Chairman, despite all the initiatives mentioned above in the promotion of human security Malian women are still not part of dialogue, mediation or negotiation processes; they are under-represented in political parties and nominations, in ministerial positions, in the parliament, in many state institutions.
- Malian women's needs are still not taken into account in policy formulation or implementation in the areas of development, peace or security. Even though there are women police officers and gendarmes, women's specific needs are still not taken into account and they rarely hold high ranking positions. In addition, gender-blind policies and programs have left women behind and gender-biased customs and traditions have exacerbated their deprivation. Just like human rights are women's rights, Human Security is women's security - the two cannot be separated.
- The Human Security agenda is inclusive, it involves women, men, boys and girls and all stakeholders - from government, UN agencies, donors, civil society organizations, and local people themselves an opportunity to define their needs, set goals, mobilize resources to implement their ideas and ensures local ownership and sustainability.
- Human security provides a holistic approach to security and development at the same time, looking across broad sectors to address interrelated issues. In this way, communities can build positive coping mechanisms to deal with many types of insecurities, especially in a post conflict context of Mali.
- Mr. Chairman with all that said, I would like to recall the words of the Secretary General in his latest report following the GA's Human Security Resolution, he said:

“Since the turn of the new millennium, our demographic, environmental and technological landscape has shifted significantly and threats to our common peace, security and development are more complex and interrelated than ever before. ... At the same time, the common understanding on human security, agreed to by the General Assembly, provides a new way of thinking about the range of challenges we face in the twenty-first century

and how we respond to them. By focusing our efforts on advancing the interconnected pillars of peace and security, development and human rights, human security provides the people-centered approach by which to comprehensively address the totality of the challenges we face and to translate our efforts into actions that give rise to more effective and tangible improvements in the daily lives of people.”

With this very important call to action in mind, the call to make tangible improvements in the daily lives of people, I request your permission to make the following recommendations:

- **To the Government of Mali:**

- To develop a national human security strategy as a conflict prevention tool, which will complement and reinforce WANEP and its partner’s HS project
- Provide national budget for projects on the promotion of human security
- Ensure political will to scale-up the human security approach throughout the country
- Revise the existing NAP on UNSCR 1325 and ensure its adoption by the National Assembly as well as its implementation with strong political will.
- Provide space for women’s groups to play an active role in advocating for the importance of human security in response to Mali’s multiple and complex challenges

- **To local civil society:**

- Educate and sensitize population on human security and its importance as a conflict prevention mechanism
- Advocate for the government’s implementation of the national human security strategy and play their oversight role in the process
- Sustain a viable network of human security with focal points in each of the 8 regions of Mali

- **To the UN:**

- Incorporate human security as a priority in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
- Use the principle of knowledge management in the implementation of human security approach and ensure its coordination among the UN agencies in Mali

- **To the international development community:**
 - Provide financial and technical assistance to local civil society and government in the areas of human security
 - Hold the Mali government accountable for its implementation of a national strategy on human security

- **To all Member States at the UN General Assembly:**
 - To ensure that the new development agenda, post-2015 framework, has human security at its core, so that sustainable development can occur in a manner that puts people first so that their human security and dignity can be secured. This is the only way to achieve real transformative change to the status quo, a transformation that so many states are calling for at this time. This is the only way to achieve peaceful and stable societies upon which real development can grow.

Mr. Chairman, the sooner we start to engage in these recommendations for a comprehensive Human Security in times of crisis, the sooner we in Mali can envision a world where our people can live in dignity with freedom from fear and want.

I thank you.