

THE
CARTER CENTER



Report of the Independent Observer

Observations on the Implementation of the Agreement on
Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, emanating from the Algiers
Process

Observation Period: January 15 to April 30, 2018

May 28, 2018



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Terms of Reference & Summary

This report covers the period from mid-January to the end of April 2018 and represents the first published report of the Independent Observer since assuming its role. The Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, emanating from the Algiers Process (agreement), in Article 63, creates the Independent Observer to identify blockages in the implementation process and recommend steps to advance the agreement. The agreement's Monitoring Committee (CSA) designated The Carter Center as the Independent Observer, a move welcomed by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 2391 (December 2017). All information, observations, and recommendations are based on the information provided by the Malian signatory parties, civil society, and members of the international community engaged in Mali.

It is important to consider this first report in the context in which it was written: The absence of direct combat between the signatory parties

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Introduction

The Carter Center started work as the Independent Observer at the 23rd session of the CSA on Jan. 15-16, 2018. Since that date, the Independent Observer has worked to fulfill its mission according to Article 63 of the agreement. Article 63 stipulates that the Independent Observer “publish[es] an exhaustive quarterly report on the implementation status of the commitments made in this agreement, identifying any hindrances, identifying the responsibilities, and making recommendations on the steps to be taken.”

The Independent Observer’s efforts are led by Special Advisor Bisa Williams, a former ambassador and career diplomat with the United States Department of State, supported by Deputy Special Advisor Jean Ntole Kazadi, former principal political counselor and head of the political unit for the African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL). The Independent Observer established an office in Bamako, with additional support from the Center’s headquarters in Atlanta, to monitor the multitude of activities in the implementation of the agreement.

The Independent Observer considers, first and foremost, the commitments made by the Malian parties to the agreement: the government, the CMA, and the Platform. It also follows the fulfillment of the responsibilities of organs and actors



The Carter Center would like to thank all the people and actors mentioned here for their openness and availability, which have facilitated the fulfillment of its mission.

The observations contained in this first report relate to the period from January 15 to April 30, 2018. The Independent Observer largely measured progress based on the timetable endorsed by the CSA, reworked in the r



issues under discussion, or of the rationale behind decisions. Consequently, populations in Bamako and especially the north describe feeling estranged not only from their political leadership, but also from the agreement. They distrust the current peace process and possess a growing mistrust of their representatives.

Civil society, especially youth and women, believes that two years of political discussions at the CSA have served as a substitute for genuine decision-making. In short, they feel the implementation process has become more important than the objectives of the agreement, which was itself arrived at after considerable sacrifice. This sense of CSA dysfunction has led to frustration and disappointment that was expressed by all segments of civil society with whom the Independent Observer engaged. Time and again, the Independent Observer was reminded by civil society, especially youth, that the goal of the agreement was to address long-standing grievances, such as unemployment, lack of services, and rampant violence. The priority, especially for women in northern Mali, is the disarmament and demobilization of armed men.

The launch of the Independent Observer's mission was welcomed by the parties, the CSA, and local actors, who expressed the hope that the Observer would stimulate progress in the implementation of the agreement. However, there remains widespread confusion about the distinction between the Independent Observer's role and that of the sanctions committee established under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2374 (September 2017). The Independent Observer is distinct from this committee and has no authority to impose sanctions.



CREATING THE TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITIES (COLLECTIVITÉS) IN THE MENAKA AND TAOUDENIT REGIONS (Deadline: April 2018) – The draft law on the creation of the territorial-administrative entities (*collectivités*) in the Taoudénit and Ménaka regions has been finalized and is scheduled for the current session of the National Assembly. As of April 24, the date announced by the government for the passage of the law by the National Assembly, the text had not been adopted.

EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF THE INTERIM AUTHORITIES (Deadline: April) – The budget for the Interim Authorities – nine billion CFA – has been adopted by the government, and the distribution table transmitted to the high representative for transfer to the members of the CSA. The disbursement of the budget is conditioned on, among other things, the existence of human and material resources for the Interim Authorities. On April 30, the minister of *collectivités territoriales* addressed a letter to the Interim Authorities asking them to share by May 31 their human-resource needs so that he could launch the recruitment process through public exams. In addition, the financial resources for the rehabilitation/construction of the offices of the Interim Authorities have been approved, but not dispersed. Considering that the recruitment of human resources through public exams generally takes significant time, it appears that funds for the Interim Authorities may not be dispersed for several months.

STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE MOC BATTALION IN GAO BY PROVIDING HEAVY WEAPONS (Deadline: March-April) – The government announced that six heavy weapons intended for the MOC in Gao were stocked in a warehouse at the regional military headquarters. The Platform and the CMA committed to furnish their first set of heavy arms for the MOCs in Gao, Timbuktu, and Kidal once administrative, logistical and other move

