

Georgetown University Integrated Planning Team

Joint Report

Mali: Developing a Multi-faceted Strategy for a Successful U.S. Stability Intervention

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CONTEXT

Earlier this month (April 2015), representatives of the Tuareg rebel groups in northern Mali rejected a proposed peace agreement in Algiers, highlighting the persistence of an ethnic conflict that has existed in Mali since its independence in 1960. The current conflict traces its roots to January of 2012, when Tuareg insurgents from northern Mali under the auspices of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) launched an insurrection against the central government based in the southern capital of Bamako. This was followed shortly by a military coup in Bamako, which in turn prompted Islamist groups to take control of vulnerable northern cities, adding an element to the conflict that enticed the French to intervene militarily in early 2013. The United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) followed with deployments of forces that are still conducting stability operations today. The French intervention led to the Ouagadougou Agreement, which paved the way for a presidential election and aimed to forge a conclusive peace. While this enabled the election of the current president, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK), a conclusive peace has yet to be reached, leaving the political situation between the rebels and Bamako uncertain and unstable.

This rebellion has reopened the social cleavages and highlighted the ethnic tensions between the primarily nomadic, light-skinned Tuareg population in the north and the sedentary, darker-skinned populations of the rest of Mali. It is important to note here that the north is not uniformly Tuareg; it also includes substantial populations of Moor, Songhai, and Mopti. Additionally, not all Tuaregs support the rebellion. Consequently, a distinction must be drawn between radical Islamist terrorist organizations, such as al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Ansar al-Dine, and the generally secular, politically motivated groups, such as MNLA.

The instability of Mali involves much more than identity tensions. Much of the rebels' discontent stems from poor governance on the part of the central government, and indeed, Bamako is not without fault. Mali is one of the poorest countries on earth and many in the north feel the government has failed to take meaningful steps to ameliorate poverty in the northern regions. Poor economic conditions have prompted some to derive sustenance from the trans-Sahel illicit drug trade run by an extensive network of organized crime. Furthermore, Mali lags in the key areas of infrastructure, technology, agriculture, and education, all of which are prerequisites for stability. Recent spurts of violence, most notably when masked gunman opened fire on civilians in a popular Bamako restaurant in March of 2015, have clearly demonstrated the need for these problems in Mali to be addressed. Additionally, transnational terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State and Boko Haram have taken advantage of northern Mali's instability to establish a strong foothold in the Sahel, thereby demonstrating the regional implications of Mali's domestic turmoil. If left unchecked, the instability in northern Mali has the potential to result in not only the collapse of the Malian state but a future center of gravity for terrorist activity in the Sahel region, thereby presenting an undeniable threat to U.S. security interests in the region and abroad.

PURPOSE

Given the above context, it is the purpose of the Georgetown Integrated Planning Team (GIPT) to propose a comprehensive U.S. intervention plan for Mali. The GIPT has identified four main components necessary for an effective intervention: short-term security stabilization, an inclusive peace deal, an increase in both government accountability measures and long-term development, and the enhancement of US interagency coordination. The first component will examine the intervention from a military angle, seeking to enhance the security situation on the ground by: 1) establishing a Multinational Training Coalition to address core issues with the Malian Armed Forces (MAF), 2) utilizing UAVs for the purpose of intelligence gathering, 3) working with the Malian Government to incorporate and screen Tuaregs interested in joining the MAF, and 4) establishing an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Rapid Response Unit. Following this examination, the report turns to the issue of formulating a comprehensive peace deal by 1) convening and facilitating problem-solving workshops, 2) assisting in negotiations between the Malian government and relevant parties, and 3) recommending a contingency plan for the possibility of a failed peace deal. The report further addresses underlying sources of instability and invisible violence in the region by focusing on government accountability and long-term development, thereby promoting 1) government decentralization, transparency, and justice system reform, 2) investment in infrastructure, technology, and agriculture, and 3) reform of the education system. Finally, the report examines the role of the U.S. interagency in the Malian context by recommending tactics for enhanced coordination and, thus, a more effective intervention. The GIPT is confident that the successful implementation of these informed recommendations will strengthen the security and prosperity of Mali, the region, and the world.

SECTION I: SHORT-TERM SECURITY STABILIZATION

1. Establish a Multinational Training Coalition to address core issues with the Malian Armed Forces (MAF)

After the 2012 Islamist-Tuareg rebellion, the European Union, the United Nations, and the United States began large-scale training operations in Mali; however, no coordinating framework exists between the different organizations to ensure that the MAF is receiving holistic training to strengthen their counterterrorism (CT), logistics, command-and-control, and rule of law capabilities. To address the core competencies that the MAF is lacking, the U.S. should take the lead in forming a Multinational Training Coalition (MTC) to coordinate the efforts of the different training efforts in Mali and establish joint end-states for MAF units that complete the training program.

First, the U.S. should conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current training missions already occurring in Mali along with the MAF's current capabilities. Such assessments would identify areas of strength and weakness within the MAF and potential avenues for improvement. The U.S. would then work with the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to distribute the responsibilities and costs of training the MAF to countries and organizations that specialize in certain fields and capabilities. For example, MINUSMA would train the MAF to respect human rights and improve their administrative capabilities through the UN Human Rights Officer program. EUTM would aid the MAF in developing its logistics and command-and-control skills to improve coordination among its various units and resources in launching

complex and long-range operations. The US would compile each respective organization or country's assessments of the MAF's capabilities and render an overall estimate regarding the battlefield readiness of different MAF units. While this strategy will require an increase in US troops and resources in Mali, it is much less costly than launching a unilateral training mission since it leverages existing actors in the field and distributes costs and responsibilities equitably. The potential payoff for this strategy is significant because it addresses some of the underlying problems with the MAF and equips them to launch independent operations against terrorist and transnational criminal networks that threaten Mali's stability. Ensuring France's role in the MTC will have the additional benefit of incorporating France within the international effort thereby moving the country away from assisting the MNLA.

2. Utilize UAVs for the purpose of intelligence gathering

To combat the problem of increased terrorist activity and illicit trafficking in northern Mali, the U.S. should coordinate the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) with the MAF as a means for both surveillance and supporting Malian CT and interdiction operations. By degrading the terrorist and smuggling networks, Tuaregs will be pressured to seek licit economic opportunities including joining the MAF. Due to the region's instability, it is not recommended that the U.S. create a new drone base in Mali. Therefore, the drone base in Agadez, Niger should be considered for such operations. Despite its distance of 2000 km from northern Mali, Agadez is the optimal base in the region for such an operation.

The UAVs should be deployed with the intention of developing a holistic understanding of the transnational terrorist and drug smuggling networks to complement the efforts of local intelligence gathered by MAF-affiliated Tuaregs. Before any operation is carried out, it is imperative that both UAV and local intelligence confirm the target to minimize collateral damage and maximize noncombatant discrimination. The UAVs will also be used to support MAF operations in the north and carry out surgical strikes against known terrorist or smuggling safe havens. The UAVs will be launched by U.S. Special Operational Forces in the region in close coordination with their counterparts in the Malian Special Forces Companies (CFS).

3. Work with the Malian Government to incorporate and screen Tuaregs interested in joining the MAF

Once targeted CT operations have degraded terrorist networks within northern Mali, Tuareg militants will be searching for alternative forms of employment that enable them to support their families. During the peace process of prior rebellions, one of the key Tuareg demands has been reintegration within the MAF. The U.S. should work with Mali's Ministry of Defense to provide resources to incorporate and screen the large number of Tuaregs who are looking for sustainable employment with the MAF. Specifically, U.S. financial support would significantly facilitate further integration of Tuaregs into MAF forces. Without the roadblock of finding funding for Tuareg salaries, further incorporation becomes a win-win, providing Tuaregs with employment, the MAF with invaluable intelligence, and the Malian government with greater and farther-reaching legitimacy and capabilities. Additionally, it will be important for the Malian government to stipulate a policy of disarmament before any Tuaregs join the MAF to prevent a further proliferation of small-arms.

One pervasive concern in any integration process is the question of motivation. Steps must be taken to distinguish between Tuaregs seeking employment for economic opportunities and those looking to steal equipment or attack the hiring organization's foreign trainers. The US

could prevent these instances by working with Tuaregs already aligned with the MAF, such as General Haji Ag Gamou and his Tuareg militia. Such collaboration would enable the establishment of a screening process that leverages the existing tribal network to shed light on the motivations of Tuaregs interested in joining the MAF. Because of the Tuareg hierarchical societal structure, a majority of a person's biographical information and ideological affiliations is passed on from generation to generation. Due to the Malian government's minimal presence in the north, only Tuaregs would have access to this network of information. The US should leverage these tribal networks to screen Tuaregs attempting to join the MAF by giving Tuaregs aligned with the Malian government this responsibility. Providing them with financial incentives or authority over the Tuaregs would prove to be two effective methods of encouraging General Gamou's participation; however, it must be clearly emphasized that the Malian government and the U.S. will hold him accountable if the screening process results in the pervasive defection or inner-MAF attacks and violence.

4. Establish an ECOWAS Rapid Response Unit

U.S. military policy stresses the importance of building partnerships in order to share the costs and burdens of security. A truly pan-Sahel approach to address the regional problems of illicit drugs and arms trade and terrorism should work within existing institutions to not only lower costs and the footprint of the U.S., but to also help legitimize the method of providing regional security to the local populations. In West Africa and the Sahel, the most appropriate existing regional institution would be the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS). While past ECOWAS missions have been plagued with problems such as a lack of funding and an overall lack of quality amongst peacekeeping forces, they have been relatively successful in achieving their stated end goals and achieving domestic stability.

In order to address these deficiencies and enable ECOWAS to take a greater role in providing security for its member countries, the U.S. should assist with the creation, funding, and training of an ECOWAS rapid response unit. The approximately 1,000 man standing force would be trained by the appropriate personnel from the United States and other partners such as France and the European Union, limiting the need for increased American resources. Funding for the unit would be split among the Western partners and the ECOWAS nations, with the goal of ECOWAS nations taking on a greater financial burden as their economies improve.

While this new unit would not take the place of ECOWAS's Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), ECOWAS's peacekeeping force, its goal would be to make regional peacekeepers unnecessary by targeting transnational threats before they gain momentum. Missions undertaken by this force could tackle a variety of sources of regional instability, including insurgencies, transnational terrorist networks, and illicit drug and arms smuggling. This approach would give ECOWAS some jurisdiction over policing these international security threats and assist with international coordination between member states surrounding these issues, such as the ECOWAS Political Declaration and Regional Action Plan on Drug Trafficking and Other Organized Crimes. Individual nations would still be encouraged to bring criminal and terrorist groups within their borders to justice, but the ability of ECOWAS forces to cross borders would assist in preventing international criminal groups from finding safe havens in or moving their operations to neighboring states in the region.

SECTION II: COMPREHENSIVE PEACE DEAL

There are three major obstacles to a conclusive peace agreement between the northern rebel groups and the central Malian government: first, the recurring insistence on the part of *some* rebels for full autonomy for Azawad; second, the insistence on the part of the central government in Bamako that they will not consider granting full or partial autonomy to Azawad; and third, the government's aversion to using force to subdue the rebels, whom they see as "sons and daughters of Mali." Given these seemingly irreconcilable obstacles, long-term stability in Mali requires a comprehensive peace deal facilitated by a stronger role for the US government.

1. Convene and facilitate problem-solving workshops

Malians, with the support of the United States and the international community, can attend to the core grievances fueling the northern separatist movement by participating in a series of problem-solving workshops that bring together important representatives from feuding parties. Problem-solving workshops, as implementation mechanisms for interactive conflict resolution, have contributed to diplomatic breakthroughs in a number of long-standing identity-based conflicts, including in Lebanon and Israel-Palestine where they led, respectively, to the famous Taif Agreement and Oslo Accords. The purpose of the problem-solving workshop is not to replace formal negotiations but to set the stage for them, since after more than fifty years of intermittent talks and mutually agreed upon terms in a relatively conciliatory political culture, the government of Mali has yet to forge a peace with the rebels.

One of the main inhibitors to a deal has been the focus on political and economic concessions without a sincere effort at reconciliation first. Problem-solving workshops can release stakeholders from these attitudinal constraints and prime successful negotiations by having participants reconcile the past mismanagement of conflict before refocusing energy in later, more official talks on the economic and political grievances that underlie the conflict. The United States should serve as a convener and facilitator in these workshops. Problem-solving workshops are run by social scientists, which AFRICOM should contract, and participants should come from the rebel groups and the government or be figures with unique access to key decision-makers in those networks. In the most critical phase of the workshop, parties generate multiple options that could contribute to a mutually acceptable solution. Participants close with a discussion of impediments to implementing those options and how those constraints might be overcome. The workshop decidedly does not itself produce a resolution but sets the framework in which one might be negotiated.

Overall, problem-solving workshops are more flexible, less formal and lower risk processes than official negotiations. They open minds to new possibilities and bring together groups for mutual understanding and trust in a space free of judgment and commitment and are therefore ripe for exploration and creativity. In an environment where no peace deal is expected, Bamako is free to broach the topics of autonomy and independence, which it previously struck from all peace agendas. Additionally, rebel groups acting independent of a negotiating coalition are freer to voice alternative end-states. Groups like the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA) which prioritize economic stability over a liberated Azawad can test the government's reaction to possible futures without undermining the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA) or without tying itself down. If one rebel group senses a space for agreement, that faction can set up a bilateral workshop with Bamako and potentially create a baseline agreement or a framework for negotiations.

2. Assist in negotiations between the Malian government and relevant parties

A lasting peace deal in Mali requires the following general elements: an impartial arbiter, trust, and a guarantee of implementation. The United States, through the recommendations listed below, has an important role to play in fostering these conditions in Mali.

A. Increased U.S. role in negotiations

According to the Malian Ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Tiéna Coulibaly, the United States is highly regarded in Mali and is seen as an impartial arbiter in contrast to other parties who have historically convened and mediated negotiations. Nations such as Burkina Faso, Switzerland, and especially France are seen as having ulterior motives and are believed to be only furthering their own interests during talks. In order to demonstrate to rebels that Bamako is committed to a peace process, the U.S. must serve as a direct convener and mediator during negotiations and change its current observer status. This role must be legitimized by consultations with regional partners and international organizations such as ECOWAS and the EU Training Mission, who will have implementation and oversight responsibilities.

Furthermore, the U.S. can use its diplomatic influence to pressure rebels to accept a peace deal that will be produced as a result of negotiations. The goal will be to show rebels that refusing to accept the deal will leave them on the wrong side of history and could lead to significant consequences.

B. Direct inter-party contact and greater inclusivity in the peace process

The most recent negotiations successfully produced a peace deal, but rebels were unwilling to sign it even after agreeing to the terms, which resulted in an increase in mistrust between Bamako and the rebels. The breakdown at this final stage in the process was partly the result of how the process itself was conducted. The process had three major flaws: rushed talks; limited direct contact between the two parties, as most negotiations took place only through the Algerian mediators; and the absence of parties from the north. Future negotiations must plan for both parties to have numerous, repeated opportunities for contact, which in conjunction with peacebuilding workshops conducted parallel to the formal peace process, would build the trust required for each group not only to create and sign an agreement but also to abide by it. Additionally, the talks must be more inclusive since the United States cannot afford to ignore the Islamist elements and other major stakeholders who will be affected by the peace agreement. The Islamic Movement for Azawad, for example, should be invited to the talks even though the U.S. remains committed to a secular Malian state. Furthermore, both the peace workshops and the negotiations must include voices that speak for the entire north—not just the rebels, who represent a minority within a minority. Local elders and respected community members must be given a role in the process.

C. U.S.-supported implementation plan

Previous peace agreements have failed partly because the Malian government has been unable to implement their terms. One of the rebel groups' stated reasons for choosing not to support the latest peace deal was a lack of trust in the Malian government. Bamako has promised to unilaterally fund the implementation of a future agreement, but in light of the failure of previous peace agreements, their commitment remains uncertain. The international community and the US can incentivize rebel willingness to strike a deal and ensure any agreement's viability by

phasing in aid as the government meets its share of the terms. Furthermore, the U.S. can assist in helping Bamako learn best practices for implementing the agreement.

3. Formulate a contingency plan for a failed peace deal

In spite of the measures recommended above, it is still quite possible the rebels will not let go of their demand for autonomy. Outside pressure from the UN, EU, and France did not persuade them to accept the recently proposed agreement in Algiers, despite its generous concessions of local authority. Additionally, holdouts refusing to support peace deals despite more pervasive support among their comrades may reignite the rebellion down the road. For these reasons, the Malian government needs to prepare to use force against the rebels. It is important when considering whether to use force against the rebels what their motives are to refuse the peace agreements. The motives of the northern rebels are difficult to discern, in large part because they are not uniform among the different factions and because they are subject to change over time. Some rebels seem to want independence so they can continue their illicit but lucrative smuggling operations. Others seem to be motivated by genuine political grievances, as evidenced by their willingness to compromise. Still others' unwillingness to compromise, even when offered increased autonomy and financial resources included in the recent Algiers agreement, suggests that they are motivated not by legitimate political grievances but instead by an uncompromising insistence on independence. If the rebellion should continue, fueled by these radical factions, it may justifiably be subdued by military force.

SECTION III: GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT

1. Defining invisible violence

A holistic analysis of violence in Mali is required for situational understanding, for planning, and for addressing sources of grievances that culminate in direct, physical violence and instability. Invisible violence is one part of this analysis and is a broad, all-encompassing term that has been sub-typed as structural, symbolic, and normalized violence. Structural violence refers to political and economic forces that lead to inequalities in rights, resources, services, and security. In the Sahel region we must look to address factors including, but not limited to, damaging sanctions, malnutrition, colonialism, environmental crises, education, and poverty. Symbolic violence concerns societal hierarchies and domination ladders, commonly seen as elitism, regional inequalities, and corruption in failed states. Finally, normalized violence encompasses everyday interactions, discourse, and ideologies that marginalize a group of individuals. Ethnic tensions, racism, slavery, deleterious institutional practices, and extremist ideologies serve as examples of normalized violence in Mali. Invisible violence must be addressed through promotion of government decentralization and transparency, targeted economic investments, and education reform.

2. Promoting government decentralization, transparency, and justice system reform

Tuaregs and other ethnic groups of the north feel that the centralized government of Mali does not equitably distribute resources, expenditures, and developmental efforts throughout the country. The highly centralized government of Mali breeds a situation in which the north feels neglected and removed from the industrialization and development of the south. Decentralizing

the government will benefit the people of Mali, as local governments will be able to tailor national policies to address individual regions and the practices and socio-economic variations of ethnic groups within that region. Locally-elected officials will make decisions for local development. By decentralizing the government and increasing local government participation, individuals will more easily be able to express grievances without feeling compelled to take up arms.

Even with a decentralized government, further efforts must be taken to expand transparency and enhance government accountability. It is believed that many officials use revenues from the drug trade to finance their campaigns and political interests. Initially, disclosure of campaign finance and officials' assets should be reported to a regional or international authority, with a longer-term goal of building enough political awareness among the domestic population to force the government to hold itself accountable to its own people. Differentiated dissemination methods to spread information regarding government finances, such as radio or pictographic representations of the findings, are valuable tools that can be used to inform a significant portion of Mali's population that is illiterate. In addition, a parliamentary committee on drug control and organized crime should be established to operate independently of the central government and target drug-related corruption.

The justice system itself is in need of reform, as it contains large gaps in legal authority. Reform targeted specifically at drug-related organized crime has the potential for immediate and wide-sweeping success. This type of reform could be as specific as enabling prosecutors to charge drug traffickers with a criminal offense, with the goal of making the costs of trafficking outweigh its benefits. When undertaken simultaneously, decentralization, transparency measures, and justice system reform will work to alleviate political marginalization and address additional destabilizing issues such as drug trafficking.

3. Investment in infrastructure, technology, and agriculture

By investing in infrastructure, particularly for transportation, irrigation, technology, and agriculture improvements, the U.S. will be able to assist Mali with its long-term economic development. The lack of a road connecting Bamako to many northern regions not only physically separates the north from the south, but also augments a feeling of disconnect and separation of the northern people from their government in the south. By building roads connecting Bamako to northern regions, the U.S. will facilitate transportation between various regions and population centers. A greater sense of connection between the northern and southern regions of Mali will incentivize the government to attend to its citizens in all regions. Building a road connecting Bamako to Kidal - through Timbuktu and Gao - will provide short-term employment in construction and long-term opportunities for commerce and transportation. U.S. technical experts from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should also work with their Malian counterparts to rehabilitate and upgrade current dams, thereby increasing irrigation efficiency and water distribution.

Furthermore, the U.S. should encourage the government to invest in technology infrastructure in the north to promote increasing sales of Internet domain names. Mali's Internet capabilities are growing rapidly, with 100 new ".ml" domain names every hour. A portion of international aid must go into developing technology infrastructure to promote domain name revenues. Giving away free domain names encourages foreigners to bring greater outside investment into the country. Investments in technical advancements in Mali must be focused on expanding the capabilities of Malian Internet users by increasing desktop capabilities and local media sites. The expansion Mali's Internet capabilities and further distribution of ".ml" domain names will help establish sustainable foreign investment into the country.

In addition, the U.S. must take steps to ensure that cotton production is gradually phased out due to its water inefficiency, while assisting cotton farmers in shifting production to other crops and training them in new fields. By emphasizing training in fields related to infrastructure development, such as construction and industrial labor, the U.S. can reduce the likelihood of famine and unemployment during periods of drought. The U.S. must also commit to assisting in agricultural policy reform and in supporting the price of certain crops, thereby preventing the fallout of an unexpected price drop on the fragile Malian economy. The U.S. should also assist in the installation of solar energy cells and networks. In isolated rural areas – especially in the east and the north – that cannot connect to the limited electrical grid that currently exists in the state, photovoltaics can replace diesel generators as power sources. Additionally, by sending technical experts from the U.S. to Mali to assist with its extraction of natural resources, the Malian government can develop a short-term revenue stream and create economic opportunities in the largely disenfranchised northern region. It would also encourage the development of infrastructure in the north to facilitate this extraction, thereby creating low-skilled employment opportunities.

4. Reform of Malian Education Sector

As previously described, sustainable peace depends on addressing the root causes of the rebels' grievances, rather than simply putting a temporary patch on the instability in Mali. Currently, there is great inequality between the quality of education received by those living in Bamako versus the education received by those living in the rural northern regions, thereby perpetuating the economic disparity in Mali and the complaints of many northerners. In recognition of this, a coalition of representatives from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nation's International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) should implement a threefold mandate to reform the Malian primary and secondary educational system.

This mandate will include recruiting new teachers and retraining existing ones, developing a comprehensive nation-wide curriculum, and increasing student enrollment across all genders and grade-levels. New teachers will be recruited by reshaping the profession to be a more desirable one through salary incentives and existing teachers will be compensated for attending retraining sessions. The nation-wide curriculum will be used as a means of creating a unified national identity and building a common understanding between the various regions of Mali. Throughout the reform process, western education experts must work with local leaders in order to develop an effective curriculum that will not be viewed as simply a Western import. Finally, student enrollment will increase by constructing new schools, providing economic incentives to parents to compensate for lost household labor, and holding local meetings to explain the reforms that are occurring and their importance. To address the Tuareg population in particular, a technology-based system of homeschooling will be implemented by the Malian government with financial assistance from the US and the international community to ensure that even nomadic peoples have access to high-quality education. Such homeschooling would be facilitated through battery-operated, durable tablets with pre-downloaded lessons and assignments. Progress will be analyzed through yearly assessments.

SECTION IV: ENHANCING U.S. INTERAGENCY COHESION TO ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

For the U.S. to successfully execute any of the above recommendations, the country's interagency coordination must be enhanced. The two primary components of an effective effort to do this are agreements and articulations of common, end-state goals across the interagency and enforcement mechanisms for ensuring these goals are met.

1. Create an Interagency Clearinghouse Administered by the NSC

To heighten the clarity and specificity of cross-agency goals, an interagency clearinghouse administered by the National Security Council should be created in which agencies would deposit lessons learned during intervention operations. This would decrease the need for the creation of ad hoc goals, enable the interagency to recycle past ideas, and root its cross-agency planning in more organized precedence.

2. Create Directorates and Offices of Joint Interagency Coordination and HADCOM to serve as enforcement mechanisms

To ensure these goals are properly adhered to, there must be greater alignment between the Department of Defense's (DOD) unified combatant commands (UCC) and civilian agencies', especially the Department of State's (DOS) equivalent functional and geographic bureaus. To accomplish this, Directorates of Joint Interagency Coordination (DJIC) could be established in each of DOD's UCCs and equivalent Offices of Joint Interagency Coordination (OJIC) could be established in DOS's functional and geographic bureaus. Members of these directorates and offices would consist of civilian and military specialists trained in identifying overlaps among the agencies and in state-building. The U.S. government could hire top Human Resource managers from some of the nation's largest and most successful private companies to train these specialists in creating cohesion. DJICs and OJICs would constantly coordinate with their geographic counterparts in other agencies, establishing greater continuity in readiness to facilitate interagency operational efforts for an intervention at any time. A Deputy for Joint Interagency Cooperation that reports to the National Security Advisor would oversee DJICs and OJICs.

To assist DOD's evolution into an actor with growing state-building responsibilities, the Department should create the U.S. Humanitarian Assistance and Development Command (HADCOM), which would serve as a new combatant command tasked with assisting cohesion among the interagency at an operational level. To facilitate the blending of civil and military actors' responsibilities, a high-ranking civilian from DOS or USAID would head the Command while DOD personnel would be incorporated throughout all levels.

CONCLUSION

The recommendations above frame a comprehensive U.S. military, diplomatic, and economic intervention to assist the Malian government's effort to establish peace and stability in Mali, as well as protect U.S. interests in the region, by achieving these six specific end-states:

1. A professional, competent, and ethnically integrated Malian Armed Forces capable of launching independent, long-term operations against terrorist safe havens and smuggling routes in northern Mali.
2. A regional approach to combating transnational terrorist and smuggling organizations through increased border control, multinational coordination, and a stronger and more capable ECOWAS.
3. An identification and elimination of terrorist safe havens in northern Mali by collecting intelligence from a variety of sources, launching targeted counterterrorism operations, and addressing the economic grievances of northern Malians at risk of supporting terrorist movements.
4. A comprehensive peace deal between the Malian government and relevant parties, facilitated by problem-solving workshops, U.S.-led negotiations, and international pressure on moderate Tuaregs to support the peace process.
5. A decentralized Malian government held to higher standards of transparency and accountability, as well as a more effective justice system capable of targeting drug-related criminal activity.
6. An increase in economic opportunities for all Malians through educational reform, investment in infrastructure, agriculture, and technology, and reintegration into the Malian Armed Forces.

The challenges that arise from Mali's internal instability extend beyond the borders of the country. It is imperative that the U.S. recognizes the substantial ramifications of inaction and reassess its current approach. U.S. security interests in the region will undeniably be at stake if the Malian state collapses; therefore, these sources of instability must be actively addressed before they deteriorate into a situation beyond salvation.

APPENDIX

This joint report is a synthesis of the contributors' individual research papers. Those contributors and a brief description of their research papers are listed below.

Dismantling Terrorist Networks and Installing Security in northern Mali

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Mali's fragile state, perpetuated by the on-going peace negotiations, has created a safe haven for terrorist organizations. The organizations, such as AQIM and Ansar al-Dine already have a stronghold presence in northern Africa. Using northern Mali's rugged and mountainous terrain, these terrorist groups have the ability to hide easily from traditional forces. From January 2015, there has been noticeable upsurge in terrorist attacks. The absence of any type of peace deal will only increase the number of terrorist attacks against Malian and foreign citizens. AQIM's particular reputation as a being a hub of resources further threatens U.S. security in the region. Ergo, the United States should first capture the Tessalit airport to use a base for further operations in the area. These operations will include intelligence gathering and strategic strikes with the use of UAVs.

Empowerment through Education Reform in Mali

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Endemic poverty and unemployment make northern Mali highly susceptible to terrorist and insurgent organizations, which pose a serious threat to the stability of the entire Sahel region and to the security of Western nations as well. Expanding economic opportunities through educational reform will allow citizens to have trajectories in life outside of joining a factional organization or participating in the smuggling routes that traverse northern Mali. These reforms will combat the roots of the instability in Mali, rather than simply temporarily causing the violence to subside. Educational reform will be relatively inexpensive for the U.S. to begin and then can be turned over to the Malian government after a couple years. By using education and as a tool to build up human capital and create a strong national identity, Mali will be a prosperous friend and ally of the US for years to come.

Restoring Political Stability to Mali through a Balanced and Comprehensive Peace Agreement

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A balanced political settlement is the best chance for securing a long-lasting solution to the problems that Mali faces. Other proposals focused on counterterrorism alone or radical political solutions, such as a two state solution, are temporary fixes unlikely to provide enduring stability in Mali or in the region. In light of the rebels' recent refusal to initial the Algiers peace agreement, however, it is clear that the current peace process needs significant reform. A lasting peace deal in Mali requires the following general elements: an impartial arbiter, trust between parties, and a guarantee of implementation. Recommended solutions for a successful peace agreement include increasing the U.S. role in the negotiations, increasing U.S. diplomatic pressure on the rebels, and ensuring U.S. financial support and expertise for implementation of the future agreement.

State-Building Response to Instability in Mali

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The foundation for stability and security in Mali is continued commitment to effective, legitimate and transparent institutions within Mali. Dependence on international aid combined with systemic corruption leads to problematic relationships between the central government and its citizens. Bad governance undermines stability and long term progress, and must be confronted in the interest of creating economic opportunity and strengthening rule of law within Mali. In order to do this, the U.S. government should: commit to enable governmental transparency and strengthening of institutions

within Mali to assist the government in regaining legitimacy in the eyes of its population and erode grievance of discontented populations; fight to improved education, specifically continuing education ,to combat high levels of illiteracy to enable a vigilant citizenry; and constructing dynamic foreign aid packages in the interest erode economic grievances that are currently undermining Malian sovereignty.

Energy and Agriculture Reform for Future Stability in Mali

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Agricultural reform, energy overhaul, and infrastructure investment are crucial to ensure long-term stability and security in northern Mali. Famine and economic grievances are a major cause of civil conflict, and they play a role in Mali's security situation. To prevent famine due to drought in the Inner Niger Delta, the United States must strengthen its opposition to the construction of the Fomi Dam in Guinea, which would, if built, be disastrous to the region. Farmers should be encouraged to shift production from cotton, which uses large quantities of water, to food crops. Investment should be focused on energy – upgrading existing hydroelectric assets and irrigation projects, supporting oil exploration in the Taoudeni Basin, and implementing solar energy systems in isolated rural areas. A portion of uranium and future oil revenues should also be shared locally. Tapping into Mali's resources and potential will create employment opportunities today and national unity tomorrow.

Expanding U.S. Interagency Cohesion During Stability Interventions and Implications for Mali

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A cohesive U.S. interagency that has the ability to agree on common goals and possesses the enforcement mechanisms for ensuring these goals are met is an essential basis for executing a successful stability intervention. The establishment of an interagency clearinghouse administered by the National Security Council would enhance the ability of the interagency to establish cross-agency goals. The consolidation of non-DOD interagency members within DOD's unified combatant commands into Directorates for Joint Interagency Cooperation that would have corresponding Offices of Joint Interagency Cooperation in civil interagency bodies would be a short-term mechanism to ensure these goals are met. An eventual establishment of a new U.S. Humanitarian Assistance and Development Command (HADCOM), led by high-ranking civilians, would support DOD's evolution in its role as a state-builder.

United States Intervention in Mali: Addressing Invisible Violence

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By focusing on invisible violence in the Sahel region, specifically Mali, a United States intervention must be tailored to address sources of grievances that lead to the creation and support of rebel and extremist groups. Invisible violence is an often-unrecognized part of everyday life that serves as a source of grievance that drives instability and extremism. Invisible violence is a broad, all encompassing term that has been subtyped as structural, symbolic, and normalized violence. Recognizing cases of invisible violence as sources of grievance in Mali reveals causes for the tension and instability created by the country's three main players: the Malian Government, Tuaregs, and Islamist groups. Through specific government reforms and economic development initiatives, the United States can address invisible violence as sources for grievance; a necessary step to achieve a desired end state and ensure its sustainability.

Addressing the Potential Spread of Terrorists in the Region by Building Partnerships and Taking a Regional Approach

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In order to address the growing terrorism problem in Mali and the region while minimizing the demand for US forces, America should adopt a low footprint, three pronged approach. The first two prongs would merely be continuations of current U.S. policy: training the Malian Armed Forces as part of the TSCTP and assisting the French by providing logistical and ISR support for Operation Barkhane. The third part of

the approach involves helping to train, establish, and fund a standing ECOWAS rapid response unit numbering about 1,000 strong. This force would be under the command of ECOWAS and be trained by the United States, France, and other partners such as the UK or the EU. It would be the elite operations unit in the region and serve as a sort of security insurance policy for the member nations, providing short-term assistance to member states that cannot adequately address security crises on their own.

Security First in Mali: Probing Unpopular Solutions to the Crisis

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There are three large obstacles to a conclusive peace agreement between the northern rebel groups and the central government in Mali's civil war: first, the recurring insistence on the part of *some* rebels for full autonomy for Azawad; second and third, the insistence on the part of the central government in Bamako that a) they will not consider granting full or partial autonomy to Azawad, and b) they will not use force to subdue the rebels, whom they see as "sons and daughters of Mali." A resolution to the conflict requires that one of these has got to give. The uncompromising demand for autonomy is not likely to disappear from among the rebels, and a two-state solution would likely exacerbate instability, like South Sudan. Therefore the best and most likely option is that the central government subdues radical rebels with military force. Before needed reforms can take place, Mali needs a strong and stable state with control over its territory. The international community should train and equip the Malian army to carry out this mission.

Utilizing Military Tools to Address Economic Grievances in northern Mali by Expanding US SOF Engagement with the Malian Armed Forces

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While U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) has worked with Malian Armed Forces (MAF) for over half a century, it must expand its current training engagement to address contemporary challenges facing the Malian state. To do this, the U.S. should pursue a three-step plan to address core economic grievances of moderate Tuaregs. The first phase includes creating a Multinational Training Coalition that coordinates the efforts of the various organizations conducting training missions in Mali to produce a professional MAF. The second phase is predicated on increasing US SOF engagement with the MAF to develop its counterterrorism and border control capabilities to eliminate terrorist safe havens throughout the country. The final phase is designed to create economic opportunities for the Tuaregs by reintegrating them with the MAF. This strategy is predicated on eliminating illicit forms of Tuareg employment and providing them with alternatives to change their calculus from supporting transnational terrorist and criminal networks to working with the Bamako government to supporting the current peace process.

Cultural and Ethnic Dynamics at Work in the Malian Conflict

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Understanding cultural and ethnic dynamics in any conflict is integral in developing a successful solution. In the case of Mali, several distinctions must be made. First, efforts must be made to recognize and identify the differences between terrorist groups and political organizations. Second, the international community and other entities must make efforts to avoid assigning racial or ethnic identities to these groups, regardless of their nature. Lastly, geographic designations to "sides" of the conflict should be analyzed with a critical eye, for if actions are based strictly on a north-south paradigm, tension will only escalate. The groups in the north challenging the authority of Bamako make up a minority of a minority. If the entire northern region of Mali is designated as "rebel groups" or associated strictly with Tuaregs, despite the fact that the majority of Tuaregs are not actively advocating for a rebelling political group or otherwise, the nuanced voice of the Malian people will be whittled away to a binary. Such an instance would inhibit true stability and thwart any chance at a successful intervention.

Strategic Implementation of U.S. Security Force Assistance Brigades

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Given the undeveloped nature of Mali's security backbone, it is quintessential that international intervention is implemented to help bring Mali on its feet. In contention with rebel factions backed by Al-Qaeda in contesting for northern Mali, it is recommended that the United States deploy a brigade combat team and a few security force assistance brigades for two purposes: Mentoring and training agencies and government forces necessary for domestic stability and enforcement, and providing physical reinforcements for Mali's weak, unstructured, and untrained military and forces to foster domestic stability, until Mali can garner enough strength to protect the three domains of the state. Implications to the overall policy of U.S. intervention via SFABs is an increase in expected costs due to the need of supersizing intervention, and gaining support of neighboring countries through economic ties and aid. Furthermore, SFABs will need to mitigate risks from counterinsurgencies, while ensuring that government forces and indigenous military is properly trained in order to manage rebel conflict in the long-run.

Combating Islamist Groups in Mali by Dismantling Illicit Drug Trafficking

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Capitalizing on the scarcity of economic opportunities present in northern Mali, groups like AQIM have successfully integrated themselves into the local framework as a commercial asset. Therefore, in order to effectively strip Islamist groups of their legitimacy, it is necessary to strip them of their ability to economically provide for the needs of the Malian people. As one of the primary sources of income for Mali's Islamist groups, drug trafficking is an issue that warrants immediate action from the U.S. and regional allies. In order to effectively combat the drug trade, which is deeply ingrained within Malian society, steps must first be taken to increase government accountability and capacity, particularly through transparency measures and justice system reform. Additionally, the institution of a regional security initiative similar to the one implemented in Central America (CARSI) would improve the day-to-day security of local populations affected by drug-related violence, as well as enhance coordination between countries in the region to combat trafficking.

Conflict Resolution in Mali

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In order to support a comprehensive peace deal in Mali, the United States should convene and facilitate problem-solving workshops between representatives of the northern rebels and the central government in Bamako. Problem-solving workshops are more flexible, less formal and lower risk processes than official negotiations, which seek to develop binding resolutions. These workshops allow for creativity and exploration without judgment or commitment and as a result do not risk establishing a precedent of failure as repeated attempts in formulating peace deals do. The purpose of these workshops is not to replace official negotiations or to sign an agreement but to set the stage for formal talks by airing and working through grievances that have prevented serious attempts to negotiate in the past.