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African-led International Support Mission in Mali
(AFISMA)

Mission internationale de soutien au Mali
(MISMA)

Press Release

AFISMA Transfers its Authority to MINUSMA

Bamako, 01 July 2013: In accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2100 (April 2013), the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) today transferred its authority to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), in a colourful ceremony in Bamako, Mali.

The event was presided over by Mali's Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, General Yamoussou Camara, and attended by several dignitaries, including: the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and Head of AFISMA, former President Pierre Buyoya, the President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States, Mr. Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Mali and Head of MINUSMA, Mr. Bert Koenders, the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, M. Hervé Ladsous, Mali's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr. Tieman Hubert Coulibaly, several other Members of Mali's Transitional Government, and Members of the Bamako Diplomatic Corps.

During the ceremony, AFISMA troops symbolically took off their hats and donned the UN blue berets, thus launching the 16th UN peacekeeping mission in the world, which when fully deployed, will have 12,600 military and police uniformed personnel and become the 3rd largest peacekeeping Mission in Africa.

Speaking on the occasion, President Buyoya commended African troops in Mali for their exemplary conduct and professionalism, and thanked the Malian Government for the traditional African hospitality and generosity extended to AFISMA over the last six months, as well as ECOWAS and the AU for their political commitment and strategic vision in the search for a sustainable solution to the multidimensional crisis in Mali.

“Going forward, the AU and ECOWAS will maintain a strong presence in Mali, and accompany the country in its efforts to resolve the crisis. The AU in particular, will work towards infusing new impetus into the political process, in a bid to efficiently respond to the multifaceted threat facing this region and the Sahel,” he said.

On his part, Mr. Koenders recalled that the establishment of MINUSMA was the result of a unanimous UN Security Council decision which demonstrated the resolve of the International Community to support Mali in its search for stability, peace and prosperity. He pledged the continuous collaboration of the UN with the AU, ECOWAS and other international Partners in support of Mali's quest for peace, justice, good governance and development.

On behalf of the Malian Government, General Yamoussou Camara thanked AFISMA for helping Mali to regain control of its territorial integrity and expressed confidence in the ability of MINUSMA to continue the good work.

The ceremony was followed by the opening session of the 5th Meeting of the Support and Follow-up Group on Mali, which was presided over by the country's interim President, Mr. Dioncounda Traore.

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