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EXECUTIVE OFFICE  
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

## Note to the Secretary-General

Visits to Paris and Washington, D.C.

27/10/14

1. I travelled to Paris on 21 October and to Washington D.C. on 24 October for consultations with French and U.S. officials, ahead of the Security Council brainstorming session on Mali scheduled for 10 November (see my note to you of 10 October). The visits also provided a timely opportunity to discuss other topics, including UNMIL/Ebola, the Peace Operations Review and the Central African Republic (CAR). In Paris, I met with Foreign Minister Fabius, President Hollande's Adviser on African issues, the Chief of Defence Staff of the French Army, and with the Director of International Organisations at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Washington D.C., I met with the Senior Director for African Affairs at the National Security Council (NSC). At the State Department, I met with the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Sherman, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organisations and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs. At the Pentagon, I held meetings with the Principal Deputy Under-Secretary for Policy and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs.

2. On Mali, I noted the progress achieved by Algeria in producing elements for a draft peace agreement, which should be further elaborated to include implementation details and guarantees for both the Government and Armed Groups. The peace talks are scheduled to reconvene in late November with the expectation that an agreement might be reached between the two parties at that time. I described the complex security situation faced by MINUSMA in northern Mali, highlighting that the mission was no longer operating in a peacekeeping environment, hence my proposal that the Security Council hold a brainstorming on Mali. I indicated that, while neither a change of mandate for MINUSMA nor the establishment of a regional anti-terrorist force as proposed by countries of the region seem to be viable options at this stage, there need to be candid discussions with Council members on realistic measures that should be taken to effectively address the serious threat posed by terrorist armed groups in northern Mali and in the region at large. I urged all interlocutors to step up support to MINUSMA TCCs, including through training and equipment, and briefed on DPKO/MINUSMA's efforts to increase the operational capacity of the MINUSMA force.

3. French and U.S. officials were very supportive of the forthcoming Council brainstorming on Mali and shared our assessment of the Malian peace process as well as of the security situation in the northern part of the country. On this second aspect, French officials cautioned against any peace deal that would entrust the security of northern Mali to Armed Groups taking part to the Algiers peace process. According to the French, some of these groups, namely the HCUA and MAA, had proven links with terrorist elements. They indicated that the French Force Barkhane would increase its operations in northern Mali and agreed to enhance cooperation between Barkhane and MINUSMA, including on intelligence sharing and the conduct of joint operations involving Barkhane, MINUSMA and the Malian Army. Although Mali remains a priority for the U.S., my interlocutors explained that the restart of

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U.S. assistance to the Malian defence and security forces, which was halted following the 2012 coup, was not envisaged in the short or mid-term. U.S. officials also confirmed their readiness to extend Counter-IED (C-IED) assistance and to provide planning and staff officers in support of MINUSMA. They also undertook to assess the potential for increased information sharing. The U.S. emphasized the need for a formal request from the Secretariat for such support. Regarding the Algiers peace process, French officials welcomed Algeria's mediation efforts and stressed the need for any outcome document to be practical in terms of implementation. The U.S. expressed concern that a peace agreement should not be a 'lowest common denominator' document. My suggestion that a strong political gesture by the Malian Government was required -- which could conceivably consist of the establishment of a government of national unity -- was positively received by my interlocutors.

4. All my interlocutors in both capitals expressed serious concerns regarding the Ebola crisis. Beyond this being a global health emergency, some also noted the potential for disruption the crisis could have on the world economy. French officials informed of France's increased support to Guinea Bissau, while U.S. officials inquired about coordination mechanisms between UNMIL and UNMEER and UNMIL's role in support of the Liberian Government, and whether medical evacuation capacities had been secured by the UN. They explained that the U.S. military engagement in Liberia would be limited in time to six months, but may be converted into a civilian presence. They confirmed the U.S. readiness to support UNMEER, including by helping the mission to fly in equipment.

5. I explained to my interlocutors that UNMIL, while not a health agency, has been providing strong support to the Government of Liberia and its partners since March to address the Ebola outbreak. In the current context, it would be important for UNMIL to prioritize delivery of its core mandate of supporting the Government of Liberia in maintaining peace and security, particularly by addressing any inevitable law and order threats emerging from the Ebola crisis. Given the limited capacity of the Liberia National Police, UNMIL's stabilizing and deterrent presence is crucial to the medical response led by other actors. At the same time, I noted that the absence of medical evacuation capacity remained an issue and we continue to appeal to Member States for support. I also emphasized that, in line with the Secretary-General's prioritisation of the Ebola crisis, UNMIL has supported UNMEER, including through the deployment of staff, logistics capacities and transportation within Liberia. At the same time, I stressed the need to address broader political and security challenges of Liberia, many of which have been exacerbated by the present crisis. In that regard, I held that, ultimately, the Security Council would need to look beyond Ebola and reflect on the future of UNMIL, which has been in Liberia for 11 years. In this context, consideration could be given to a possible reimagining of the United Nations' engagement in Liberia.

6. With regard to the Peace Operations Review, my interlocutors sought information on the status of the process, and specifically with regard to the review's panel, the topics to be addressed, and the timeline for the finalisation and publication of an eventual report. All conveyed the sense that the exercise should be bold enough to look at the general direction of peacekeeping and make recommendations as to what could be done on a systemic level. U.S. officials confirmed that they were also conducting their own review of peacekeeping, and suggested *inter alia* a specific focus on both the conceptual and implementation aspects of protection of civilians, noting that there is a range of conceptual approaches and resulting

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implementation in peacekeeping operations. The operational responsiveness of Mission support to current logistics/support needs of peacekeeping was also raised as a key topic. We also discussed the military configurations of peacekeeping operations and how these relate to the types of threats, which are often of a law and order nature, and thus require a police and gendarmerie response, and agreed that this was another good angle from which to approach the review. I welcomed these suggestions and briefed on the current work streams that would feed into the review, including the Panel on Technology in Peacekeeping and the work of the Office of Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership (OPSP).

7. On the CAR, French interlocutors felt that despite force generation challenges, MINUSCA had adopted the right posture during recent incidents in Bangui. They indicated that while Sangaris would reduce in number as MINUSCA builds up its deployment, efforts were still required in coordination between the international forces on the ground. Their main concern was the need to send concerted messages on the need for a rapid organisation of elections. Foreign Minister Fabius was of the view that the international community should insist on polls being organised no later than August 2015. The restructuring of the *Forces armées Centrafricaines* (FACA) was another concern, as troops of the former national army continued to dissolve and join militia groups. I shared the French concern regarding the FACA and the need for rapid elections. In Washington, I updated U.S. officials on the situation on the ground as well as the political process, with the Bangui forum scheduled for early January.

8. My exchanges in both Paris and Washington D.C proved very useful in maintaining a high level of engagement by French and U.S. officials on issues of common interest. I intend to follow up with both capitals on pledges for support made both specifically for Mali, as well as for other missions.



Hervé Ladsous  
27 October 2014

cc: Mr. Eliasson  
Ms. Malcorra  
Ms. Amos  
Ms. Clark  
Mr. Feltman  
Ms. Haq





**Fw: DPKO OUSG - Note to the Secretary-General - Visit of USG DPKO to Paris (21 October), Washington D.C. (24 October)**

SGCentral to: Hazel Foster

Sent by: Hazel Foster

28/10/2014 10:48 AM

----- Forwarded by Hazel Foster/NY/UNO on 28/10/2014 10:47 AM -----

From: SGCentral/NY/UNO  
To: Xiomara Fiallo/NY/UNO@UNHQ,  
Date: 28/10/2014 08:55 AM  
Subject: Fw: DPKO OUSG - Note to the Secretary-General - Visit of USG DPKO to Paris (21 October), Washington D.C. (24 October)  
Sent by: Hazel Foster

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----- Forwarded by Hazel Foster/NY/UNO on 28/10/2014 08:55 AM -----

From: Dalila Benmehidi/NY/UNO  
To: SGCentral/NY/UNO@UNHQ,  
Cc: Marco Bianchini/NY/UNO@UNHQ, Fifatin Grace Kpohazounde/NY/UNO@UNHQ  
Date: 27/10/2014 07:20 PM  
Subject: DPKO OUSG - Note to the Secretary-General - Visit of USG DPKO to Paris (21 October), Washington D.C. (24 October)

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Dear colleagues,

kindly find attached for your processing a note from Mr Ladsous to the Secretary-General reporting on his visit to Paris on 21 October and Washington D.C. on 24 October.

We shall be grateful for dispatch to Ms. Malcorra and Mr. Eliasson (cc: in the note) as well.

The original will follow shortly.

Best regards



Note to the SG trip report Paris and D.C. 27oct14.pdf

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