
PRESS RELEASE

Visit to Bamako by Said Djinnit, the UN Special Representative for West Africa

Dakar, 7 april 2011 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for West Africa, Said Djinnit, visited Bamako, Mali, on 6-7 April, to reiterate the United Nations firm position on the need for an early return to constitutional order and respect for unity and territorial integrity of Mali. His visit was undertaken as a follow up to the consultations held in recent days by the UN Secretary-General BAN Ki-moon with a number of West African leaders with regard to the situation in Mali. It was also intended to support, on the ground, mediation efforts led by President Compaoré of Burkina Faso on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

In that context, Said Djinnit held a series of meetings with the ECOWAS mediation team led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso, Djibril Bassolé, and comprising the Ivorian Minister in charge of Regional Integration, Adama Bictogo, and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Nigeria, Nurudeen Mohammad. He also met the President of the CNRDRE, Captain Amadou Haya Sanogo, as well as other Malian stakeholders, including the President of the Constitutional Court, the Members of the Bureau of the National Assembly, the Members of the "Collective of Northern citizens" (Collectif des ressortissants du Nord-COREN), and leaders of political parties and civil society.

The Special Representative welcomed the signing, on 6 April, of the Framework Agreement between the President of the CNRDRE, Captain Sanogo, and the ECOWAS mediation, as a significant step towards effective restoration of constitutional order, and commended the mediation for this achievement. Said Djinnit urged Captain Sanogo to continue to cooperate with the ECOWAS mediation in the implementation of the Agreement. He stressed in that regard that the Agreement forms a basis for a transition that is expected to take the country to credible elections, within a reasonable timeframe, and restore in the meantime legitimate institutions capable of addressing in earnest the daunting challenges facing Mali. "In the current context, the sooner constitutional order is restored and legitimate institutions are in place, the better it will be in order to allow the Government in Bamako to face the situation prevailing in the North and engage with relevant stakeholders in the search for a solution that preserves the country's territorial integrity," Djinnit declared.

Before leaving Bamako, Said Djinnit had a brief encounter with the Speaker of the National Assembly, Dioncounda Traoré, who had just returned to Bamako to serve as interim President in accordance with the provisions of the Framework Agreement. He took this opportunity to reiterate the full support of the United Nations to the implementation of the Framework Agreement, and to the ECOWAS mediation efforts.

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