

# The Mali Election Scam: Legitimizing France's "Total Re-conquest".

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"The objective is the total reconquest of Mali" -French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, (20 January, 2013)

Presidential elections are due to take place in Mali on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup>. The latest polls indicate a victory for Ibrahim Boubecar Keïta, with Soumaila Cissé coming in second place. There are 27 candidates running in the election. The holding of the election just months after the French military intervention in January 2013 has been widely criticized due to the chaotic state of the country.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon admitted that the elections would not be 'perfect' but indicated that they would have to be accepted by the Malian people.

There have already been reports of widespread fraud and irregularities, with thousands of NINA (Numero d'identité nationale) voter cards not being delivered to voters. There have also been reports of dollars being handed out to bribe voters.

There is a very low distribution of NINA cards in the refugee camps both inside and outside Mali. Only 300 voter cards have been distributed among 730,000 refugees in camps in Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Algeria and Niger while Burkina Faso's 50,000 Malian refugees have only received 30 NINA cards.

The electoral lists are the same as 2009, thereby excluding 300,000 eligible voters who have come of age since then. The NINA cards were only distributed in April in spite of the fact that it would take at least 6 to 12 months for their adequate distribution in a war torn country of Mali's size.

The regions of the North of the country, formally occupied by jihadists and separatist forces will hardly vote at all. The MNLA, Azawad National Liberation Movement, who waged a war against the central government in Bamako since 2012, want to declare independence from the Malian state. The region of Kidal in the North is still occupied by the rebel forces, with French troops also stationed there.

The hastily organized elections will not help the cause of national reconciliation due to the fact that so many people have been excluded from voting.

The Malian war and its consequences

In March 21, 2012, generals of Mali's military (green berets) overthrew the country's president Amadou Toumani Toure, inaugurating the National Committee for the Restoration of Democracy and State. The coup was led by Captain Amadou Aya Sanogo and was

supported the next day by a mass, popular movement called the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement led by left-wing deputy Dr. Oumar Mariko.

The generals were unhappy with the half-hearted efforts of their government to crack down on the terrorists invading the country from the north. Soldiers had been badly equipped, with many going hungry. Amadou Toumani Toure had ruled Mali as a French puppet since 2002 and previously been accused of drug dealing with war lords.

Toure had served Western corporations well, while the Malian people languished in dire poverty. Many of the supporters of the coup had demonstrated in support of Muammar Kaddafi during the Libyan war of 2011 and wanted to see a strong state defeat what they considered to be a French conspiracy to destabilize and subsequently re-colonize the mineral rich country, by using jihadist terrorism as a pretext for intervention.

The reaction of the 'international community' to the military coup was swift. The coup was condemned and sanctions were imposed on Mali, with ECOWAS, the Community of West African States threatening to invade and occupy the country to restore 'democracy'.

These measures impeded the efforts of the Malian military to regain control of the Northern territories. The sanctions also helped precipitate a humanitarian crisis as Malian goods could not be transported from ports in the Ivory Coast and Guinea.

All of this weakened the country's defenses enabling the terrorists to capture village after village. In spite of the fact that the 'international community' was fully aware of the advances of the terrorists, it was more concerned with the 'rule of law' and 'democracy' than in helping the Malian military defeat the barbarians. The generals finally ceded to the international pressure and agreed to nominate Dioncounda Traore,( a NATO asset) as interim president.

Meanwhile, the MNLA was joined by extremist Wahhabi terrorists groups funded by Qatar and Saudi Arabia, France's allies. The terrorist groups, ACMI, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Magreb and Mujao (Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa), overran some of the country's most important cities such as Timbuktu, where they destroyed thousands of ancient scientific manuscripts and holy shrines, as well as occupying the cities of Tessalit, Gao and Kidal.

In January 11<sup>th</sup> 2013 after the occupation of the town of Konna by islamists, France launched Operation Serval, a military invasion of Mali aimed at 'liberating' the country from the terrorists. The pretext for the intervention was a letter sent by French puppet president Dioncounda Traore to the UN.

By March most of the terrorist groups had been driven out of Northern cities, which were now under the control of French and Chadian military. Most of the fighting was done by Chadian soldiers with the French playing a supporting role.

An article published by Le Nouvel Observateur in June 2013 revealed that the MNLA had been working closely with the DGSE(Direction générale de la Sécurité extérieure) the French secret service since 2003, confirming the suspicions of Malian patriots that the French had deliberately used the terrorists to destabilise the country.[1]

On April 18<sup>th</sup> the Ouagadougou Accords were signed in the Burkina Faso capital between the interim government and the MNLA rebels. As the MNLA rebels are puppets of France and do not have any legitimacy, while the interim government is unelected, the accords are a violation of the Mali's 1992 constitution.

The Ouagadougou Accords effectively hand over sovereignty of Kidal and the Northern regions to the MNLA rebels. Under international law, states are not required to recognize sovereignty over national territories by armed gangs. This is precisely what the Ouagadougou Accords require.

Mali is going to be partitioned. This has been the French plan since the 1990s; the country will be divided and conquered, with an unstable independent republic of Azawad in the north and a truncated, impoverished Mali in the South, with French military bases 'keeping the peace'. To compound the country's problems, there are three potential 'azawads': the Moor Azawad of the North west, the Toureg Azawad of the North East and a mixture of Songhay, Peul and Toureg on the banks of the Niger river. It is therefore possible that the armed gangs will continue to fight among themselves if independence is achieved under the UN occupation.

Oumar Mariko- The people's candidate.

If there is any 'terrorist' feared by the French occupation forces in Mali, Oumar Mariko is certainly one of them. Dr. Mariko is the secretary general of Parti Sadi, Solidarité africaine pour la démocratie et l'indépendance, African Solidarity for Democracy and Independence.

Mariko comes from a generation of African intellectuals inspired by Thomas Sankara, the Marxist revolutionary of Burkina Faso, and the African socialism of Mali's first president Modibo Keita. Mariko was one of the organizers of the March 22 movement, a popular mass movement which initially supported the military coup, hoping to use the seizure of power to mobilize the masses in favour of genuine democracy.

Mariko was prevented from travelling to France last year for a conference to discuss French imperialism in Mali. One of the reasons for the celerity with which elections have been organized in Mali is to prevent the masses from voting for Parti Sadi's candidate.

Mariko is the only presidential candidate, who has genuine mass support and has not relied on corporate funding for his election campaign. Mariko is an admirer of Hugo Chavez and wants to reestablish the role of the social state through nationalizing national resources, re-establishing national sovereignty and instituting popular democracy.

Mariko is the man the French government wants out of the picture. However, given the fact that so many have been excluded from the election and there has been so little time to organize mass meetings, and the allegations of fraud, Mariko is unlikely to win.

Legitimizing neo-colonialism

The French ruling class wants to create an image of legitimacy for its invasion and "total reconquest" of Mali. The Malian elections are a total sham. They have been imposed on a people traumatized by a war planned and foisted upon them by imperialism.

The partition of the country corresponds to the plan elaborated by French politician Alain

Peyrefitte during the De Gaulle era, which involves creating the conditions for French control over the Sahara/Sahel region.

The French are attempting to resurrect the 1957 L'Organisation commune des régions sahariennes (O CRS) in co-operation with the 2004 US Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative, a plan to control the Sahara which could see the eventual destabilization of Niger, Algeria, Tchad, Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania, Senegal and Ghana.

This is part of the US initiative Africom, which aims to militarize all of Africa in accordance with US/NATO strategic interests, thereby weakening Chinese influence in the continent and ensuring access to cheap resources for Western multi-national corporations.

The purpose of the electoral charade is to legitimize the break up of the country and the occupation by French and UN forces, thus preventing the Malian people from ever having a claim over their own lands and resources. As a consequence, the country will be partitioned and Mali will become the new Somalia.

[ 1 ]

<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130607.OBS2446/mali-les-secrets-d-une-guerre-eclair.html>

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