UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIRD REPORT OF THE SG ON HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH HUMAN SECURITY BY MALIAN CSOs JUNE 18, 2014

Good morning everyone- thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me an opportunity to address the General Assembly on the thematic debate on Human Security in light of the third report of the Secretary-General on human security in the next development framework in particular with respect to women in situations of vulnerability- the Mali Human Security Project

- Mr. Chairman as you know the Sahel region has become one of the most challenging regions in sub-Saharan Africa because of the multiple effects of conflict, insecurity, humanitarian crisis, human rights abuses and democratic consolidation across the region and that include Mali, which since March 2012 has been engulfed with multi-dimensional crisis (military, security, humanitarian, cultural, socio-economic, political and institutional)

- Those who lived or worked in Mali noticed that there were serious lingering problems early 2010 despite the façade of an example of a stable and democratic country in West Africa. Since 2011 early warning signs as captured by the ECOWAS Early Warning System supported by data from CSO (WANEP) revealed that the country was on a timed bombshell waiting to be exploded (extreme corruption, high unemployment, deteriorating educational system, food insecurity, conflicts between communities, dysfunctional judicial system, tension in the army, weak institutions, lack of inspiring leadership, poor engagement with the rebel groups in the north etc were all glaring and suggestive of a country with serious human security challenges. In the course of 2011, ECOWAS conducted several missions to Mali based on the analysis of data from the ECOWARN system, alerting the Government of Mali about the seriousness of the indicators and urging the government to engage in preventive peacebuilding measures. Despite the early warning signs with specific attention to issues of proliferation of heavy weapons brought by the ex-combatants from Khadafy's regime without a Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration process, the reorganization of the rebel groups with Jihadists in the north, drugs smuggling, human trafficking, sexual exploitation and slavery, all the ingredients for human insecurity were happening in the corridors from Kidal, Timbuktu, Gao, and Mopti, and unfortunately we didn't pay much attention to the promotion of human security.
Mr. Chairman, as a result of the impasse in resolving the Malian crisis there's complete distrust from the population, insecurity reigns throughout, people constantly living in fear, no real rule of law, no real prospect for peace in the near future.

Mali, a previous example of democracy in West Africa just couple of years ago is now faced with the worse kind of multi-dimensional crisis of its history; Mali is probably the only country in the world fighting the war on terrorism with multiple actors each with its own agenda - rebel groups (the Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad, the newly created High Islamic Council of the Azawad, Ansar Dine, Mujao, and Al-Qaida in the Maghreb) along with two major international missions MINUSMA and the French military SERVAL.

With the highly celebrated and popularized “liberation” of the French army in January 2013 and the replacement of the AU-ECOWAS African Standby forces (AFISMA) by the UN Multidimensional and stabilization Mission (MINUSMA) last July-the Malian crisis is still far from being resolved; in fact Kidal is still under the full control of the rebel and jihadists despite the presence of MINUSMA and the French Army.

Despite all these military efforts, the crisis in Mali still persists- this goes to show that military approach alone has not been able to solve the Malian problems. The terrorists can be chased out to go into hiding in the mountains in Kidal and Timbuktu or blend in with the local population in Gao but without a holistic human security approach the root causes of the problem are not addressed. Military approach therefore can only be said to be a short term solution rather than the sustainable solution to the Malian crisis.

After a year of occupation by the jihadists in the northern regions with the sharia law in practice and the occupation by the military junta with no rule of law in Bamako – Malian women living in both the northern and southern regions have experienced insecurity in all its forms, gross human rights violations perpetuated by the rebel groups, the jihadists as well as the military junta throughout 2012;

As the result women have suffered atrocities and were subject to sexual and gender based violence, including individual and collective rapes, sexual slavery, they were beaten, mutilated, victims of trafficking and involuntary prostitution, they suffered physical and psychological trauma and were constantly living in fear and above all they had no recourse to justice.

To realize the goal of sustainable peace and development in Mali, we have to engage in the promotion of human security; Hence WANEP’s Human Security Project is indeed timely and brings a regional perspective into the conflict resolution and peacebuilding as the Malian crisis is a regional crisis involving other countries and needs to be treated as such if we really want peace in the Sahel region.
• It's the only project of its kind currently where CSOs after a mapping process gathered together and formed the Malian Human Security Network, representing all the 8 regions with focal points spearheading the activities in their respective regions. They, through a national workshop have developed an operational workplan on human security to be implemented in the various communities in the 8 regions throughout the course of the project.

• Women representing 56% of the Malian population are at the heart of the WANEPP’s Human Security project; Mali will be able to build the foundations of peace and development only with the full participation and empowerment of women. With this human security project women are not regarded as mere victims of discrimination who must somehow be rescued through special measures, rather the human security approach provides a platform for women to design and decide the framework of dialogue and they are treated as the mainstream of society and as the real agents of change. The human security project invests in the empowerment of women as it is necessary for sustainable peace and development and not as a guilty compensation for past discrimination. This empowerment of Malian women is vital because they will be at the fore front of the intra-inter communal dialogues, bringing belligerents together to talk to each other, state facts, admit wrong doing, go beyond their differences, forgive each other and find common ground; they will conduct these dialogues in their respective communities and regions with the end goal of participating in the national reconciliation process and the rebuilding of social cohesion; Malian women play a positive role in future development and in building an edifice of peace in their societies. This investment in human security has higher returns for humanity than any other alternative investment.

• Military intervention is indeed necessary sometimes but it has to be accompanied by political dialogue, intra and inter-communal dialogue and with the full involvement and participation of the population who may be the actors and the victims of the crisis as well as drivers of change.

• This HS project is driven by Malian CSOs, who traditionally worked on socio-economic development projects related to health, education, food security, water and sanitation have now shifted their focus on human security fighting for human rights promotion, good governance, restoring rule of law, transitional justice and human security approach, all in the hope of ensuring sustainable peace in Mali; Malians need to be reconciled as a community, as a people as one nation living in harmony where social cohesion is the common ground and people live free from fear and want.

• The promotion of human security approach is imperative in ensuring sustainable peace and development in Mali. Mali is de-facto a peaceful nation, Malians were only used to
dialogue and mediation as the most peaceful means of conflict resolution, they traditionally only cultivate a culture of peace throughout their history- hence HS is the ultimate choice of Malians in this context of semi-post-conflict environment

- Mr. Chairman, despite all the initiatives mentioned above in the promotion of human security, Malian women face many challenges: since the first Women’s Conference in Mexico City in 1975, much has been accomplished in raising consciousness, in setting norms and standards, and in setting up national and international machineries to implement the various national and global plans of action
- Mali has agreed to all the regional and international instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Kinds of Discrimination Against Women of 1979, the Beijing Conference of 1995, the UNSCR 1325 of 2000, the Maputo Protocol of 2003, etc, yet, women still do not enjoy the same opportunities as men and the statistics show glaring disparities in access to social services, income and employment opportunities between Malian men and women
- Mali has developed a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, calling for the full participation, promotion and protection of women in conflict situations, however, this NAP has never been adopted by the National Assembly, despite major advocacy by women’s groups
- Malian women are still not part of dialogue, mediation or negotiation processes; they are under-represented in political parties and nominations, in ministerial positions, in the parliament, in many state institutions;
- Malian women’s need are still not taken into account in policy formulation or implementation in the areas of development, peace or security
- Even though there are women as police officers, gendarmes etc. women’s specific needs are still not taken into account in the security sectors and they rarely hold high ranking military positions
- In addition, gender-blind policies and programs have left women behind and gender-biased customs and traditions have exacerbated their deprivation
- The Human Security agenda is inclusive, involves women, men, boys and girls and all stakeholders- from government, UN agencies, donors, civil society organizations, and local people themselves an opportunity to define their needs, set goals, mobilize resources to implement their ideas and ensures local ownership and sustainability
- Human security provides a holistic approach to security, looking across broad sectors to address interrelated issues. In this way, communities can build positive coping mechanisms to deal with many types of insecurities, especially in a post conflict context
of Mali; Just like human rights are women's rights Human Security is women's security- the two are NOT mutually exclusive

- Mr. Chairman with all that said, with your permission I’d like to make the following recommendations:
  - To the Government of Mali- to develop a national human security strategy as a conflict prevention tool which will complement and reinforce WANEP and its partner’s HS project
  - Provide national budget for projects on the promotion of human security
  - Ensure political will to scale-up the human security approach throughout the country
  - Revise the existing NAP on UNSCR 1325 and ensure its adoption by the National Assembly as well as its implementation with strong political will
  - Provide space for women’s groups to play an active role in advocating for the importance of human security in response to Mali’s multiple and complex challenges
  - To CSOs- educate and sensitize population on human security and its importance as a conflict prevention mechanism
  - CSOs- to advocate for the government’s implementation of the national human security strategy and play their oversight role in the process
  - CSOs to sustain a viable network of human security with focal points in each of the 8 regions of Mali
  - To the UN- to incorporate human security as a priority in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
  - Use the principle of knowledge management in the implementation of human security approach and ensure its coordination among the UN agencies in Mali
  - To development partners-to provide financial and technical assistance to CSOs and government in the areas of human security
  - Hold government accountable in the implementation of a national strategy on human security

Mr. Chairman, the sooner we start to engage in these recommendations for a comprehensive Human Security, the sooner we are to envision a world in which people live in dignity, free of fear and want.

I thank you.