



Brussels - International partners yesterday pledged to support Mali's political transition and development process, at a conference organized jointly by the Governments of Mali and France with the European Union.

Participants at the High-level Conference on Support and Development of Mali included the Malian President Dioncounda Traoré, Heads of State and Ministers from African and European countries, as well as representatives from multilateral institutions.

International partners pledged a total of €3.25 billion in support of Mali development plan. The funds will contribute to Mali's sustainable recovery plan, which aims to restore the country's territorial integrity and promote peace, security and reconciliation, paving the way for inclusive growth and long-term development. The overall cost of the Recovery Plan is €4.3 billion.

"Addressing the crisis in Mali goes beyond addressing security threats. It will require tackling deep-rooted political, social and development challenges," said United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) Associate Administrator Rebeca Grynspan, who represented the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the event.

Ms. Grynspan added that "we count on our Malian partners to use this opportunity to promote a sustainable and inclusive political process that will lead to improved governance". Mali is expected to organize presidential elections in July which are considered as a key step in the transition process.

The UN has adopted a joint framework, aligned with the country's recovery plan, which aims to support the country in the areas of good governance, sustainable peace and access to basic social services. It has established a Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to provide support for Malian authorities as they extend state control and work to strengthen good governance.

UNDP is providing technical support to Mali's electoral institutions and to the dialogue and reconciliation process. In addition, it has been helping to build the capacities of the organizations involved in the political transition, including the recently established Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation.

Capacity-building will also be provided to the National Assembly, aiming to enhance procedures and political participation, with a focus on the inclusion of women parliamentarians.

In addition, UNDP has developed an electoral cycle project to support the forthcoming elections in Mali, with a basket fund mechanism in place.

The European Union and UNDP signed a financing agreement for €14.8 million in support of the electoral process, in the presence of the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso, President of France François Hollande and President Traoré.

Warning that long-term development should not overshadow Mali's immediate needs, Ms. Grynspan urged countries to step up their support to tackle the current humanitarian situation in the North of the country. The precarious security situation in Mali is being further exacerbated

International community pledges €3.25 billion to help rebuild Mali

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by pervasive food insecurity and extreme poverty throughout Africa's Sahel region, with some 10 million people at risk of starvation this year.

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