

EU CONTRIBUTES TO ESTABLISHING THE MALIAN ARMED FORCES JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER

By supporting the MaAF in the establishing of the Joint Operations Center the EU is helping the democratic government of Mali to exercise their sovereignty over the entire territory and to protect its population from terrorists groups. An improved security in Mali will also help to improve the security in Europe.

The Malian Army (MaAF) is engaged in combating the terrorists groups in the center and North of Mali. One of the challenges is to establish an efficient command and control chain in order to coordinate the activities of its units deployed on operations in the Malian regions. EUTM Mali has developed a project in order to help MaAF improve its command and control capabilities. Ultimately the MaAF General Staff will be able to better liaise with subordinate Military Regions and the units deployed around the Malian territory.

The project started in November 2017 with the renovation of the Joint Operations Center (COIA). In this phase the building was renewed and thereafter the Center was equipped with a computer network, screens and video conferencing capabilities.

In a second stage, an Operations Centre Staff Officers' Course (CSCO) was conducted with the participation of 26 MaAF officers with 16 instructors from EUTM Mali, Operation Barkane and Belgium as their instructors. The course lasted from 29 January to 23 February. The main topic studied was the planning and conduct of operations at the Operational Level. At the end of this course an exercise was conducted in order to put into practice the knowledge acquired by these MaAF officers during the theoretical portion of the course. The training was a real success and those officers trained will now be appointed to the COIA. The course ended with a closing ceremony presided by the Chief of Staff of the Malian Air Force Colonel Mayor Souleymane Bamba representing the MaAF Chief of Staff and the General Millan, EUTM Mali Mission Force Commander.

More CSCO courses will be conducted in the near future to foster the capabilities of the MaAF in the area of command and control of operations. The new COIA will not only allow MaAF to conduct operations in a more effective way but also to better coordinate its efforts with MINUSMA and Barkane forces.