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Yet more German – EU created Push Pull Northerly Migration from Mali into Europe!

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The Human Rights Teachers

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[BAMAKO/BERLIN](#)(Own report) - Serious accusations raised by the United Nations against the Malian army are also implicating the Bundeswehr and German policy. According to a recent UN report, Mali's armed forces have been massacring civilians since some time - within the framework of its counter-terrorist operations in central Mali.

Since over five years, EU troops, particularly from the Bundeswehr, have been training Malian soldiers. The Bundeswehr claims that "content and guidelines of humanitarian international law" are an "important component of its training concept."

The development in central Mali exemplifies how state discrimination and social conflicts foster jihadism - and how anti-jihadi military action, favoured by Berlin and the EU - in Mali only leads to a steady deterioration of the situation and an increase in brutality.

According to observers, the situation in Mali has become significantly worse since the German-European intervention began five years ago.

Massacres of Civilians

The United Nations is raising serious accusations against the Malian army. According to a new report on recent developments in this West African country, several massacres of civilians have been committed in that country over the past few months, and experts are blaming the country's armed forces. The UN is investigating several mass graves that have been discovered between February and July of this year.[1] One incident pertains to the execution of 44 civilians and three enforced disappearances. In a second incident, documented by the UN experts, 12 Malians were killed at a cattle market. A third incident involves 25 civilian victims, who had been arrested just previously during a house-to-house sweep, whose bodies were then found in three mass graves. The UN report notes that the information "suggests a worrying pattern of human rights violations against civilians by the security forces during counter-terrorist operations." According to the UN, the government in Bamako has launched investigations; however, no action has been taken against the soldiers that were implicated.

Ineffective Corner Stone

These accusations are also implicating the Bundeswehr and German policy. For more than five years, the Bundeswehr has been participating in the EUTM (European Union Training Mission) in Mali. According to its own information, the Bundeswehr is "one of the main troop providers," providing even EUTM Mali's commander from Mai 2015 to July 2016.[2] On the one hand, the mission is advising Mali's defence ministry and military command, and on the other, training its armed forces. According to the Bundeswehr, around 10,300 Malian soldiers - over 60 per cent of the Malian army - have already taken part in the training. "The content and guidelines of humanitarian international law" are an "important component of the training concept." [3] EUTM Mali describes the preoccupation with human rights as another "corner stone" of its mission.[4] Their "important component" and "corner stone" have apparently remained completely ineffective.

Mass Graves

The question of the Malian troops - being trained by soldiers from the EU, particularly from the Bundeswehr - allegedly massacring civilians is all the more urgent, since these allegations have been re-emerging for quite some time.

Almost a year ago, Human Rights Watch (HRW) had already pointed out that since late 2016, Malian forces have allegedly committed "extrajudicial killings," arbitrary arrests, torture, or enforced disappearances of men accused of supporting Islamist armed militias.[5] HRW documented three graves of civilians allegedly executed by soldiers: **One** contains the remains of five men killed on December 19, 2016; the **second** the remains of three men detained on January 21, 2017; and the **third** the remains of at least six men abducted in early May 2017.

HRW did not report, whether these revelations have had any repercussions on the EUTM Mali training of Malian troops, particularly by Bundeswehr soldiers. On the contrary, the massacres have increased.

Social Conflicts

The United Nations' accusations also implicate German policy. Looking at the background of the massacres, one can see that military combat - favoured by Berlin and the EU - against the Malian jihadi, is mistaken even in its approach and, therefore, doomed to failure. The soldiers' massacres of civilians that have so far come to light were not carried out in northern Mali - under jihadi occupation by since 2012 - but in the Macina region in the centre of the country.

This region is characterized by the traditional conflict between crop farmers and shepherds - the crop farmers, often belonging to the Bambara linguistic group and the shepherds usually to that of the Peulh (or Fulani/Fulbe). The conflict has repeatedly escalated, particularly when - as has been the case for quite some time - the River Niger is not furnishing enough water, thereby escalating competition for arable or grazing lands respectively.

Furthermore, the Peulh, a minority in Mali, suffer under state discrimination. "The shepherds have always been oppressed," noted an expert on the region already two years ago in the Journal "Jeune Afrique." They are arbitrarily taxed by state authorities and arbitrarily fined by the police. In view of the escalating conflict between the Peulh shepherds and the Bambara crop farmers this cannot end well.[6]

Jihadi Model

Since 2015, a growing number, of the Peulh in particular, have in fact begun to rise up against their discrimination, taking on the model that some believe promises to be successful: expel the state authorities, as jihadis had done in northern Mali in 2012.[7] This has led to the formation of

the jihadi "Macina Liberation Front" organization (known by its French acronym, FLM).

The FLM Front has regularly committed terrorist attacks, usually targeting representatives of what they perceive as the discriminating state, especially its military. The army, in turn, is reacting with increased brutality, even massacring civilians - primarily Peulh - suspected of supporting the FLM.

The United Nations documented, for example, a massacre of 25 civilians in June 2018 in two villages near the town of Mopti in central Mali. According to the Malian human rights organization Kisal, Malian soldiers who carried out a sweep, released all members of the Songhai linguistic group, while abducting 25 members of the Peulh. All of were shot.[8]

"Afghanistan in Africa"

This development in central Mali not only exemplifies the fact that local jihadism could have been prevented - with reasonable efforts to halt the anti-Peulh discrimination and to resolve the social conflicts - **but also that the military's "war on terror" is not striking at the roots of the problem, but is rather continuously escalating it.**

In the five years, since the arrival of the Bundeswehr, the situation in Mali has persistently deteriorated, prompting major media organs - not fundamentally unsympathetic to the Bundeswehr's mission in Mali - to begin to refer to an "Afghanistan in Africa."[9]

[1] Mali security forces accused of killing civilians: UN report. news24.com 10.08.2018.

[2], [3] Die Ausbildungsmission in Mali (EUTM Mali). einsatz.bundeswehr.de 07.05.2018.

[4] DIH or Droit International Humanitaire (International Human Rights) is a Corner Stone for EUTM Mali. eutmmali.eu 15.08.2018.

[5] Mali: Unchecked Abuses in Military Operations. hrw.org 08.09.2017.

[6] Rémi Carayol: Mali: dans le Macina, un jihad sur fond de révolte sociale. jeunefrique.com 20.06.2016.

[7] Jack Watling, Paul Raymond: Don't Call It a Jihadist Insurgency - Yet. foreignpolicy.com 16.12.2015. Macina: Mali's second insurgency. ultimatio-blog.org 15.02.2018.

[8] Twenty-five bodies found after army sweep in Mali. news24.com 18.06.2018.

[9] Matthias Gebauer, Christoph Titz: Afghanistan in Afrika. spiegel.de 22.04.2018.