

March 2012

Military officers seize Bamako, forming the National Committee for the Restoration of Democracy and State (CNRDR) and toppling President Amadou Toumani Touré.

August 2019 – 2020

Colonel Assimi Goïta leads a mutiny, detaining President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta and his prime minister; the junta declares control and promises a transitional civilian government.

September 2020

ECOWAS imposes sanctions, demanding a civilian-led transition; the junta agrees to an 18-month roadmap but retains military influence.

May 2021

"Coup within a coup" – Goïta removes interim President Bah Ndaw after a cabinet reshuffle, declares himself president and extends the military rule.

2021-2022

Consolidation of military rule – The junta arrests former civilian ministers, stalls elections, and deepens ties with Russia and Wagner, cementing a new political order.

Since the 2013 French-led military intervention, Mali's peace-building has hinged on a series of negotiated accords and UN facilitated talks. The 2015 Algiers peace agreement, brokered by the African Union and supported by MINUSMA, created parallel governance structures and set a roadmap for demobilisation, though its implementation lagged. In early 2024, a renewed inter-Malian dialogue in the north, involving the Coordination of Movements of Azawad and the Malian Minister of Reconciliation, was launched to revive the stalled peace process. These efforts illustrate a persistent, albeit fragile, mediation trajectory spanning a decade. This poster focuses on local and third-party actors influencing the peace prospects in Mali in order to address the many complexities at play.

France

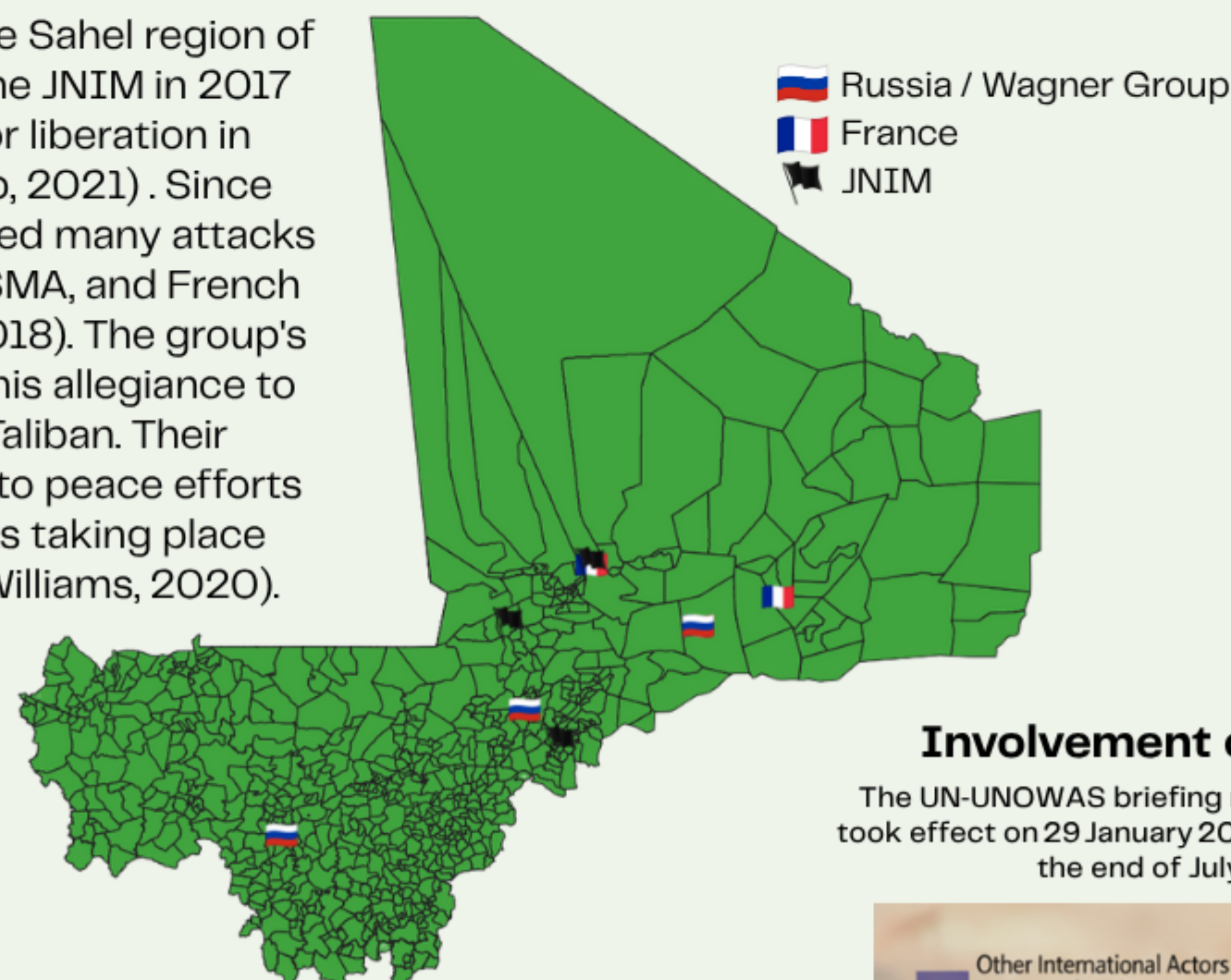
France entered Mali in January 2013 with Operation Serval, rapidly pushing back jihadist advances and securing major towns. The follow-on Operation Barkhane (2014-2022) expanded the mission into a regional counter-terrorism framework, providing logistics, air support and training to Malian forces. (Finabel, 2023). French troops operated under a status-of-forces agreement with Bamako and coordinated closely with MINUSMA and EU training missions. By 2022, mounting political friction with regional actors and the rise of Russian private-military actors led France to withdraw its forces, marking the end of a near-decade of direct military involvement. (Bertrand, 2023).

Russia

Russia has been an important partner for Mali since Soviet times, however since 2021, this influence has been expressed through the state-linked private military company, the Wagner Group (WG) (Gogny and de Castro, 2025). This power has only increased, attributed to a power vacuum after the French withdrawal (Levine, 2025), as well as financial motivations, especially for the funding of the conflict in Ukraine. Russia's involvement has proved popular amongst Malians (Pokalova, 2023), despite accusations of human rights violations (Levine, 2025). After the death of their head, Prigozhin, the WG has been nationalised, absorbed by the Defence Ministry into the paramilitary Africa Corps (Omeje, 2025).

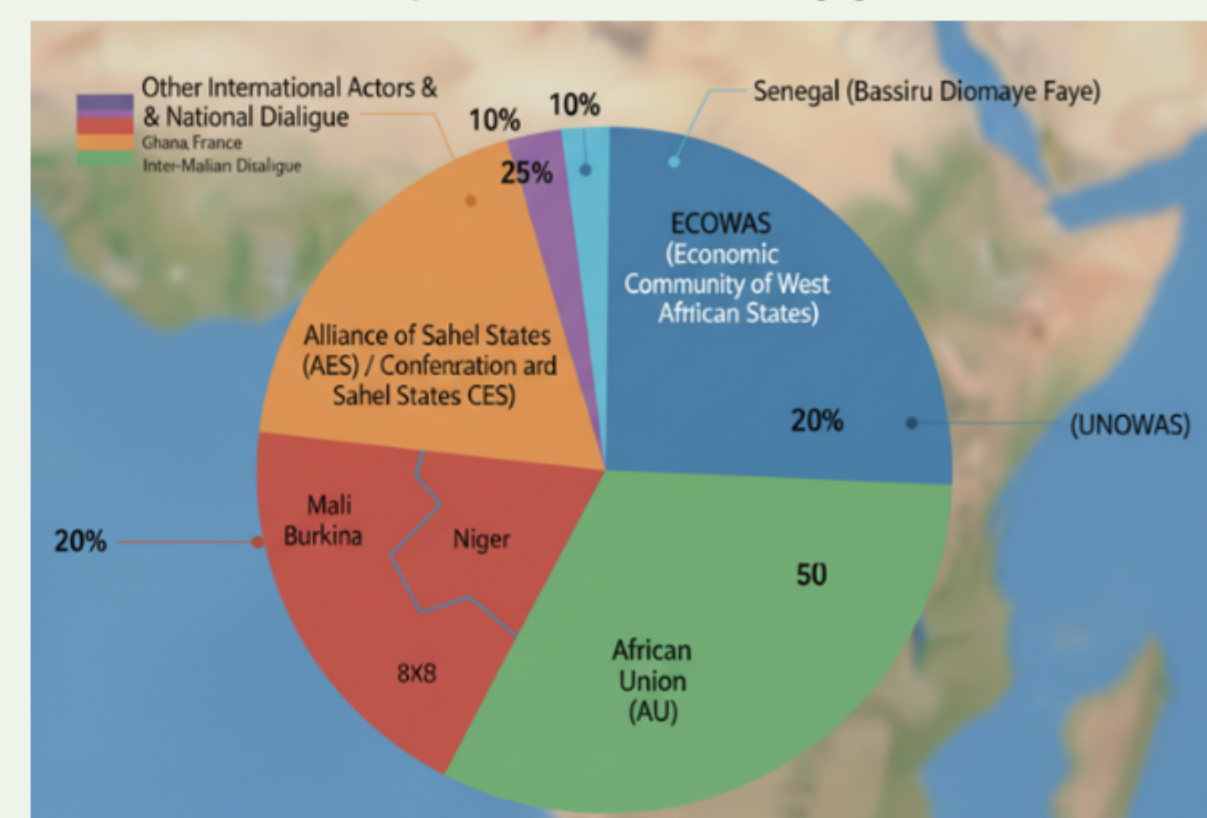
JNIM

JNIM is a jihadist group that operates in the Sahel region of Africa. Three of the groups that formed the JNIM in 2017 have ties to the 2012 violent uprising for liberation in Northern Mali (International Crisis Group, 2021). Since their creation in 2017, the JNIM has launched many attacks against the Malian Defense forces, MINUSMA, and French personnel in the region (United Nations, 2018). The group's leader Iyad Ag Ghali who has expressed his allegiance to the leaders of both Al-Qaida and the Taliban. Their presence in Mali presents a severe threat to peace efforts in the region, with several of their attacks taking place against third-party actors (Eizenga and Williams, 2020).



Involvement of actors in peace processes

The UN-UNOWAS briefing notes that the Alliance of Sahel States' separation took effect on 29 January 2025, with ECOWAS granting a transition period until the end of July 2025 to define future engagement.



Sources

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