

## MALI

### TRAORE REVIEWS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN NEW YEAR SPEECH

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[Address to the nation by Malian President Moussa Traore on the occasion of the New Year--recorded]

[Excerpts] Fellow citizens, we are about to begin a new year that will soon follow 1979, which has been, in many respects, a decisive year for our country. Since this is a time for presenting good wishes, I would like to begin this message by wishing each of you a Happy New Year. I hope that 1979, which has been a difficult year for us, will be followed by a year that will bring happiness and good health to all of you, and to our dear country progress and well-being in harmony, fraternity and peace. To our compatriots living outside the country, I address my New Year wishes and would like to tell them how much we expect to see them return home finally one day to take up their tasks and thus directly contribute to Mali's development. To the aliens who have come to work and live among us, I wish a Happy New Year as well as a stay which will be fruitful to them and to Mali. This country is also theirs since they are contributing in one way or another to its construction. We are grateful to them for their contribution.

As I have just said, the year 1979 has been a difficult one for us. It could not have been otherwise considering the accumulated disastrous effects of world inflation and increasing oil prices, the persisting drought, the terrible consequences of which are even more obvious to our people, and the difficulties experienced in the sale of our products. We experienced a great deficit in grain production. The effects of this deficit were attenuated thanks to the measures taken by the government and particularly the liberalization of the internal market [few words indistinct] and to the assistance of the international community. While paying tribute to our benefactors for this assistance and expressing our gratitude to them, we are compelled to make a new appeal to the friendly countries and the various international and nongovernmental organizations to continue their generous assistance. Our country experienced insufficient rainfall throughout its territory again this year. This rainfall, which was considerably less than that of 1978, had a disastrous effect on our crops. Production of crops such as cotton, tobacco and [word indistinct] during the 1979-1980 season was either superior or equal to that of the 1978-1979 season, but last season's production of millet, sorghum, maize, rice and peanuts was less than that of the 1978-1979 season. Thus, our country faces a considerable food shortage. While renewing our appeal to the international community, I would also like to appeal to the civic awareness of our compatriots who trade in foodstuffs in order that they may not take advantage of the situation to disrupt the sales operation for the sole purpose of enriching themselves by every available means. Trade is honorable only when it is noble; that is, when it aims at satisfying the major needs of the people at fair prices. Trade becomes traffic when it blindly aims at satisfying (?petty) appetites. I, therefore, appeal to the traders concerned to make a noble and useful contribution, because the objective of the party and government is to insure the correct supply of foodstuffs to the people by all means.

Fellow citizens, in the years ahead the government will accord particular attention to the first, sixth and seventh administrative regions as far as rural development is concerned. These regions will constitute the priority areas of our intervention. Our new financial investments will be primarily directed toward these particularly underprivileged areas, which urgently need attention. In the other areas, we will mainly continue our policy of consolidation and [word indistinct]. In 1980 and 1981, we will engage ourselves in the execution of a vast program of study and implementation of various projects in all the regions. These programs will include the launching of the (Malou Koumta) area development project and the construction of an agricultural training center at Sami in Kayes region.

This program will also include the launching of the Bankoumana district rehabilitation project, the execution of the Selingé regional development project, the feasibility studies on a rice farm at (Kolodimini), the continuation of the feasibility studies concerning the proposed construction of dams at Soye, Talo and Djénne on the Bani River, as well as the feasibility studies on the proposed integrated development of the Dogo plateau.

As far as our forest and water resources are concerned, a national policy on forestry has been defined and viable forestry projects have been drafted. The struggle against the encroachment of the desert constitutes a major concern for Mali and the other countries of the Sahelian zone, and it is essential that the international community should answer our call by giving us increased assistance in this regard.

As far as stock-breeding is concerned, the main problems are improving the health of the animals, satisfying our requirements for ploughing oxen and upkeep of the animals during the dry season. Therefore, our efforts will be centered on the execution of a systematic program of vaccination and destruction of parasites, improving the productivity of the animals and creating collective parks in the villages.

The year 1979 witnessed the vigorous resumption of the activities of the cooperatives following the improvement of the trade relations between the cooperatives and the state enterprises and companies.

As I announced to you 3 months ago on the occasion of the 19th anniversary of our national independence, the balance sheet on the execution of our 1974-1979 5-year development plan shows that we have secured 83.7 percent of the total money needed and that 63.7 percent of the projects have been completed. This result can be considered a success and the government is still continuing to look for money to finance the remaining projects in the program. On the same occasion, I also fully informed you about the state of our public finances and our monetary policy and emphasized the need for scrupulous respect for budgetary discipline. I also stressed the need for economy at all levels as well as the need for the party and government to adopt policies compatible with the means at the disposal of the state.

As you all know, the government has always given particular attention to the problems of our state companies and enterprises. Unfortunately, the efforts it constantly made in their favor have not always produced the expected results. The extension of this crisis to all the state companies and enterprises without exception has given this problem a special dimension that calls for equally special measures. The government is fully aware of this and will not fail to act accordingly. As far as the industrial sector is concerned, a vast campaign of education has been launched to convince Malian traders and businessmen both in and outside the country to invest their capital in Mali and thus join their efforts to those of the other classes of our population to insure our social and economic development.

As far as mineral exploration and exploitation are concerned, the expected start of production at the Kalana mine and the proved amount of the deposits are matters for hope and satisfaction. Similarly, with the forthcoming transfer of SONAREM's [national company for prospecting and exploitation of Malian mining resources] equipment to the Bourem district, the exploitation of our phosphate deposits will be given a considerable boost and will immediately contribute to the progress of our agriculture. Moreover, great and sustained efforts are being made in the search for uranium, gold, diamonds and oil throughout the national territory.

Important measures have been taken within the context of the rehabilitation of the teaching profession. These measures clearly demonstrate the firm determination of the party and government to restore to the teachers the privileged place they deserve in our society.

Fellow citizens, the fate of our workers and the safeguarding of their purchasing power and of the quality of their life in the face of the particularly unfavorable development of the socioeconomic situation constitute some of the main concerns of the party and government. As you know, the world inflation and the constant extension and worsening of the international economic crisis are factors which are entirely beyond the control of our country but which have very serious repercussions on our economy. It is in the context of these extremely serious repercussions that you must consider the price increase which the government was recently compelled to introduce after delaying this measure as long as possible, after studying the situation thoroughly and after insuring that these increases are as low as possible.

I said at the beginning of this address that the year 1979 has been a decisive one for our country. It was indeed in 1979 that the process of our country's return to a normal constitutional life began with the holding of the constituent congress of the Malian People's Democratic Union and of the various elections and the establishment of the various institutions.

For our country, the year 1979 was not like other years because it was a year of normalization and a new start. Our people, who are more than ever sovereign and confident, must be able to fully assert themselves in an atmosphere of democracy, justice and harmony. One cannot help having confidence in them because their enthusiasm is great, their resources are immense and they are determined to forge ahead. To be sure, their efforts in this regard will be somewhat impeded by the very great crisis which has affected the world economy for some years now. Naturally, this crisis has seriously affected our economy. But however serious it may be, this situation cannot hinder us from having confidence in our future because our people have always been able to prove that problems do not discourage them, that they know how to suffer and that, if necessary, they can surpass themselves in order to confront any adversity.

We know and we will continue to emphasize that although foreign assistance is necessary, we must first of all rely on ourselves and our own efforts and performance to insure our development. This is a fact that is becoming increasingly obvious because the generalized crisis does not spare anyone, and because everyone must face his share of problems and constraints. In Mali, we rely first of all on our own effort because we are convinced that there can be no progress without personal effort and because our dignity demands this effort. We must endeavor to make good use of the resources at our disposal. We must put a stop to waste and carelessness and combat corruption, breach of trust and misappropriation of public funds. We must also combat incompetence, absenteeism, laziness, negligence and irresponsibility. The struggle against these negative attitudes concerns not only the state, but also all the citizens and party militants. To shirk this responsibility would amount to failing to perform an essential duty and making oneself the accomplice of the guilty ones. Our leaders at all levels must always assume all their responsibilities, whatever the nature of the problems confronting them.

The cadres responsible for our state companies and enterprises must henceforth increase their performance in order to achieve the objectives assigned to them. If they cannot achieve these because of incompetence, negligence or other serious shortcomings, they will be dismissed outright. As far as I am concerned, I am firmly determined to take all necessary measures to improve the situation. Some measures have already been introduced to combat waste and lack of respect for public property. Other measures will follow.

Fellow citizens, the situation in southern Africa, where colonialism, racism and apartheid prevail, continues to be a matter of particular concern to us. As you know, a positive development has occurred in Zimbabwe since the opening last September of the tripartite conference in London. This conference discussed problems concerning the future of the territory. With the conclusion of the agreements on the draft constitution, the organization of the transitional period and the cease-fire, it is now clearly obvious that a great step has been taken toward Zimbabwe's accession to true independence. But we must take care not to think that this objective will be easily attained, because the enemies of our continent will do their utmost to thwart the Patriotic Front and hinder the achievement of the Zimbabwean people's aspirations. We must now be more vigilant than ever before in order to prevent the accomplishment of our enemies' evil designs. Africa must insure that the Patriotic Front and the Zimbabwean people are not deprived of the fruits of 14 years of armed struggle and heavy sacrifices. It must endeavor to insure their victory. It must also insure that this victory is quickly followed by those of SWAPO in Namibia and of the African National Congress and the pan-Africanist congress in South Africa.

As far as Western Sahara is concerned, Mali will continue to make its modest contribution to insure a peaceful and just solution to the problem. We will continue to make our contribution because this is, for us, a veritable duty which we will perform at all costs.

Finally, Mali will continue to give its firm support to the Arab and Palestinian peoples in their just struggle to regain all the occupied territories, to obtain recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the creation of a sovereign state and the restoration of the holy city of Jerusalem to a status befitting its historical and religious past.

With the year 1980, we are on the threshold of a new decade that does not promise anything reassuring. Everywhere, on all the continents, people are anxious; everywhere they are wondering and scanning the horizon with deep anguish. This is because they are faced with too many sacrifices, constraints and threats. As far as our country is concerned, it aspires mainly for tranquility and peace in order to be able to devote itself to the struggle for its economic and social development. As you all know, this struggle is becoming increasingly difficult to conduct in the face of the hard realities of the moment.

Fellow citizens, 1980 will be a difficult year for our country. It will be a year of trials and sacrifices. This is not the time for relaxation but for creative work. This is not the time for despair but for determination in the face of adversity. This is not the time for disorder and division but for order, unity and discipline. That is why I have decided, following the agreement reached on 28 December 1979, that all secondary schools and higher institutions of learning should be reopened on Monday, 14 January 1980. On this occasion, I call on all parents to assume their responsibilities in the face of the future of their children and of the nation.