

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**8 avril 2022**



## **The vicious cycle of violence and impunity in the Sahel must end**

Statement by the People's Coalition for the Sahel - 8 April 2022

“The [People's Coalition for the Sahel](#) expresses its deep concern at the spiralling violence against civilians in the Sahel and demands that full light be shed on the allegations of serious human rights violations by the Malian armed forces, notably in Moura in late March 2022.

We welcome the decision of the Malian military justice to investigate the operation carried out by the army in Moura, during which several hundred civilians were allegedly killed, and call for an independent investigation.

**The Moura tragedy is only the latest in a series of allegations of crimes against civilians by different actors in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. We cannot remain silent while our brothers and sisters are being slaughtered. This vicious cycle of violence and impunity in our region must end.** That's why we also condemn in the strongest terms the killing of hundreds of civilians in recent weeks in the Menaka region in attacks attributed to jihadist groups, which are being investigated by human rights organisations. We salute the memory of the civilian victims and members of the defence and security forces killed in the line of duty. And we recall that no responsibility has yet been established for the Ogossagou massacre attributed to self-defence groups just three years ago, nor for any of the other mass atrocities committed against civilians in Mali, but also in Burkina Faso and Niger.

We remind Sahelian governments of their primary responsibility to protect their people and to ensure justice for the crimes committed. Impunity feeds the population's distrust of the state, exacerbates community tensions and contributes to a spiral of violence that fuels recruitment by armed groups. All military forces present in the Sahel, whether national or foreign, must demonstrate the utmost transparency in the conduct of their military operations. In this respect, we reiterate our request that all light be shed on the French strikes in January 2021 in Bounti.

In the face of a resurgence of violence, we call on international partners to encourage and support the governments of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger in their efforts to curb insecurity while ensuring justice for the civilian populations who have been victims of abuse.”

### **About the People's Coalition for the Sahel**

The [People's Coalition for the Sahel](#) is an informal alliance of [dozens](#) of Sahelian and West African civil society organisations, whose aim is to convince governments to adopt a new approach in the Sahel that better protects civilians.

For more information on the People's Coalition for the Sahel:

<https://www.sahelpeoplescoalition.org/>

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## Media resources

- [Statement](#) by the Commission nationale des droits de l'Homme (CNDH) du Mali, 6 April 2022 (French)
- [Statement](#) by the UN independent expert on the human rights situation in Mali, 6 April 2022.
- « Allegations of crimes against civilians in Moura, Mali: an independent investigation must take place », [Statement](#) by Association malienne des droits de l'Homme (AMDH), Amnesty International (AI), Avocats sans frontières Canada (ASFC) et la FIDH, 6 April 2022.
- « Mali : Massacre by Army, Foreign Soldiers », [Statement](#) by Human Rights Watch, 5 April 2022.
- « The Sahel : What needs to change », [report](#) by the People's Coalition for the Sahel, April 2021. A Progress report will be published in June 2022.