AFRICAN UNION		UNION AFRICAINE
الاتحاد الأفريقي African Commission on Human & Peoples' Rights		UNIÃO AFRICANA Commission Africaine des Droits de l'Homme & des Peuples

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Press Release on the Coup d'Etat in the Republic of Mali

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Commission) is following with close attention and great concern the coup d'état of Thursday, 22 March 2012 by renegade soldiers of the newly formed National Committee for the Return of Democracy and the Restoration of the State (CNRDR), and the subsequent suspension of the Constitution.

The African Commission is deeply concerned with the arbitrary detention of President Amadou Toumani Toure, Government Officials and Heads of Institutions. The African Commission is particularly concerned about the condition and current whereabouts of the President.

The African Commission notes that this state of affairs constitutes a serious violation of the right of every citizen to participate freely in the government of his country, either directly or through freely chosen representatives, and the right of every individual not to be arbitrarily arrested or detained as guaranteed by Articles 13 and 6, respectively, of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. These acts also violate other relevant provisions of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, as well as the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

The African Commission calls for the restoration of constitutional rule, the unconditional release of government officials who have been arbitrarily detained.

The African Commission finally calls on the African Union and the international community to ensure the immediate restoration of democratic governance.

Done in Banjul, The Gambia, 23 March 2012