

REPUBLIQUE OF THE NIGER
REGION OF TILLABERI
DEPARTMENT OF BANIBANGOU

**Peace Agreement between the communities of the
Department of Banibangou**

January 2023

Preamble

We, communities of the Department of Banibangou (Tondikiwindi canton), region of Tillabéry, hereinafter referred to as the Parties;

Recalling that in the past our communities coexisted peacefully in the Department of Banibangou;

Aware that the conflict that has been opposing us for over two decades is a result of disputes over the sharing of natural resources and of the security crisis affecting the region of Tillabéry;

Recognising that jihadist groups recruit from all communities and that stigmatisation of one community alone is source of division;

Conscious that the conflict opposing us can only be resolved through dialogue and mediation;

Aware that the conflict involving members of our respective communities may not end immediately with the signing of this Agreement, but will require a constant commitment on our part to peacefully manage our disagreements;

Keen to strengthen inter- and intra-community dialogues initiated by the State, under the presidency of the President of the Republic, Mohamed Bazoum, such as the forum of the three regions (Dosso, Tillabéry and Tahoua) held in Niamey from 24 to 27 November 2021;

Desirous to complete our reconciliation in conclusion to the mediation process facilitated by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) since May 2021. Recalling that this mediation process has, notably, sought to include community leaders, religious leaders, representatives of women, the youth, self-defence groups, the Banibangou Peace Committee and persons working for peace, social cohesion and development;

Determined to work towards peaceful and durable coexistence between our communities;

Gathered in Banibangou, on this day, 21 January 2023, under the presidency of the Ministry of the Interior and decentralisation, agree on the following:

Chapter I: Generalities

Article 1: Through this Agreement, the parties declare peace between them and commit to do their utmost to maintain it.

Chapter II: Causes and consequences of the conflict

Article 2: The Parties agree that the intercommunity conflict that opposed them is the consequence of the security crisis along the border between Mali and Niger. This crisis is characterised by the presence of jihadist armed groups, specifically belonging to the ISSP (Islamic State Sahel Province).

This security crisis has resulted in:

- a) Attacks, lootings and destructions of goods and properties in the villages and hamlets by armed individuals;
- b) Targeted assassinations of influential figures and notables;
- c) Massive thefts of livestock by both parties;
- d) Attacks and ambushes on vehicles;
- e) Embargoes on some villages and weekly markets;
- f) Closure of basic social services (school, health centres, etc.);
- g) Withdrawal of government officials and defence and security forces;
- h) The feeling, on both sides, that the neighbouring community is joining forces with armed groups to attack the other;
- i) Perception of partiality from the defence and security forces;
- j) Lack of justice following abuses.

Chapter III: Commitments of the Parties:

Article 4: The Parties jointly agree to:

- a) Encourage community leaders to strengthen the peace process by forgiving all past acts and by spreading messages of cohesion and appeasement. In particular, no claims will be made on animals and properties taken or stolen prior to the signing of the Agreement, except for those found and recognised by the owner with witnesses. Claims for found animals must be made to the members of the monitoring committee or to its representatives designated by zones.
- b) Undertake initiatives to help build solid links between the communities, in support to the Agreement. The first initiative will be to work, once the Agreement has been signed, to stop the abduction of livestock and to return stray animals to their owners;
- c) Stop associating communities with armed groups;
- d) Recognise the respective rights of each community, as well as their customs and traditions;
- e) Avoid reprisals against civilians in the event of an attack by armed groups;
- f) Facilitate the free movement of people and their properties throughout the area covered by the Agreement;
- g) Encourage the attendance to weekly markets by all communities;
- h) Report thieves and criminals to the authorities and security forces;
- i) Forbid the circulation of weapons in the villages and towns covered by the Agreement;

- j) Accompany and facilitate the peaceful return of all displaced persons to their respective villages;
- k) Promote social cohesion messages through social media and condemn calls to division and violence.

Article 5: The Parties request that armed groups:

- a) Respect the commitments made by the communities under the Agreement and assist in their implementation;
- b) Condemn all acts of robbery and summary execution.

Article 6: In addition, the Parties invite the Agreement monitoring committee to:

- a) Engage in dialogue with armed actors to secure the implementation of the Agreement's provisions, ensuring prior authorisation from the State in this regard;
- b) Promote the release of prisoners and abducted persons in connection with the intercommunity conflict.

Chapter IV: Recommendations to the State

Article 7: The Parties recommend to the State to support their pacification efforts in the area concerned by the signing of this Agreement in favour of a peaceful intercommunity coexistence, in particular by:

- a) Releasing the persons detained in connection with the intercommunity crisis in support to their reconciliation efforts;
- b) Ensuring security in all the communities without distinction;
- c) Encouraging the rehabilitation of destroyed villages;
- d) Facilitating, with the support of partners, the return of displaced persons;
- e) Reopening the weekly markets closed as a result of the crisis;
- f) Providing humanitarian, economic and food assistance to all the communities affected by the crisis with a view to the economic recovery of the area;
- g) Facilitating the reinstatement of basic social services;
- h) Building, repairing and equipping communities with basic social infrastructures (water points, health centres, schools, etc.);
- i) Opening a dialogue with the armed groups to find a solution to the security crisis in the region of Tillabéry.

Chapter V: Monitoring of implementation

Article 7: The Parties commit to convene once every trimester during the first year following the signing of this Agreement to review its implementation and, if needed, to renew and adjust their commitments.

Article 8: A monitoring committee is set up, whose mission is to:

- a) To regularly review with the state authorities the progress made in implementing the commitments taken under this Agreement, in order to strengthen its impact;

- b) Prevent and manage disputes between the Parties that could lead to non-compliance with this Agreement;
- c) Identify, where necessary, additional measures required for the process of intercommunity reconciliation;
- d) Regularly update State authorities on the progress of the implementation of the commitments made under this Agreement in order to strengthen its impact.

Article 9: 23 members designated by consensus to represent all the Peulh and Zarma communities shall make up the monitoring committee. There shall be seven (7) representatives of the Peulh community, thirteen (13) representatives of the Zarma community, including two (2) members of the Banibangou peace committee, one (1) representative of the Tuareg community, one (1) representative of the Arab community and one (1) representative of the Hausa community.

Article 10: The monitoring committee shall convene once every trimester during the first year following the signing of this Agreement to review its implementation and, if needed, to renew and adjust the commitments.

Chapter VI: Dispute management

Article 11: The Parties will make all necessary effort to settle amicably and through negotiation and dialogue any dispute arising between them, in the spirit of cooperation and friendship which underlies this Peace Agreement.

Article 12: In the event of failure to apply this Agreement or in the event of a dispute regarding its interpretation, the Parties will refer the matter to the monitoring committee so that a consensus may be found and applied.

Article 13: In the event of failure to apply the solution identified through consensus with the monitoring committee, the Parties shall jointly refer to the traditional and religious dispute management mechanisms.

Article 14: In the event of serious failure to apply this Agreement, and failure of all attempts at negotiations to remedy the situation, the Parties may terminate this Agreement. Such termination shall take effect on the specified date of notice of termination. In such case, the Parties shall take all necessary measures to minimise the impact of such a decision on the pacification efforts already undertaken.

Chapter VII: Final provisions

Article 15: The parties shall sign this Agreement in five copies in the French language, and shall try to translate it in Fula and Zarma.

Article 16: This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature by the Parties.

In Banibangou, 21 January 2023

Signatories to the Agreement

For the Zarma community

Alpha Abdoulaye Hama, religious leader [signature: illegible]	Yacouba Harouna, Banibangou village chief [signature: illegible]
Massaoudou Chamsou, Chinagoder religious leader [signature: illegible]	Halima Harouna, Intoussa woman leader [signature: illegible]
Hama Wandou, Soumat village chief [signature: illegible]	

For the Peulh community

Ibrahim Sadou, representing Wedabangou tribe's chief [signature: illegible]	Elh Boureima Ousmane, representing Bissaou's village chief. [signature: illegible]
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Supports to the Agreement

Tahirou Hassimi, coordinator of the Zarma self-defence group [signature: illegible]	Cheik Saidou Hassomi, head of Zarma self-defence group [signature: illegible]
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Guarantors of the Agreement

Mohamed Mogaze, Prefect of the Department of Banibangou [Stamp: REPUBLIC OF THE NIGER – REGION OF TILLABERI – DEPARTMENT OF BANIBANGOU – The Prefect] [Signature: illegible]	Alassane Hadoum, Mayor of the commune of Banibangou [Stamp: REPUBLIC OF THE NIGER – RURAL COMMUNE OF BANIBANGOU – The Mayor] [signature: illegible]
Oumarou Soumana, Member of the Peace Committee [signature: '21/01/2023', illegible]	Tahirou Adamou, Chief representative of the canton of Tondikiwindi [signature: illegible]

Witnesses to the Agreement

Salma Chigali, Arab leader [signature: illegible]	Allasmaghil Ag Ahmad, Tuareg Leader [signature: illegible]
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Boubacar Moussa Amadou, Hausa leader
[signature: illegible]