



INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE THEME: "PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE SAHEL: ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS"

From 7 to 9 October 2025, the Alioune Blondin BÈYE Peacekeeping School (EMP-ABB) in Bamako hosted an international seminar in its conference room on the theme "*Protection of cultural heritage in the Sahel: Issues, Challenges and Prospects*".

The event was chaired by **Mr Mamani NASSIRÉ**, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister, responsible for Political Reforms and Support for the Electoral Process, representing **Major General Abdoulaye MAIGA**, Prime Minister. He was accompanied by:

- **Professor Boureïma KANSAYE**, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research,
- **Mr Abdoul Kassim FOMBA**, Minister of Youth and Sports, responsible for Civic Education and Citizenship Building,
- **Mr Mamou DAFÉ**, Minister of Crafts, Culture, Hospitality and Tourism,
- **Mr Julius KLEINDIENST**, First Secretary at the German Embassy in Mali,
- and **Colonel-Major Souleymane SANGARÉ**, Director General of the EMP-ABB.

In addition, several ambassadors, members of the Board of Directors and partners of the School honored the opening ceremony with their presence.

Peacekeeping School
Ecole de Maintien de la Paix
Alioune Blondin BEYE
de Bamako

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Background:

Cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible, is a fundamental pillar of people's identity and a foundation for sustainable development that strengthens social cohesion, a sense of belonging and economic growth through cultural tourism, local crafts and creative industries.

Its preservation is threatened during armed conflicts by the destruction of cultural property by belligerents who see this as a way of destroying the identity, history, culture, beliefs and symbols of their adversaries.

One of UNESCO's reports (2016) cites the emblematic case of the Mausoleums of Timbuktu in Mali, whose destruction affected not only cultural heritage but also the identity of the peoples of the Sahel. With the emergence of new types of conflict involving new actors, modus operandi and territories, the risk of destruction of cultural heritage remains high in countries plagued by terrorism and transnational organized crime.



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Overall Objective:

Understanding current issues, promoting the sharing of experiences and strengthening the capacities of those involved in cultural heritage management with a view to ensuring the effective and sustainable protection of cultural property in Sahelian countries affected by conflict.

Specific Objectives:

- Map threats to cultural heritage in the Sahel;
- Identify the determinants and impacts of threats to cultural heritage in the Sahel;
- Analyse legal and institutional frameworks for the protection of cultural property and their implementation in the Sahel;
- Identify innovative strategies for the protection and promotion of cultural heritage in the Sahel.



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Following an inaugural lecture delivered by **Mr Mamou DAFÉ**, Minister of Handicrafts, Culture, Hospitality and Tourism, the seminar began with an initial panel discussion moderated by **Mr Salif SANOGO**, journalist, on the theme of "**Mapping, determinants and impacts of attacks on cultural heritage in the Sahel**". The sub-themes listed below were developed by eminent panelists:

Sub-theme 1: "**Mapping the actors and modus operandi of attacks on cultural heritage**". It was moderated by **Mr Baba Fallo KEITA**, expert consultant on cultural heritage in Mali;

Sub-theme 2: "**Determinants of attacks on cultural heritage**". This was presented by **Mr Fidèle GUIROU**, UNESCO Project Coordinator;

Sub-theme 3: "**Social, economic and cultural impacts of attacks on cultural heritage on local communities**". **Mr Moulaye COULIBALY**, National Director of Cultural Heritage in Mali, gave a presentation on this sub-theme.



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In the afternoon, the second panel of the day focused on "**Legal and institutional frameworks for the protection of cultural property in the Sahel**". It was moderated by **Mr Kléssigué SANOGO**, Heritage and Development Expert. The topics explored were:

Sub-theme 4: "**Legal and institutional frameworks for the protection of cultural heritage: strengths and weaknesses**". This topic was developed by **Mr Sidi Lamine KONE**, Deputy National Director of Cultural Heritage in Mali.

Sub-theme 5: "**Implementation of legal and institutional frameworks: issues, challenges and prospects**". This was led by **Dr Mamadou CISSE**, Technical Advisor to the Ministry of Crafts, Culture, Hospitality and Tourism of Mali;

Sub-theme 6: "**Lessons learned and good practices in the implementation of legal and institutional frameworks in the Sahel states**". **Mr Abdouramane GABIDAN**, Director of the National Museum of Niger, gave a lengthy presentation on the subject.



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The second day began with the third panel on the theme "***The role of actors in the protection of cultural heritage***". It was moderated by **Ms Fatima Zahra ABOULFARAJ**, Cultural Counsellor at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Mali. During the discussions, the experts developed the following sub-themes:

Sub-theme 7: "***Responsibilities and limitations of actors in the public sector, civil society, local authorities and the private sector in the protection of cultural heritage***". It was moderated by **Mr Lassana CISSE**, former National Director of Cultural Heritage of Mali;

Sub-theme 8: "***Contributions and challenges of international institutions in the protection of cultural heritage***". This part was led by **Mr Ali DAOU**, Culture Programme Officer at UNESCO-Mali;

Sub-theme 9: "***The place and role of local communities in the protection of cultural heritage in a context of armed conflict***". **Dr Salia MALE**, Anthropologist and Project Manager at the Ministry of Handicrafts, Culture, Hospitality and Tourism of Mali, reminded the audience of the vital role played by indigenous peoples in safeguarding their identity.



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The afternoon of the second day featured the fourth panel discussion on the theme "***Protecting cultural heritage in the face of change in the Sahel***". Moderated by **Professor Mouhamed Abdallah LY**, Director of the Museum of Black Civilisations (MCN) in Dakar, this panel addressed the following sub-themes:

Sub-theme 10: "***Preservation, safeguarding and emergency protection in contexts marked by organised crime and terrorism***". This was developed by **Mr Sabari Christian DAO**, Director of the National Museum of Burkina Faso;

Sub-theme 11: "***Impact of climate change and demographic and urban growth on the preservation of cultural heritage***". This sub-theme was led by **Dr Bakari SANOGO**, Lecturer and Researcher at the "Ecole Normale Supérieure de Bamako" (ENSUP), Mali;

Sub-theme 12: "***New technologies and heritage protection: risks and opportunities***". This was developed by **Mr Amadou Bekaye SIDIBE**, National Director of the Library and Documentation Centre of Mali.



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The morning of the third and final day of the seminar was devoted to the fifth panel discussion on the theme "***Strategies for the protection and promotion of cultural heritage in the Sahel***". **Professor Oumar Kamara**, Director General of the Balla Fasséké Kouyaté Conservatory of Arts and Crafts in Mali, moderated the discussion on the following themes:

Sub-theme 13: "***The role of UNESCO and the international community in cultural heritage management***". The contribution of international organisations to heritage preservation was presented by **Mr Ali-Mohamed SINANE**, Acting Head of the UNESCO Office in Mali;

Sub-theme 14: "***Looting and illicit trafficking of cultural property: challenges, opportunities and prospects***". **Mr Daouda KEITA**, Director General of the National Museum of Mali, presented a wide range of implications related to this sub-theme;

Sub-theme 15: "***Reconstruction and rehabilitation of damaged or destroyed heritage sites: the case of the mausoleums and ancient manuscripts of Timbuktu***". **Mr El-Boukhari BEN ESSAYOUTI**, Head of the Timbuktu Cultural Mission, gave an overview of the measures taken to preserve the rich heritage of this Malian city from natural and anthropogenic damage.

Sub-theme 16: "Cultural tourism and arts and crafts as a lever for local development in the Sahel: challenges, opportunities and prospects". **Mr Mamary DIARRA**, National Director of Tourism and Hotels in Mali, concluded this last series of presentations by outlining the significant economic impact that cultural heritage could have on the economic development of the Sahel states.



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The afternoon of Thursday, 9 October 2025 was devoted to summarising the work and reading the **"Bamako Declaration issued by the Seminar on the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the Sahel"**. **Dr Birama Apho LY**, Director of the EMP-ABB's Centre for Analysis and Research in the Sahel-Saharan Region, led these two activities.

At the end, speeches by **Mr Julius KLEINDIENST**, First Secretary at the German Embassy in Mali, and **Colonel-Major Souleymane SANGARÉ**, Director General of EMP-ABB, preceded the closing remarks of the seminar by **Mr Mahamadou dit Koumboura DIARRA**, Secretary General of the Ministry of Handicrafts, Culture, Hospitality and Tourism.





PC BAT 3-25 (DEU)

Battalion Command Post (PC-BAT)

Date et Location

From 06 to 17 October 2025
EMP-ABB (Bamako, MALI)

Founding

Germany

Beneficiaries

Military course
25 trainees
including 01 woman

Objective

Provide officers with the additional knowledge and skills essential for their employment in a battalion or brigade headquarters deployed as part of a United Nations Peacekeeping Operation or an African Union Peace Support Operation.



GPS 1-25 (JPN)

Gender Peace and Security (GPS)

Date et Location

From 20 to 25 October 2025
EMP-ABB (Bamako, MALI)

Founding

Japan

Beneficiaries

Integrated Course (Civilians-Military-Police)
15 trainees
including 08 women

Objective

Strengthening the capacities of displaced women and young people in Bandiagara on the concept of "Gender, Peace and Security", as part of the "Stabilization Project as a multisectoral response to displaced women and young people in central Mali".



SR-PC 2-25 (JPN)

Post-Conflict Stabilisation and Reconstruction (**SR-PC**)

Date et Location

From 27 to 31 October 2025
EMP-ABB (Bamako, MALI)

Founding

Japan

Beneficiaries

Integrated Course
15 trainees
including 08 women

Objective

Provide participants with theoretical and practical knowledge enabling them to gain a better understanding of the complexity and importance of the post-conflict reconstruction process, within the framework of the "Stabilization Project as a multi-sectoral response to displaced women and young people in central Mali".

08/10/25 – SWISS COOPERATION – Courtesy visit by **Ms Fairlie CHAPPUIS**, new Human Security Adviser, to discuss ways of strengthening existing cooperation.

16/10/25 – INDIA – Courtesy visit by **His Excellency Dr Nandakumar NAGENDRAN**, Indian Ambassador to Mali, as part of efforts to strengthen the existing partnership between the two institutions.

16/10/25 – MOROCCO – Courtesy visit by **Colonel Hicham ALAOUI ISMAILI**, Defense Attaché at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Mali, to discuss strengthening the partnership between the two institutions.

27/10/25 – SWISS COOPERATION – Courtesy visit by **Her Excellency Ms Cédrine BENEY**, Swiss Special Envoy for the Sahel, to discuss ways of strengthening the partnership between the two organizations.

31/10/25 – NIGERIA – Courtesy visit by **Colonel BABATUNDE**, the new Defense Attaché at the Nigerian Embassy in Mali, to discuss potential avenues for collaboration between the two institutions.



37th Edition

« *National Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation* »



The Alioune Blondin BÈYE Peacekeeping School (**EMP-ABB**) in Bamako, through its Centre for Analysis and Research on the Sahel-Saharan Region (**CARESS**), held the 37th edition of its book club on Thursday, 2 October 2025, in the CARESS documentation room.

The document presented during this edition was the "*National Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation*," commented on by **Professor Bréma Ely DICKO**, lecturer, sociologist, and senior lecturer at the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES).

The aim was not only to present the process of drafting the Charter, but also to explain in detail the main recommendations contained therein.

As a reminder, Mali's National Charter is a reference document whose vision is that of a sovereign, reconciled, tolerant and peaceful nation, in a rebuilt state based on democratic, fair and equitable governance.

As usual, the question-and-answer session allowed participants to contribute to the discussions and gain a deeper understanding of the document.

For this edition, the Reading Club brought together CARESS members and Club members, including researchers, doctoral students and CARESS master's students, as well as Professor DICKO's parents, friends and supporters, who enriched the discussions with their contributions.

38th Edition

"Sahelian women, key players in successful transitions" "Whirlwind in a Canary"



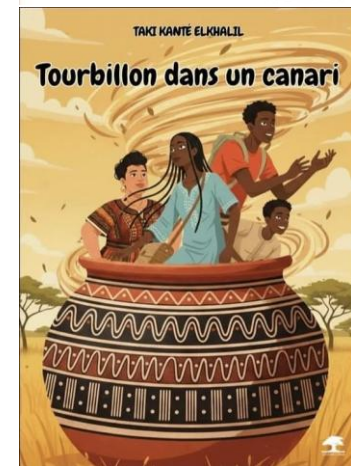
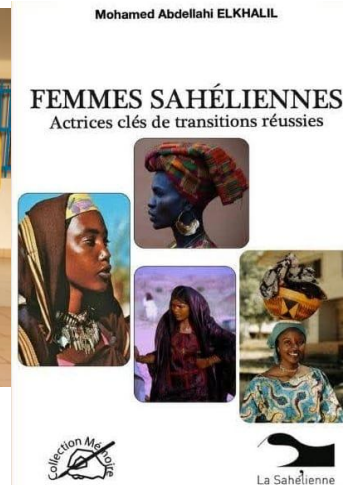
The Alioune Blondin BÈYE Peacekeeping School (**EMP-ABB**) in Bamako, through its Centre for Analysis and Research on the Sahel-Saharan Region (**CARESS**), held the 38th edition of its book club on Thursday, 30 October 2025, in the CARESS documentation room.

The works presented by the author couple **Mrs. Taki KANTE ELKHALIL** and **Mr. Mohamed Abdellahi ELKHALIL** were respectively an essay entitled "**Sahelian Women, Key Actors in Successful Transitions**" and a work of fiction entitled "**Whirlwind in a Canary**".

The first is a powerful call that explores the central yet often invisible role of women in the processes of political and social transformation in the Sahel, while the second traces the journey of four teenagers who escape to the beautiful, mysterious tourist town of Siby, despite their parents' warnings, where they will be confronted with fateful events.

As usual, the question-and-answer session allowed participants to contribute to the discussions and gain a deeper understanding of the books presented.

For this edition, the Reading Club brought together CARESS members and Club members, including researchers, doctoral students and CARESS master's students, as well as the parents, friends and supporters of the Elkhail couple, who enriched the discussions with their contributions.



Promotions OCTOBER 2025

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Battalion Command Post (PC-BAT 3-25 DEU)
EMP-ABB (Bamako, Mali)
From 06 to 17 October 2025

Promotions OCTOBER 2025

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Gender Peace and Security (GPS 1-25 JPN)
EMP-ABB (Bamako, Mali)
From 20 to 25 October 2025

Promotions OCTOBER 2025

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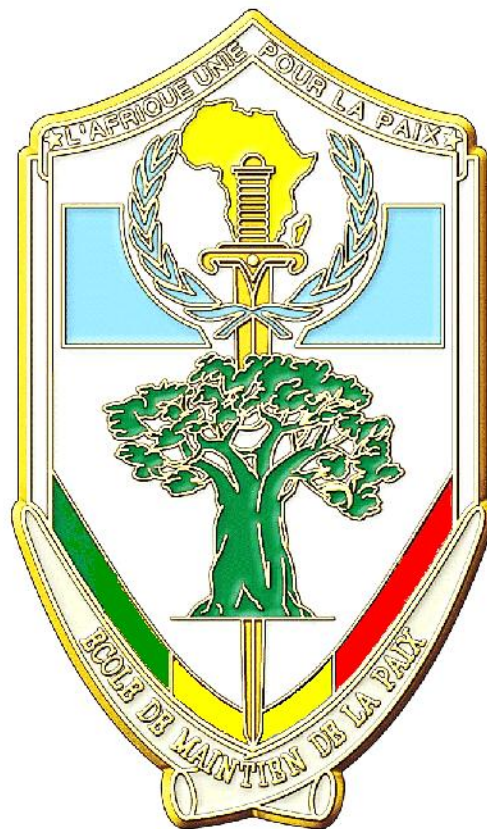


Post-Conflict Stabilisation and Reconstruction (SR-PC 2-25 JPN)
EMP-ABB (Bamako, Mali)
From 27 to 31 October 2025

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