**Universal Periodic Review of MALI**

**16 January 2018
Intervention by the delegation of Estonia**

Estonia warmly welcomes the delegation of the Republic of Mali to its 3rd UPR, and thanks Minister for Human Rights, Ms Kadidia Sangaré Coulibaly for the presentation of the report.

Estonia notes with appreciation that Mali has become party to nearly all main international human rights instruments, we invite Mali to lessen gradually the backlog of submitting periodic reports to the UN human rights treaty bodies. While welcoming the good cooperation with the Independent Expert on Mali, we invite the Government to consider issuing a standing invitation to all UN special procedures mandate holders.

We would further like to commend Mali for several steps taken during the past UPR period to strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights, including the adoption of the national policies and action plans on human rights and transitional justice (2016), the second plan of action on women, peace and security (2015-2017), and the recent establishment of the Ministry of Human Rights and State Reform (2017).

Estonian Defence Forces serve in the United Nations [MINUSMA] mission in Mali since 2013 for peacekeeping and support of the government in helping to organize free elections, assisting in administrative capacities and in the protection of human rights. Estonia also contributes to the EU-Training Mission in Mali.

Estonia would like **to recommend** the Government of Mali to: (1) decriminalize defamation and place it in a civil code, in accordance with international standards; and (2) ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (ICCPR-OP2).

Finally, bearing in mind the volatile security situation on the ground, and for the purposes of lasting peace, Estonia calls on Mali to investigate systematically allegations of human rights violations and abuses, including concerning sexual violence, and to hold perpetrators accountable.

We wish to the delegation of Mali a successful review.

Thank you.