

# No foreign intervention in Mali

Statement by Stop the War Coalition - 14 January 2013

Once again western powers are using anti-islamist rhetoric to justify colonial interventions. Two days (Now over two weeks) of French air strikes have already killed many civilians and is certain to inflame an already volatile region. The civil war in Mali is a direct consequence of the disastrous intervention in Libya, and shows that the War on Terror is a source of instability in Africa as in Central Asia and the Middle East.

France's intervention in Mali is part of a growing scramble for Africa. France occupied Mali as a colony until 1960. It was at the centre of its historic colonial empire and is now at the heart of its effort to control a mineral-rich area including Senegal, Burkino Faso, the Ivory Coast - all former colonies in which the French once again have troops. French President Hollande's call for tighter security at home is a recognition that growing western interventions in Africa are making the world a much more dangerous place.

That Britain was the first to support the French adventure - with no democratic discussion or debate - only shows how keen the government is to participate in a new rush for influence on the African continent. This intervention is being packaged as a war for democracy despite the fact that the regime in Mali is the product of a military coup in 2012.

We are told that Britain will not put troops on the ground. But the two RAF transport planes that have been sent to Mali are full of 'personnel' as well as military equipment, and the danger is that, as fighting intensifies, that Britain will get further drawn in to an intervention that has already been backed by the US government.

It is extraordinary that the government has not learnt from the terrible legacy of Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. The experience of the last decade and more has been that foreign wars bring nothing but suffering, destruction and instability. Stop the war condemns the intervention in Mali, and calls on the government to withdraw all support immediately.

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A Public Rally to Mark the 10th Anniversary  
of the February 15th London Mass Demonstration Opposing the Attack on Iraq

## FOR A FUTURE WITHOUT WAR

End the occupation of Afghanistan  
No to war against Syria and Iran  
Invest in the social economy not war

### Speakers:

**Lindsey German**  
**Clare Williams**  
**Hazera Begum**  
**Tony Kempster**

Honorary Convenor, Stop the War Coalition

UNISON Northern Regional Convenor

Former Head Sister for Muslim Students at Northumbria University

Vice President of the International Peace Bureau (Geneva) and  
Honorary General Secretary, Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

Friday 15 February 2013  
7.00pm Pandon Room, Newcastle Civic Centre  
6.30-7pm Reception and Refreshments