



Mali seeks UN help to stop France abetting 'terrorists'

Description

MALI: The African nation has threatened to exercise its right to self-defense, citing repeated French “acts of aggression”

Mali has urged the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to put an end to alleged “*acts of aggression*” by France, accusing Paris of arming and collecting information for terrorist groups operating in Mali’s Sahel region.

French drones, helicopters and fighter jets breached Malian airspace over 50 times this year alone in order to “*collect information for terrorist groups operating in the Sahel and to drop arms and ammunition to them,*” foreign affairs minister Abdoulaye Diop wrote in a letter to the UN dated Monday and published on Wednesday.

Diop claimed that the flights were engaged in “*activities considered to be espionage*” as well as intimidation and that the Malian government has evidence proving France had both collected intelligence for and supplied arms to some of the same jihadist groups it has supposedly been fighting for nearly a decade. Specifically, he alleged, France may have transported two members of a jihadist group by helicopter to the Timbuktu region in early August.

Warning that Mali “*reserves the right to use self-defense*” if the French continue violating its sovereignty under the UN Charter, Diop called on the UN Security Council president, China, to use his claims as the basis for an emergency meeting of the council.

French soldiers arrived in Mali in 2013 at the invitation of the government and successfully routed the Islamist forces who had taken over the northern part of the country. Paris subsequently poured billions of dollars into what became known as Operation Barkhane, expanding its jihadi-hunting project across Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, and Niger – all former French colonies.

Following a 2021 military coup, Mali’s new government ordered the French to leave, and in May canceled its defense accords with France and five neighboring African countries, alleging “*flagrant violations*” of its sovereignty. The last French soldiers left the Mali this week, though France maintains an airbase in Niger and a detachment in Chad and hopes to keep a special forces contingent in

Burkina Faso.

Category

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Date Created

08/19/2022