

Washington, DC, US, October 5 (Infosplusgabon) - The United States says the establishment of a transitional government in Mali is "an initial step" towards a return to constitutional order in the West African country.

In a statement in Washington, DC, by Morgan Ortagus, Spokesman for the US Department of State, over the weekend, the US urged the transitional government to honour its commitments to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), including holding democratic elections within 18 months.

"It will also be important for the transitional government to fulfill its pledges to the Malian people to strengthen governance, combat corruption, reform electoral processes, and implement the 2015 Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali," the statement said.

The US called on the transitional government to respect human rights and take concrete steps to prevent violations of those rights by state security forces, and to investigate and hold to account those responsible when violations do occur.

"We firmly believe that a democratic, prosperous, and secure Mali is essential to the future of the Sahel region," the statement said.

The US said as a partner of Mali for over 60 years it would work with all who were committed to these goals, adding "now is the time for Malians to come together to build a better, brighter future for all".

The transitional government has named civilians -- Bah N'Daw and Moctar Ouane -- as transitional president and prime minister respectively. Colonel Assimi Goita, who led the 18 August coup in Mali, is the vice president.

The final version of the Transition Charter announced by the military junta said the vice president will not be able to replace the president of the transition in case of a power vacuum and will only deal with defence and security matters.

A first draft of the charter indicated that the vice president could replace the president of the transition in case of impediment and that he would deal, in addition to the defence and security matters, with rebuilding of the state.

However, ECOWAS, which closed its borders to Mali and suspended trade and financial transactions with its member, rejected the first draft insisting on civilians as interim president and prime minister.

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