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Mali

# A dictatorship without complexes in Mali

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**The ban on political parties in Mali is a further step in the consolidation of a dictatorship incapable of curbing jihadist attacks. From now on, all political parties in Mali will be dissolved. This was a recommendation of the National Transitional Council (CNT), the legislative body set up by the junta that seized power in 2021.**

At that time, Colonel Assimi Goïta pledged to organize elections and return power to civilians. Since then, elections have been repeatedly postponed, the colonel has become a general in the army, and the CNT recommends that he remain in power until 2030.

## A long succession

The ban on political parties is the culmination of a policy of restricting democratic space. Initially, the junta had already tried to ban the SADI party (Solidarité africaine pour la démocratie et l'indépendance) because its leader, Oumar Mariko, had criticized the Malian armed forces' actions against civilians. Little by little, all dissenting voices were hunted down. Youtubers like Ras Bath and Rose-Vie Chère are behind bars; religious dignitaries are suffering the same fate. Imam Bandiougou Traoré, for example, was arrested simply for criticizing the substantial funding for a festival in the town of Kayes, "when the state of the roads in the region is deteriorating daily".

The junta is trying to terrorize the population with the disappearance of activists. Following the decision to ban political parties, a rally of several hundred people took place to demand the return to power of civilians. Since then, many demonstrators have been abducted. This is the case of two political opposition leaders, Abba Alhassane and El Bachir Thiam, as well as Abdoul Karim Traoré, leader of a youth organization. On the other hand, on social networks, supporters of the putschists can call for violence against opponents with complete impunity.

## Targeting the population

This repression is not just political. It is also ethnically based. Under the pretext of fighting the jihadists, who are gaining strength and ground, the Malian armed forces, with their Russian Wagner auxiliaries, are guilty of massacring members of the Peuhl community. Recently, during an army operation in the town of Diafarabé in the centre of the country, some twenty men were arrested and had their throats slit, as was the case in April for the 60 men arrested and executed in Sébabougou.

The extreme warfare between the jihadists on the one hand, and Malian forces on the other, has put the population in a stranglehold, where they are successively subjected to reprisals from one side and then the other.

When the putschists seized power, they spoke of a second independence for Mali, but this is not the case. If there's a similarity to be found, it is with the Moussa dictatorship of the 1970s and 1980s.

23 May 2025

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Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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