



**MINISTÈRE  
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FRENCH JOINT STAFF

PRESS RELEASE

Paris 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**- Operation BARKHANE -  
Transfer of the site of Ménaka**

- **. The overall reorganisation of the French military set up deployed in the Sahel-Saharan Strip, decided by the President of the French Republic and his counterparts in the Sahel, started in July 2021 with the transfer of three sites of the Barkhane Force to the Malian Armed Forces (FAMa) in northern Mali.**
- **Considering that the political and military conditions were no longer met, France, in coordination with all its partners, decided in February 2022 to reorganise the units of the Barkhane Force outside the Malian territory, and to handover the sites of Gossi, Ménaka and Gao.**
- **The site of Gossi was handed over to the FAMa on 19<sup>th</sup> April. The site of Ménaka is being handed over today, 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The site of Gao will be handed over at the end of the summer.**

In 2018, given the degraded security situation in southern Liptako and the three-border-area, it has been decided with our partners (FAMa and MINUSMa), to set up a base near Ménaka. The aim of this deployment was to support the FAMa to secure the region of Asongo and Ménaka and to facilitate the return of its administration and basic services.

This Forward Operating Base (FOB), located near the town of Ménaka, enabled the Barkhane Force to hamper the freedom of action of the terrorist armed groups in the region and to prevent the territorialisation of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (IS-GS). The operations, coordinated with the FAMa deployed in the three-border-area against the terrorist armed groups, have participated in the neutralisation, in August 2021, of Adnan Abou Walid al-Sahraoui, the leader of the IS-GS armed group.

The Barkhane Force created the conditions to implement many development actions for the benefit of the populations. In the region of Ménaka, the AFD, the Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs' Centre for Crisis and Support and Expertise France work, together, to support the return of the State in a wide range of sectors, from security and the reinforcement of the local constituencies' capabilities to the support of economic activities and the enhancement of the access to the social services

(education and health) and to drinking water. Several million euros have been invested for the Malian population.

After 4 years of existence, the French FOB has been transferred to the Malian Army on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022, in accordance with the decisions announced by the President of the French Republic in his 17<sup>th</sup> February speech, when he announced the reorganisation of BARKHANE outside Mali.

This transfer was conducted in an orderly and fully transparent manner, in a context of regular informational attacks against the Barkhane Force, aimed at soiling its action and credibility.

The reorganisation of the Barkhane Force and the handover of the site of Ménaka, after that of Gossi, does not mean the departure of the French armed forces from the Sahel-Saharan Strip.

The commitment in the fight against terrorism alongside the countries of the region, upon a request expressed by them, in coordination with all the countries and international organisations participating in the fight, remains an absolute priority

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