

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
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Subject: Fw: French jets pound Mali as top Islamist reported killed (Hurriyet)

From: OpsNewsTicker@state.gov [mailto:OpsNewsTicker@state.gov]
Sent: Sunday, January 13, 2013 06:59 AM
To: NEWS-Mahogany
Subject: French jets pound Mali as top Islamist reported killed (Hurriyet)

BAMAKO (Hurriyet) - French fighter jets bombed Mali for a third straight day. A security source said a lieutenant of Ansar Dine chief Iyad Ag Ghaly was killed in fighting to recapture the central town of Konna from the rebels.

"There were (air strikes) last night, there are now and there will be today and tomorrow," Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said in televised remarks.

"Our intervention is ongoing and we will continue in order to make them (Islamist fighters) retreat and allow Malian and African forces to go forward and re-establish the territorial integrity of the country," Le Drian said.

The first troops promised by African nations were expected in Mali on Sunday to join the campaign.

Burkina Faso, Niger and Senegal on Saturday each pledged 500 troops for an African-led intervention force.

Also Sunday a security source said a lieutenant of Ansar Dine chief Iyad Ag Ghaly was killed in fighting to recapture the central town of Konna from the rebels.

"The Islamist fighters suffered a real setback with the death of Abdel 'Kojak' Krim," the source said.

On Saturday French troops arrived in the capital Bamako, flying in from bases in Ivory Coast and Chad, a Malian officer told AFP. He refused to give details of their numbers or their mission.

Colonel Paul Geze, the French mission's commander, told Mali's ORTM television he hoped their mission would succeed "as quickly as possible, in the best conditions possible".

ORTM said the French contingent would be at full strength by Monday. It has been deployed in the capital to protect the 6,000-strong expatriate community.