

Mali intervention plan gathers pace

The international community is moving forward with plans to deploy a 6,000-strong force of African peacekeeping troops to Mali in an effort to oust al-Qaeda linked Islamists from the nation's north



ECOWAS
Economic Community of West African States

Group of 15 nations has been pushing for intervention in Mali for months. Expected to contribute 3,200 troops to peacekeeping force, mainly from Nigeria



Mali: Government in south of country to contribute 3,000 troops, trained by European Union



France: Moving surveillance drones to West Africa. Also reported to have special forces in and around Mali



U.S. and Britain

Offering logistical support to African-led mission



Algeria: Key player in region, shares 1,400km border with Mali. Has given tacit approval for operation despite concerns that it could spill over into its territory

MALI CRISIS

► **Jan 2012:** Ethnic Tuareg revolt in Mali sparked by armed fighters returning from Libya

► **Mar-Apr:** Rebel Malian troops stage coup. Power vacuum allows Tuaregs and Islamist allies to seize north of country

► **June:** Islamists expel Tuaregs, begin turning north into austere Islamic state

Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

Armed with weaponry from the Libya conflict and funded by kidnappings and drug trafficking, AQIM has recruited hundreds of foreign fighters and turned northern Mali into a militant stronghold