

## CANADA'S INTERESTS IN MALI

---

I confess to being perplexed by arguments that Canada shouldn't go to Mali because it's dangerous, or hopeless, or not in Canada's interests (Trudeau's Mali Misadventure – editorial, March 22).

Peace support operations are by definition dangerous, they take place where political accord and governance are severely compromised. That doesn't mean quagmire, it means it takes a long, long time to transition from armed conflict to political stability and the rule of law. And it is certainly in Canada's interests to support the international community in its responsibility to support such transitions – for the sake of the people affected, to be sure, but also for the sake of building a more stable international order from which we all benefit.

The Mali case is urgent precisely because it is complex and dangerous. It does have the benefit of a peace accord, and the government needs to tell us a lot more about what it will be doing in support of the non-military elements of the UN mandate in Mali.

That mandate includes helping implement the fragile peace pact, supporting reconciliation, implementing institutional reforms, preparing for elections this year, promoting security-sector reform, and demobilizing and disarming combatants and reintegrating them into society. How much of that will be part of the Canadian mission? Success is not guaranteed – but there's little doubt where Canadian responsibilities and interests lie.

*[Ernie Regehr](#), Waterloo, Ont.*

*Letter printed in the Globe and Mail, 28 March 2018.*