

# TAC NEWS

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## Tuareg Uprising Part Two: 2012 Participants

### MALIAN ARMY

The Malian Army arose immediately after independence in 1960. By the time of the events of 2012 it had expanded into a force of two combined arms battalions, one airborne/special forces battalion, a rapid response battalion, four motorized infantry battalions, two artillery battalions, five reinforced independent companies, at least seven National Guard infantry companies, and four militia battalions. These were scattered across the country assigned to one of the six or seven military districts. The militia battalions were predominantly in the north and formed of a mixture of regular army and Tuareg troops. When the war came many of the Tuareg changed sides during the fighting. There was a large base in Gao with smaller bases across the north. In the south battalions were stationed in all the provinces with a large base in Kati near the capital of Bamako.

The battalions follow the French nomenclature and are referred to as regiments. The reinforced independent companies, the airborne/ special forces battalion, and the combined arms battalion based in Gao all received equipment and training from both the United States and France with varying degrees of success.

Following the last rebellion in 2007 to 2009 the Malian government reduced military spending considerably. The result of this was that morale was very low to non-existent, equipment could not be maintained, and ammunition was in very short supply. Ammunition and maintenance for the tanks was virtually non-existent. In fact, in only one battle were two tanks even used. When the 2012 rebellion began the results were predictable. While the army made several gallant stands they were ejected from all the cities of the north.

With the loss of bases they also lost the armaments and munitions stored there with the resulting increase in the capabilities of their opposition.

The attempted coup in March, 2012 was the final nail in the coffin for the old Mali Army. Resistance in the north collapsed and a period of relative quiet settled on the field. The Malian government sought assistance from France and its friends in ECOWAS.

With the UN resolutions and the pending arrival of foreign troops provoked MOJWA into attempting to drive on Bamako and ending the war before the intervention could take shape. The cities of Diabaly and Konna fell rapidly. Diabaly was deep within the territory of the south and controlled the road to Timbuktu. Konna was far more worrying because if it fell there was a chance that Bamako would come under attack. The best units of the Malian army were placed in the path of the oncoming jihadists. Unable to resist the initial attack the Army fall back on its base at the airfield near Sevare. A drive to the south by MOJWA was blunted by the newly arrived French special forces. Receiving reinforcements from Bamako, the Army was able to attack and retake Konna opening the way for further attacks towards Gao and the liberation of the north.

After that the Malian Army seems to have begun shifting units into training under the tutelage of European trainers. It did participate in the fighting at Gao to some effect. Now the army is organized into battalion tactical groups similar to the French. They are better trained, better equipped, and vastly more effective.

### MALIAN ARMY

**Until January 1, 2013: Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 10, Class: Militia, Base Determination: 25%**  
**After January 1, 2013: Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 10, Class: Conscripts, Base Determination: 25%**

CCS <sup>1</sup> :	1 x TL2 Infantry(B)(HQ)/Toyota, 1 x TL2 Support/Toyota	Camel Co:	1 x TL2 Infantry(B)/Camel, 1 x TL2 Infantry(B)/Toyota
CCAS <sup>2</sup> :	1 x TL2 Infantry(B)(HQ)/Toyota, 1 x Type 63 MRL/Toyota or GAZ 66, 1 x SPG-9 RCR/Toyota	Reconnaissance Co:	3 x BRDM-2[R]
Militia Co:	3 x TL2 Infantry(D)	Medium Tank Co*:	3 x T-54's or Type 62's or T-34/85's
Infantry Co:	3 x TL2 Infantry(B)/Toyotas/HMGs, 1 x TL2 Support/Toyota	Light Tank Co*:	3 x PT-76's
Armored Infantry Co:	3 x TL2 Infantry(B)/BTR-60PBs	Support Co:	1 x M1943 82mm Mortar(3)/Toyota, 1 x Type 63 MRL on Toyota or GAZ
Motorized Infantry Co:	3 x TL2 Infantry(B)/Toyotas/HMGs, 1 x TL2 Support/Toyota	Engineer Co:	3 x TL2 Engineers/Trucks
Special Forces Co:	9 x TL3 Infantry(S)	Anti-Aircraft Co:	2 x Toyotas/ZSU 23/2
		Artillery Battery:	1 x 122mm D-30 Howitzer(3)/Truck
		Mortar Battery:	1 x 120mm M1943 Mortar(3)/Truck

*Malian Army continued on page 2*

Malian Army continued from page 1

MRL Battery: 1 x BM-21(8) or 2 x BM-21(4)

ETIA<sup>3</sup>: 1 x TL2 Infantry(B)/BTR-60,  
5 x TL3 Infantry(B)/Toyotas, 4 x Trucks,  
1 x M1943 82mm Mortar(1)/Toyota

**Regiments:**

Militia Regiment: 1 x CCS, 3 x Militia Companies

Infantry Regiment: 1 x CCAS, 2-4 x Infantry Companies,  
1 x Anti-Aircraft Company,  
0-1 x Support Company,  
0-1 x Recon Company

Parachute Regiment: 1 x CCS, 2 x TL3 Infantry Companies,  
1 x Special Forces Company

Armored Regiment: 1 x CCS, 1 x Recon Company,  
1-2 x Medium Tank Companies,  
1 x Light Tank Company,  
1 x Armored Infantry Company

Artillery Regiment: 1 x Artillery Battery, 1 x Mortar Battery

GTIA<sup>4</sup>: 1 x TL3 Infantry(A)(HQ)/Toyota,  
1 x Armored Infantry Company,  
3 x Motorized Infantry Companies,  
1 x Engineer Company, 1 x Mortar Battery

**Available Support Units:** (One or more of these units, or parts thereof, may appear in a particular action at your discretion):

Half a BM-21 Battery: 1 x BM-21(4)  
Helicopter Platoon: 1 x Mi-24D  
Artillery Battery: 1 x 122mm D-30 Howitzer(3)/Truck

\* These were available and both sides have them. However, the operational status of these is highly questionable.

<sup>1</sup> Company Command and Support

<sup>2</sup> Company Command and Artillery Support

<sup>0</sup> *Echelon Tactique Interarmes*

<sup>4</sup> *Groupment Tactique Inter-Armes*- formed after June, 2013. All infantry in these units are TL3 Infantry(A) regardless of previous types shown.

**Note:**

1. During the early part of 2012 local militias were raised in a number of locations. These can be added to any scenarios from that period.

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**GOVERNMENT ALLIED FORCES: GANDA KOY/GANDA ISO**

Ganda Iso arose in the early 21st century from an earlier group, Ganda Koy. It was made up of a conglomeration of tribal fighters from the Tuareg/Bella, Bozo, Songhai, Bambara, and Fulani tribes.

In earlier conflicts they fought quite a bit with varying degrees of success. They participated in the battle of Asongo early in the uprising but their leader, Amadou Diallo was killed in the fighting. When MOJWA showed up in the Ganda Iso controlled town of Douentza on September 1st, 2012 they laid down their arms and took no further part in the fighting. They are included for use in the early battles and as a "what if" scenario should they have chosen to fight at Douentza.

**Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 0, Class Militia, Base Determination: 25%**

Militia Company: 3 x TL2 Infantry(D)

Militia Regiment: 1 x TL2 Infantry(C)(HQ),  
3 x Militia Company

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**OPPOSITION FORCES**

**Until January 1, 2013: Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 10, Class: Militia, Base Determination: 25%**  
**After January 1, 2013: Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 10, Class: Conscripts, Base Determination: 25%**

**Boko Haram Company:** 1-5 x TL2 Infantry(C)/Truck

**Infantry Company:** 1-5 x TL3 Infantry(A)/Truck

**MNLA Infantry Company:** 3 x TL3 Infantry(A)/Truck,  
1 x TL3 Support/Truck,  
1 x 82mm Mortar(1)/Truck,  
1 x FIM-92A Stinger

**Al-Qaeda Infantry Co.:** 3 x TL3 Infantry(A)/Truck,  
1 x TL3 Support/Truck,  
1 x 82mm Mortar(1)/Truck,  
1 x FIM-92A Stinger

**Support Company:** 1 x Type 63 MRL on Truck

**Anti-Aircraft Company:** 1 x ZSU-23/2 on Toyota

**MNLA Battalion:** 1 x TL3 Infantry(A)(HQ)/Truck,  
3 x Infantry Company,  
1 x 120mm M43 Mortar(3)/Truck,  
1 x Anti-Aircraft Company

**Jihadist Battalion:** 1 x TL3 Infantry(A)(HQ)/Truck,  
1-4 x Infantry Company,  
0-1 x Support Company,  
0-1 x Anti-Aircraft Company

**Al-Qaeda Battalion:** 1 x TL3 Infantry(A)(HQ)/Truck,  
3 x Infantry Company,  
0-1 x Support Company,  
1 x Anti-Aircraft Company

**Available Support Units:** (One or more of these units may appear in a particular action at your discretion)

Anti-Aircraft Battery: 1 x ZSU-23/2/Truck †

Recon Platoon: 1 x BRDM-2[R]

Recon Company: 3 x BRDM-2[R]

Tank Platoon\*: 1 x PT-76 or 1xT-54/55

Helicopter Rocket Pod: 1 x Helicopter Rocket Pod/Truck †

*Opposition Forces continued on page 3*

Opposition Forces continued from page 2

Toyota w/ a BRDM turret: 1 x Truck with BRDM Turret †  
Improv Rocket Battery: 1 x Rocket Launcher(1) ^  
Recoilless Rifle Battery: 1 x SPG-9/Truck

Additional units as specified under each of the various groups.

\* These were available and both sides had them. However, the operational status of these is highly questionable

† All of these vehicles have been observed. All of them involve mounting a scavenged weapon system in the bed of a Toyota pickup. The Toyota movement is -2 due to the extra weight. Use the weapons combat data from vehicles that sport these types of weapons (BRDM-2's, Mi-24's, etc.)

^ These are launch stands made from angle iron that fire a single 122mm Rocket from the BM-21 MLRS system.

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## OPPOSITION FORCES

### **National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA):**

The *Mouvement National de Libération de l'Azawad*, or National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad was formed in October, 2011 from a previous organization called simply the National Movement of Azawad and the merger with other nationalist groups among the Tuareg. At it's peak it commanded roughly ten thousand followers though not all of these were fighters. Besides the Tuareg their ranks also include Fula, Songhai, and Arabs.

The armed forces of the MNLA include battle hardened men from previous rebellions, deserters from the Malian Army and Tuareg mercenaries who had fought in Chad and in the various kerfuffles in Libya until the fall of Qaddafi at which point large numbers of them returned to their homes in Mali. When they returned they had the presence of mind to take every bit or ordnance, munitions, and supplies that they could carry.

Their military commander, Colonel Ag Mohamed Najem was previously the commander of the 315th Brigade of Tuareg mercenaries in Libyan pay. Many of their commanders served either in the Libyan Army or in the Malian Army. Each katiba had two officers in charge, one from each of these two groups. Their forces appear to have been organized into three mobile katiba with supporting independent companies. Very little is known of their military beyond this. In addition to their own units, the MNLA found itself allied with Ansar Dine, AQIM, and MOJWA giving the necessary force to evict the Malian Army from the northern half of the country.

As a side note, at one point the MNLA claimed to have captured 30 functional tanks with another 10 being repaired. The only appearance of these on the battlefield was the use of 10 tanks as blocks across the Gao airfield to prevent the French from landing aircraft to seize the field. Given the state of the Malian Army, the functionality of any tanks or the presence of ammunition for their guns is highly speculative. However, had they been able to use these it might have changed the war considerably.

Once the territory of Azawad was secured and independence declared many of these troops appear to have returned to the fighting in Libya for the promise of greater pay. This left the newly founded state vulnerable to it's former allies.

The MNLA's military forces came predominantly from officers and men who had served as mercenaries in the Libyan Army. They fought in Chad, Libya's numerous border skirmishes, and in the Libyan Civil War. Their organization is based on the Libyan Army with updating as necessary to reflect the situation in Mali.

### **Ansar Dine (Jihadist):**

This group splintered off from the MNLA due to the lack of an offer for a leadership position for Iyad Ag Ghaly. Ag Ghaly is the cousin of an AQIM commander, Hamada Ag Hama. In July, 2012 they were part of the attack to wrest control of the new state of Azawad from the MNLA. Subsequently they participated in the invasion of the south but were defeated.

The Ansar Dine military forces appear to include up to seven battalions with additional equipment. They have been observed with Toyota trucks sporting ZSU23/2 anti-aircraft guns as well as having captured a significant amount of engineering hardware allowing them to create improvised explosive devices as well as defensive earthworks.

**Available Support Units:** (One or more of these units, or parts thereof, may appear at your discretion):

Armored Infantry Platoon: 1 x TL3 Infantry(A)/BTR-60  
Engineer Platoon: 1 x TL2 Engineer/Toyota,  
1 x Bulldozer

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### **Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (Jihadist) (MOJWA or MUJWA):**

This group splintered off from AQIM in October, 2011. It tended more to a militant form of Jihad and would impose Sharia Law in the areas it controlled. It would eventually go on to swear allegiance to the Islamic State and is one of the branches of that organization in West Africa along with Boko Haram.

The group appears to have made up of and led by non-Tuaregs. It appears to have mobilized at least five katiba originally with more being formed later. These forces led the invasion of the south with three katiba seizing then defending Konna. After their drubbing in Konna the group shrank and would later merge with another splinter group from Al Qaeda. They would subsequently declare their allegiance to ISIS and continue to terrorize cities in the region to this day.

**Available Support Units:** (one or more of these units, or parts thereof, may appear at your discretion):

None beyond what is listed above.

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### **Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (Jihadist)(AQIM):**

Al Qaeda in the Maghreb maintains a force of no more than 5 battalions in the Mali/Niger area. Five additional battalions are present but are dedicated to the Algeria/Libya areas. Leaders move between the different groups carrying out the Jihad and it should be noted that there are familial relations among the jihadist groups leadership.

AQIM emerged sometime in 2007 from the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat. Their sources of funding stem mostly from kidnapping ransoms, participation in the lucrative smuggling routes through the area, and the drug trade. Their membership is predominantly local but includes jihadis from all corners of the globe.

**Available Support Units:** (One or more of these units, or parts thereof, may appear at your discretion)

None beyond what is listed above.

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### **Boko Haram (Jihadist):**

While this group is predominantly known for its activities in Nigeria it has sent contingents to Mali in early 2013. A group of 200 to 300 was reported to have participated in the Battle of Konna in January, 2013. It is unclear just how well their forces are armed or how well they fight as no actual engagements seem to have been reported.

Based on this they should probably be reflected as a militia formation using the structure for the other jihadi groups. Photos of Boko Haram taken after the kidnapping of the Nigerian girls show them posing with a captured BRDM-2 and holding SKS carbines and similar weapons. No machine guns or RPG's were seen.

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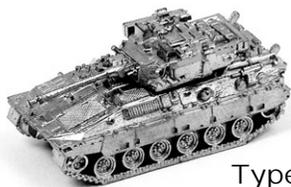


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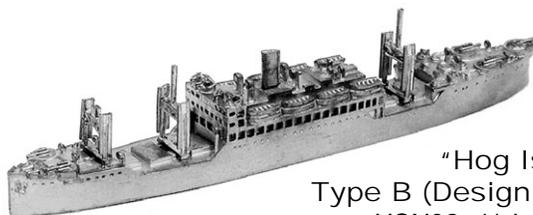


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