

# *Clashes on Malian border kill dozens as France announces gradual withdrawal*

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Bamako, February 21 (RHC)-- In Africa, Mali's military says eight soldiers were killed, four remain missing, and 14 others were injured, after clashes with armed groups near Mali's borders with Burkina Faso and Niger over the weekend. An estimated 57 unidentified fighters were also killed in the attacks.

Meanwhile, witnesses say about 40 civilians were killed in the area during recent fighting between rival armed groups. Earlier, French President Emmanuel Macron said French troops would gradually withdraw from Mali over the next six months.

Mali's military rulers have called on France to withdraw "without delay." France deployed more than 2,000 troops to its former colony in 2013 after Tuareg rebels and groups with ties to al-Qaeda seized control of two-thirds of Mali's territory.

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