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## **Mali: Killers of accused man must face justice**

The extra-judicial execution by firing squad of a man in Mali was a horrific and illegal act and those responsible must be held to account, Amnesty International said.

The call came after the man, who had been accused of murdering his neighbour, was shot on Tuesday evening by members of Islamist armed group seeking to impose their strict interpretation of Sharia law.

“Irrespective of the offences committed, extra-judicial executions are prohibited under international humanitarian and human rights law and all parties involved in the conflict in Mali must ensure civilians are protected,” said Gaëtan Mootoo, Amnesty International's researcher on West Africa.

A witness to the execution told Amnesty International: "They brought him between 5 and 6pm in a square between [two] hotels ... and said that this man had killed a person and should therefore be killed.

“They made him pray first, then they tied his hands and feet and forced him to kneel. And many of them shot at him.

“When they fired, the crowd left the place because we didn't want to see this.”

Following a 15-day research mission in September, Amnesty International revealed widespread abuses in several locations across Mali.

Mali: Civilians bear the brunt of the conflict documented cases of extra-judicial executions, sexual violence, amputations, stoning and the recruitment of child soldiers by armed Islamist groups in the north of the country and also by self-defence militias in government-controlled areas.

Gaëtan added: “Fighting in Mali has died down, but could ignite again at any time and it is essential all parties ensure civilians are protected in strict compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law.”

Northern Mali has been overrun by Islamist and Tuareg armed groups following a coup in Bamako in March.

Armed groups currently control much of northern Mali, comprising about two-thirds of the country's land area.