

PN-ABZ-034

91381

**Abt**

# Mali

## **Toward Better Support for the Head of State**

**Strengthening the Services of the Presidency**

**Catherine Rielly  
Duncan Last  
Nezam Motabar**

June 17, 1994

**Policy Reform for Economic Development  
Programme de la Réforme Economique pour le Développement  
USAID/Mali**

A

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## MALI

### TOWARD BETTER SUPPORT FOR THE CHIEF OF STATE

#### *Strengthening the Services of the Presidency*

Mali stands out in West Africa for the remarkable progress it has made over the past three years in the transition to democracy. Indeed, observers of African politics are now looking to Mali as a potential model of how a modern democratic system can take root in an African milieu. The structure of governance at the highest level — the Presidency — will strongly influence the outcome of efforts to consolidate democracy and governance practices in Mali. As Mali's first democratically elected President, Alpha Oumar Konaré has the mandate and moral authority to lead the country in meeting the challenge of development and in pursuing its interests in the international community. Two factors make it difficult for the President to perform this role.

First, 30 years of authoritarianism — in the wake of the colonial regime — have accustomed the populace to regard the President as the all-powerful ruler, controlling the resources of the state, providing advantages and withholding favors. The democratic constitution adopted in 1992, the culmination of the Malian people's successful struggle against the authoritarian regime, however, provides for a much more circumscribed role for the President as head of state, *not* as head of the government. To be sure, the President needs to play a pivotal part, but in a manner totally different from that of his predecessor. Second, the President's office — split between the *Sécrétariat Général* and the *Cabinet* — has yet to perform at a level that allows the President as Mali's "First Citizen" to articulate his vision of social and economic development for the country, to communicate this vision and to offer the leadership, and to be free of worry about relatively petty issues involved in managing the basic functions of the most important office in the country. This situation has prompted those responsible to invite a team of experts to develop recommendations for change to enable the Presidency to perform at a level commensurate with its political and moral weight in the Third Republic.

We believe that it is useful to distinguish three major functional processes for the President's office:

- assisting the President in *articulating a coherent vision* of the country's overall development and its position in the international community;
- *ensuring that the President's vision is adequately communicated* to the government, the population at large, and Mali's partners abroad; this function also includes the supervisory functions of the President as *chef d'État* responsible for *veiller au fonctionnement régulier du gouvernement*;

- *housekeeping*, that is, managing the human, informational, financial, and physical resources of the Presidency in the most efficient and responsible manner.

We believe that the most important changes overall concern the elimination of overlapping responsibilities within the Presidency, the establishment of smoother working relations between the Presidency and the ministries, and the separation of advisory functions from the management of communications and housekeeping functions. Consequently, we are proposing a structure that establishes a small *Strategic Team* of senior advisers to support the President in articulating his vision, interpreting current events and developing policy options. This lean, cohesive, high-performing "think-tank" will equip the President with astute political and economic analysis that he needs to guide and monitor the government. A *Directeur des Services et Affaires Presidentielles* will supervise the management functions and lead the *Strategic Team*. This more parsimonious and simple institutional design proposed for the Presidency takes into account Malian economic realities and allows for a more harmonious interaction of broadly political and mainly administrative considerations.

On the basis of our analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the current management of the Presidency, we submit the following ten primary recommendations for improvement:

**Recommendation 1.** Create a small *Strategic Team* of six senior advisers, each responsible for a particular policy domain, who will advise on medium and long-term strategy.

**Recommendation 2:** Recruit eight to ten of the "best and the brightest" young public servants to support the strategic team as *chargés de mission* (CMs) for short periods, on a revolving basis.

**Recommendation 3.** Launch a Presidential communications initiative, including a *campagne de sensibilisation* which informs Malian citizens about their role in the democracy and the new roles of the President and the government.

**Recommendation 4.** Take full advantage of opportunities inherent in the constitution to exercise the Presidential mandate for leadership based on his moral authority.

**Recommendation 5.** Foster a work environment that enables the Presidential staff to do rapid, high-quality analysis.

**Recommendation 6.** Improve access to information on the Republic of Mali as well as on international and regional issues of concern to the President.

**Recommendation 7.** Simplify mail procedures and organize a central filing system for all dossiers.

**Recommendation 8.** Develop a mechanism for the Presidency to report to an alternative oversight agency other than the government (through the Ministry of Finance) for its

**financial accountability.**

**Recommendation 9. Formalize DAF's reporting procedures and provide reliable financial information to the Presidency.**

**Recommendation 10: Streamline the procedures for the use of vehicles in the Parc Automobile Presidentiel.**

*d*

## *Table of Contents*

	<b>Page</b>
Introduction . . . . .	1
Reconciling the President's Constitutional Role with the People's Expectations . . .	2
Dual Structure at the Presidency: Enhancing Coordination and Authority . . . . .	2
The Executive Branch in West Africa: A Comparative Perspective . . . . .	3
Improving Communications between the Presidency and Government Ministries . .	5
A Leaner, More Cohesive Presidency . . . . .	7
Implementation: The Importance of Building Consensus behind the Restructuring .	7
Recommendations . . . . .	8
Tableau 1: Nouvelle Structure de la Présidence . . . . .	21
Tableau 2: Equipe Stratégique . . . . .	22
Tableau 3: Administration . . . . .	23
Tableau 4: Besoins Informatiques de la Présidence . . . . .	24
Tableau 5: Nouvelle Gestion et Suivi du Courrier et des Dossiers . . . . .	25

E

## MALI

# TOWARD BETTER SUPPORT FOR THE CHIEF OF STATE

### *Strengthening the Services of the Presidency*

#### Introduction

Mali stands out in West Africa for the remarkable progress it has made over the past three years in the transition to democracy. Indeed, observers of African politics are now looking to Mali as a potential model of how a modern democratic system can take root in an African milieu. The structure of governance at the highest level — the Presidency — will strongly influence the outcome of efforts to consolidate democracy and governance practices in Mali. As Mali's first democratically elected President, Alpha Oumar Konaré has the mandate and moral authority to lead the country in meeting the challenge of development and in pursuing its interests in the international community. Two factors make it difficult for the President to perform this role.

First, 30 years of authoritarianism — in the wake of the colonial regime — have accustomed the populace to regard the President as the all-powerful ruler, controlling the resources of the state, providing advantages and withholding favors. Second, the President's office — split between the *Sécrétariat Général* and the *Cabinet* — has yet to perform at a level that allows the President as Mali's "First Citizen" to articulate his vision of social and economic development for the country, to communicate this vision and to be free of worry about relatively petty issues involved in managing the basic functions of the most important office in the country. This situation has prompted those responsible to invite a team of experts to develop recommendations for change to enable the Presidency to perform at a level commensurate with its political and moral weight in the Third Republic.

We believe that the most important changes overall concern the elimination of overlapping responsibilities within the Presidency, the establishment of smoother working relations between the Presidency and the ministries, and the separation of advisory functions from the management of communications and housekeeping functions. Consequently, we are proposing a structure that establishes a small *Strategic Team* of senior advisers to support the President in articulating his vision, interpreting current events and developing policy options. This lean, cohesive, high-performing "think-tank" will equip the President with astute political and economic analysis that he needs to guide and monitor the government. A *Directeur des Services et Affaires Présidentielles* will supervise the management functions and lead the *Strategic Team*. This more parsimonious and simple institutional design proposed for the Presidency takes into account Malian economic realities and allows for a more harmonious interaction of broadly political and mainly administrative considerations.

## **Reconciling the President's Constitutional Role with the People's Expectations**

President Konaré faces formidable obstacles in his efforts to translate democratic advances which are structural and constitutional into a sustainable democratic culture. The Malian people retain their expectations of a traditional, all-powerful President, emerging out of the legacy of an authoritarian one-party state. However, the democratic constitution adopted in 1992, the culmination of the Malian people's successful struggle against the authoritarian regime, however, provides for a more general and more powerful role for the President as head of state, with the new post of Prime Minister becoming head of government. The Presidency is now less constrained by the day-to-day concerns of policy implementation and thus freer to concentrate on elaborating the outlines of governmental action and monitoring the compatibility of ministerial work with the overall conception. The President is Head of State and has the symbolic powers associated with that position, but he is also the only national figure elected by universal suffrage, which gives tremendous clout to the sketchy powers assigned in the constitution.

Most Malian citizens and some government officials, as well, fail to understand the division of power between the President, as Head of State, and the Prime Minister, as Head of the Government. Nor does the average Malian grasp the concept of separation of powers between the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary, as envisaged in the constitution. The true challenge of legitimizing democratic institutions is to convince the citizens to leave behind the image of a dictatorial President and embrace the concept of citizen ownership of governance. The discussion below suggests steps that the President can take toward fostering the development of a civic culture.

### **Dual Structure at the Presidency: Enhancing Coordination and Authority**

The President should seize on his unique opportunity as the President elected by and for the people of Mali to realize his new strategic role of leading Mali into the twenty-first century. To do so, he needs to change the structure of the Presidency before it begins to slow down the process of the consolidation of democracy in Mali. Unclear lines of authority between the Cabinet and the General Secretariat of the Presidency (GSP) paralyse both staffs from taking the actions necessary to achieve the President's mission.<sup>1</sup> The Presidency, as it is currently organized, is like a body with two heads leading it in different directions, with neither guiding it toward its strategic vision. Specifically, this report proposes unifying the President's staff in one Office of Presidential Affairs and Services. The new structure combines the responsibility for political functions, currently performed by the President's Cabinet, and the technical advisory functions, performed by the General Secretariat, in a single office.

---

<sup>1</sup>In contrast, in Cote d'Ivoire where there seems to be less overlap between the Cabinet and the General Secretariat in the Presidency, the Secretary General has no *conseillers techniques*, and a very small staff, while the *Directeur du Cabinet* has about ten *conseillers techniques* working for him.

The root of the organizational problem that this new office aims to resolve is that the structure of the Presidency still resembles that which existed under the old regime when the President was both *Chef d'Etat* and *Chef du Gouvernement*. At the present time, there is at least one *conseiller technique* or *chargé de mission* in the GSP who is responsible for almost every governmental ministry, even though the Prime Minister, not the President, is responsible for running the daily affairs of government. In addition to 15 technical advisers in the General Secretariat whose posts mirror the structure of the government, the President is surrounded by a Cabinet of 14 political advisers who are reputed to be "closer to the President." The President's Cabinet does not meet regularly with the SGP to coordinate either the President's political concerns or his communications strategy with his policy positions. While the President had planned to meet with his entire staff, the *Cabinet elargi* each month, he has only had time to hold three such meetings since he took office in 1992.

Furthermore, weak horizontal links within each of these two structures dilutes their capacity to realize their potential. Relations with the President are usually based on personal rapport, rather than regular staff meetings, leading to frustration and even jealousy among members of the President's advisory staff. The result is that competition, rather than cooperation, within the Presidency wastes valuable human and financial resources. What was striking in the interviews with the SGP was the significant number of advisers who were well-trained and seemed to be technically competent whose talents were not being exploited fully. Several complained that they received no direct feedback from the President on position papers they wrote for him. The President's inability to respond personally to all his advisers' briefs is an indication that he is extremely overloaded and time-pressured and needs to delegate some of his responsibility to his closest advisers.

### **The Executive Branch in West Africa: A Comparative Perspective**

In an effort to glean useful insights for Mali, the team looked at the experience of executive bodies in other West African countries, including Sénégal, Côte d'Ivoire, Bénin, Burkina Faso, and Cameroon. This comparative research failed to illuminate an ideal model of Presidential government which could be easily applied to Mali. Rather, the experience of African democracy so far offers more lessons of what not to do, rather than positive models of the Presidency which enable governments to be more democratic. In Cote d'Ivoire, for example, the President and Prime Minister are not playing the roles envisioned for them in the Constitution when it was amended in 1990 to include a Prime Minister. Even though constitutionally the Prime Minister is Head of the Government, in the words of the Ivorian Secretary General, "*le Premier Ministre n'a pas la puissance réelle ou personnelle.*"

Nonetheless, past experience with the failure of certain organizational structures of the executive branch can shed some insight into better ways of organizing the Presidency in the future. Specifically, in West African countries which have organized themselves along the lines of the French system, such as Cameroon, with a Primature and a Secretary General in the Presidency, there has been significant rivalry between the Secretary General and the Prime Minister, especially when the Prime Minister is strong. The pattern has been that when the President and

the Prime Minister are close, the role of the SGP is diminished and when the PM and the President are at odds, the SGP tends to be stronger. The lesson for Mali is that it may be better to break away from the French West African tradition of a General Secretariat in the Presidency and start with a fresh structure with less historical baggage.<sup>2</sup>

The Benin Experience: Importance of Counterbalancing Institutions to the Executive Of all the West African countries studied, Benin appears to have made the most progress toward becoming democratic. One of the reasons that the Benin Presidency functions well is that other counterbalancing institutions are flourishing there, such as the Assemblée Nationale and civic associations. Experience indicates that civil society has played an important role in the consolidation of democracy in West Africa. Benin also chose to move away from the West African pattern of a dual executive, when it eliminated the post of Prime Minister after its transition period. Thus its government structure is closer to the American presidency than the French model of semi-Presidentialism. Also of note in Benin is the important role that the opposition party plays.<sup>3</sup> The clear lesson that emerges for Mali is the importance of reinforcing other democratic institutions as counterweights to the Executive including the legislature, the judiciary, civic associations, and the opposition.

One means of accomplishing this would be to enhance the ability of the Assemble Nationale to perform its independent role by increasing the human and financial resources at its disposal. If needed, several economists and other social scientists in the Presidency could be redeployed to the technical staff of the Assemblée Nationale to bolster its capacity to analyse legislation.<sup>4</sup> However, it is possible that these advisers may encounter some resistance from deutes who could view them as partisan representatives of the Presidency. If these advisers were accepted

---

<sup>2</sup>In contrast, the Malian government's recent introduction of a Secretariat Generale in each ministerial Cabinet, who acts as a permanent counterweight to the Minister (like Permanent Secretaries in England), should prove to be a very useful innovation. Of course, such a counterweight is not necessary in the Presidency.

<sup>3</sup>Congo, as well, has recently considered the idea of giving a formal role to the opposition, including the novel proposal that the opposition leader be given the post of Vice President in the government.

<sup>4</sup>Other studies have recommended technical assistance to the deputies in drafting bills, improvement of the working conditions at the AN through the provision of computers, software, and other equipment, and the creation of a documentation and research center. (See Tessa Bakary, *Democratic Governance and the Legislature in Mali: A Preliminary Assessment and Recommendations*, 1992; *A Strategic Framework for Donor Support to Democratic Governance in Mali*.) Staff at the National Democratic Institute (NDI) have confirmed the National Assembly's need for technical support, as well.

by the legislature, it would be possible to obtain financing from the United States government for training them in legislative analysis. Another way that the Presidency could foster a stronger legislature would be to encourage deputies and their analysts to tap into the new computerized information system at the Presidency, once they are equipped with PCs, themselves (see Recommendation 6). The President could also try to ensure that institutions which will contribute to the nation's policy pluralism such as the Council of Collectivities and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the Assemblée Nationale, receive adequate funding. The Constitutional Adviser on the Strategic Team could work with the Economic Adviser to ensure that budgets for these institutions are prepared on time.

### **Improving Communications between the Presidency and Government Ministries**

One of the central themes of this report, the need for better coordination and communication, applies both **within** the Presidency and **outside** of it in its relations with government ministries, the Primature, the National Assembly, civil society, and Malian citizens. It is important to understand how the Presidency and the Prime Minister's Office can work well together. The essence of this understanding should be a distinction between the "broadly political" role of the Presidency and the "mainly administrative" one of the ministries including the Prime Minister's Office. Of course, this contrast is relative and overdrawn, as no administration or policy is entirely without politics, and political feedback is to be expected, even from the lowliest up to the highest rank. But it will help to get the Malians thinking of the President as, say "top officer" and "strategist" of the political-administrative campaign being waged by the entire governmental apparatus, while the ministers (including Prime Minister) are all "officers of lesser rank" who are responsible for "tactics."

The staff of the SGP complained that consultation with government ministries is rare and there is no institutionalized mechanism for it to take place. While some conseillers techniques periodically attend meetings of the Ministerial Cabinets, it is on the basis of their personal ties that they are invited, rather than formal coordination between the Presidency and the government. Furthermore, there are no regular meetings between the staffs of the General Secretariat and the *Sécrétaire General du Gouvernement* (SGG).

We believe that these complaints show what does not work and thus point the way towards establishing more harmonious relations between the Presidency and the ministries. It is counterproductive for the GSP or other presidential representatives to expect to know about and have a say in almost everything that is done in the ministries. Rather, in keeping with the general mandate described in the constitution, presidential representatives should expect to follow policy implementation from a distance, intervening directly with the assertion of presidential authority on only an occasional basis, or in clearly defined areas of presidential prerogative (such as foreign policy). The President should exercise his wide powers with discretion because he otherwise risks demoralizing the PM and ministers and in the end getting nothing much done, neither for the country, nor for the President's own political future. *This point is crucial:* smooth functioning ultimately depends upon subtle political monitoring of the government by the presidency, with only very limited intervention in the work of the ministries in order solely to

maintain coherence of the overall effort, as opposed to regular direct control by the President or his delegates, with a few obvious exceptions (e.g. defense, foreign policy, major political initiatives).

In return, the Prime Minister and ministries tolerate or even enjoy having the President's representatives "looking over their shoulders" because they understand the importance of the President's global political project, and because they know they will be rewarded for good work. Accordingly, the political appointees and the career civil servants must understand that they owe ultimate political allegiance to the President. They need to be made aware that withholding information or otherwise obstructing the monitoring function of the Presidency can be damaging to their professional future. Should the President or his representatives have an objection to what is being done in a ministry or department not normally controlled directly by them, they should go through the appropriate channels (e.g. discussion with the minister or other supervisor) rather than issue a direct challenge. When the system works well, even the humblest official anticipates his/her role in the President's overall project and accepts *occasional* presidential interference with good grace. When it does not, everyone looks out for number one (*sauve qui peut*).

The newly restructure Presidency, as proposed here, could improve its relations with the Primature at three levels. At the highest level, the Director of Presidential Affairs and Services, accompanied by the President when he is available, should meet the Prime Minister to coordinate government policy with the President's orientations. At a second level, the strategic team should meet on a monthly basis with the Prime Minister's Cabinet to discuss the dossiers coming up for review at the Conseil de Ministres and make sure they integrate the "*grands instructions du President*." It is important that the main stream of information from the Government to the Presidency pass through the Prime Minister's Cabinet although on an informal basis, members of the strategic team may need to meet with the Secretary Generals (previously called *Chef du Cabinet*) in the Ministries.

In the past, the staff of the SGP have expressed frustration when they do not see the dossiers until just before the meeting of the Conseil de Ministres at which time it is too late to adapt them to fit the President's vision. At a third level, the *chargés de mission* supporting the strategic team should attend inter-ministerial meetings when dossiers are debated, as non-speaking observers. Attending these meetings in advance of the Conseil de Ministres meeting will enable the Presidential representatives to be informed about the issues up for discussion at the upcoming Conseil de Ministres, in time for them to try to incorporate the President's views on issues, as needed. *Chargés de mission* should have the opportunity to convey the information they learned at these government meetings directly to the President by occasionally attending meeting of the strategic team.

## A Leaner, More Cohesive Presidency

The structure of the Presidency must be adopted to reflect the role of the President under the Third Republic as chef d'état responsible for *veiller au fonctionnement régulier du gouvernement*. Accordingly, the Presidency should be structured in a fashion that equips the President with the best information and most astute political and economic analysis that he needs to guide and monitor the government. This will require a leaner, more cohesive, high-performing staff united behind their Mission of serving the President and the republic.<sup>5</sup>

The heart of the newly structured Presidency would be a small *Strategic Team* of six senior technical and political advisers who would reflect upon and help the President plan his broad medium and long-term strategies (See Diagram 2). The President will delegate a number of the tasks he currently performs to his team, in order to lighten the extremely heavy burden of his work load. This more parsimonious and simple institutional design proposed for the Presidency takes into account Malian economic realities.

Importance of One Senior Manager in the Presidency Experience suggests that the Presidency functions more effectively when it is under the direction of one administrator. In Senegal, a new leadership position in the Presidency was recently created, *Ministre des Services et Affaires Présidentielles* (who is a *Ministre d'Etat*).<sup>6</sup> While creation of a similar post in Mali would run the risk of reinforcing the Malian citizens' expectations of an all-powerful Presidency, it is important in Mali, as well that one person be clearly designated as the President's manager. In Mali, the Director of Presidential Affairs and Services would be the most appropriate person to play this important role of Chief of Staff.<sup>7</sup> The Director would accompany the President to the meetings of the Conseil de Ministres, as the *Sécrétaire Générale de la Présidence* has done in the past. The *Chef du Cabinet*, who will report to the Director, will manage the administration of the DAF, including the *Parc Auto*, the *Bureau du Courier et Archives* and the *Centre de Documentation et Information* (See Diagram 3). Great care should be taken in selecting the most qualified persons to fill both of these extremely important positions in the Presidency.

### Implementation: The Importance of Building Consensus behind the Restructuring

The proposed changes to the existing lines of authority and work processes may be unsettling to some. Thus strong leadership from the top is essential to build commitment to the new procedures throughout the Presidency and stay the course. It will be important to build consensus behind the new structure among the members of the Presidency. To do so,

---

<sup>5</sup>Small, well-structured White Houses have produced some of the most effective American presidents, including Harry Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower.

<sup>6</sup>In Botswana, as well there is also a Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration.

<sup>7</sup>In Côte d'Ivoire, where the President also has a small team of senior advisers, the *Directeur du Cabinet* holds a higher rank in the Presidency than the Secretary General.

participatory workshops should be held for the *Strategic Team* to brainstorm about their new missions.

## **Recommendations**

The rest of this report is organized around ten recommendations for improvement of the three major functional processes of the President's office:

- assisting the President in *articulating a coherent vision* of the country's overall development and its position in the international community;
- *ensuring that the President's vision is adequately communicated* to the government, the population at large, and Mali's partners abroad; this function also includes the supervisory functions of the President as *chef d'État* responsible for "veiller au fonctionnement régulier du gouvernement;"
- *housekeeping*, that is, managing the human, informational, financial, and physical resources of the Presidency in the most efficient and responsible manner.

**Articulating the President's Vision** The overall goal of this study is to strengthen the President's capacity to realize his strategic vision. Toward this end, recommendations 1 and 2 suggest a stronger organizational structure which will enable to President's advisers to help him articulate his vision. Recommendations 5 and 6 deal with ways to improve the working conditions and information flow in the Presidency, in order to raise the quality of analysis which shapes the President's vision. Information flow is absolutely necessary for high quality political and policy analysis and good governance.

**Communicating the President's Message** It is critical for the President who was legitimately elected to lead the people to communicate his message to them clearly, as recommendation 3 underlines. Both a *campagne de sensibilisation* to inform Malian citizens about their role in the new regime and a Presidential press policy are needed. Recommendation 4 which deals with constitutional interpretation, should improve communications both within the Executive (with the Primature) and between the Presidency and the other branches of government. Recommendation 7, which suggests ways to streamline the circulation of mail and dossiers, should also improve the President's capacity to understand his people's needs and communicate with them in return.

**Managing the "Housekeeping" in the Presidency.** Recommendations 7,8, 9, and 10 aim to streamline "housekeeping" in the Presidency through better management systems and accountability for the mail and files, the Direction Administrative et Financiere, and the Parc Auto. While these issues may seem more mundane than those at the two higher levels, it is absolutely essential that they be addressed, if the President is to achieve his mission in the most efficient and effective manner.

In the interest of producing this report quickly, several of these recommendations are presented with a broad brush and can be developed in more detail in the future, as needed.

**Recommendation 1. Create a small *Strategic Team* of six senior advisers, each responsible for a particular policy domain, who will advise on medium and long-term strategy.**

**Objective: Enable the President to realize his new constitutional role, in the most efficient and effective manner possible.**

The team comprises the following six advisers, as shown in Tableau 2:<sup>8</sup>

- Conseil charge de Affaires Economiques
- Conseil charge de Affaires Sociales
- Conseil charge des Affaires Diplomatiques
- Conseil charges des Affaires Constitutionnelles
  
- Conseil charges Affaires Politiques
- Conseil charge des Affaires Regionales

It is critical that all of the team members have easy access to the President who would be the natural leader of his "think-tank." All team members would be equal: there should be no hierarchical distinctions. The advisers must be selected very carefully to ensure that they are not primarily politically motivated: that they are public-spirited, rather than seeking power for their own personal gain. The team mix of superb technical experts with those of keen political sensibility should produce creative synergies.

The entire team would sit down and strategize with the President at regular meetings twice a week. These frequent team-wide meetings would encourage team cohesiveness and minimize the potential for frustration arising from limited, informal access to the President, a problem existing under the current system. At one meeting the team could discuss regional, internal, and foreign policy issues, and at the other they could discuss the dossiers in preparation for the upcoming meeting of the Conseil de Ministre. Certain Chargés de Mission could participate in the second, as appropriate, to brief the President on the specific issue they had analysed for the Conseil de

---

<sup>8</sup>The structure of the group of high-level advisers surrounding the President of Côte d'Ivoire is very similar to that suggested here. The differences are that President Bedié also has a *Conseiller chargé des Affaires Generale*, and he has neither a *Conseiller des Affaires Regionales* nor a *Conseiller des Affaires Constitutionnelles*.

Ministres meeting. For instance, they could try to identify which Ministers are likely to raise which concerns, on the basis of the information they gleaned from attending inter-ministerial meetings. This would help to ensure that the President would not encounter any surprises, when the issue is raised in the Conseil de Ministres. The challenge of briefing the President clearly and succinctly would be good training for these fast-tracked Charges de Mission. In the President's absence, his Directeur would run the meeting.

The challenge of the team is to translate their vast experience and collective wisdom into broad political strategies with a high probability of success. The team must be diverse enough to enable the President to consider a full range of policy alternatives and interpretations of information at his disposal and choose from them the most prudent course of action. All members of the President's advisory circle must have the courage to oppose the President. If they always acquiesce to the President's view, there is a danger that they could create an "imaginary consensus" which could compound mistakes and lead to errors in judgment.<sup>9</sup>

**Recommendation 2: Recruit eight to ten of the "best and the brightest" young public servants to support the strategic team as charges de mission (CMs) for short periods, on a revolving basis.**

**Objective: to institutionalize the President's role in monitoring policy implementation and support the *Strategic Team* with quick analysis of the most pressing political and economic issues of concern to the President.**

A revolving door recruiting system would enable young stars with fresh experience of the workings of government departments and parastatals to rotate through the Presidency for short periods, just as the creme of junior civil servants in Britain rotate through the Cabinet Office early in their careers. Talented, sharp professionals in their twenties and thirties could either be recruited at short notice to work on one pressing issue of particular interest to the President, such as regional integration or devaluation, or be called in to work more generally on monitoring

---

<sup>9</sup>To avoid drifting toward unanimity on the President's staff, one Presidency expert recommends that the President actually foster dissent by appointing a devil's advocate on his team to argue for the opposite of the consensus and a "Cassandra's advocate" to spell out the worst possible repercussion, should the program of consensus be implemented. See Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink: psychological studies of policy decisions and fiascoes*, 1983.

policy implementation. The *chargés de mission* would serve the *Strategic Team* for 6 to 18 months, after which time they would return to their ministries where their knowledge of the Presidency could strengthen government-Presidency relations and information exchange. Financial incentives in addition to the prestige and experience of serving in the Presidency, will motivate the brightest young professionals to seek these CM positions.

The team of CMs will conduct research and analysis to assist the President in fulfilling both his missions: to guide the direction of the government; and to monitor the implementation of government policies. The skills of the *chargés de mission* must reflect the broad range of issues they will assess, including politics, macroeconomics, law, social policy, and international relations. The *chargés de mission* could either be assigned to report to individual *conseillers techniques* or be organized in a pool, reporting to the *Directeur des Services et Affaires Présidentielles* (DSAP). The former would be easier to manage, but the latter structure would be more dynamic, encouraging more cross-fertilization within the team on issues touching several of their specialties. The DSAP will decide which dossiers should be given to the strategic team to, in turn, be passed on to CMs.

CMs could also participate in small, ad hoc sub-teams such as a Council of Economic Advisers (like the White House) chaired by a member of the Strategic Team. Creation of task forces such as these would make it easier for the DSAP to oversee who is working on what subject, in the Presidency. *Chargés de mission* will work with the DNSI and the *Cellules de Planification et Statistique* of the ministries to build up *tableaux de bord* for use in policy analysis. They would advise him on dossiers discussed in the *Conseil de Ministres*.

Poor regional information is currently a major problem which dilutes the potency of the regional *chargés de mission* in the Presidency in representing their areas' needs. A *Conseiller des Affaires Regionales* was included on the Strategic Team in order to ensure the representation of regional interests in the Presidency and improve the quality of information flowing in from the regions. He/she would be supported by four highly-competent *chargés de mission* representing each of the regions with whom he/she would meet regularly, as a team. The *Regional Affairs* team should spend as much time as possible in the field, in order to oversee data collection and deepen their understanding of local problems. The *Regional Affairs* team, would become increasingly important, as the decentralisation process takes place.

**Recommendation 3. Launch a Presidential communications strategy including a campagne de sensibilisation which informs Malian citizens about their role in the democracy and the new role of the President.**

**Objective: Communicate the President's message to the people.**

It is absolutely critical that the President communicate as clearly as possible with the citizens who put their trust in him when they elected him as their leader. A *Communications Team*, should work closely with the President and the Strategic Team to develop a Presidential *Communications Strategy* which translates the President's essential message into words and ideas that the people will embrace. A Communications counselor and a Public Relations counselor, together with their Attachés de Presses, would comprise the *Communications Team*, which should meet weekly with the *Strategic Team* to ensure that they agree on the President's communications strategy. The communications adviser must understand the substance of what the President stands for. In order to deliver this message in the most effective way, the advisers must be sensitive to public opinion and know where the President's authority lies. This Presidential message must be communicated broadly in a way that is comprehensible to citizens with no formal education, such as radio shows translated into local languages. This strategy may be adopted in response to public opinion which must be carefully tracked.

A press policy dealing with the radio, newspapers, and the electronic media, must be included in the communications strategy. The Presidency should support the recent mushrooming of the Malian media as an important component of democratization and transparency in government. The President should try to cultivate a climate of confidence with the press by developing a personal rapport with a wide spectrum of journalists at regular press conferences or briefings in the Palace.

It is important that the President cultivate ties to the rural people, especially after relinquishing his role as Head of the Party weakened his links with Malians at the grassroots level. A citizenship campaign educating people about the concept of self-governance is one mechanism which could be used to change citizens' expectations that all political power is concentrated in the single figure of the President. The President should invite the Prime Minister and his office to collaborate in this effort to inform citizens about the division between the Presidency and the Government, as envisaged in the constitution. An organization like the National Democratic Institute could work with the President's communications staff to create a civic education package about the institutions of democratic governance that would not look like a partisan campaign designed to promote the agenda of the Executive Branch. The campaign would encourage Malians to participate in their new system of democratic governance locally through conseil de notables, religious groups, rural councils, village associations, and other rural-based

non-governmental organizations. Persuading the people to put the concerns of their communities — as opposed to their individual concerns — on the national agenda through their representatives will increase policy pluralism. The campaign could take different forms, according to the audience including town meetings, workshops, and seminars. Communications staff should be creative about how the message is communicated, especially to Malians with no formal education, by employing such methods as songs and plays performed by local artists in native languages, fabrics, posters, and video and audio cassettes.

**Recommendation 4. Look for opportunities to interpret the constitution in a manner that is consistent with the vision of the President as a leader with moral authority.**

**Objective: Use the constitution to exercise the Presidential mandate for leadership.**

President Konaré faces the difficult challenge of leadership under the Malian constitution which is based upon the French model, in a milieu with few similarities to France in 1958 under de Gaulle. Specifically, there are a lot of gray areas in the Malian constitution adapted from the French regarding the division of power between various government institutions, including the Primature and the Presidency. An appropriate expert on the French and Malian constitutions and other judicial matters should be appointed to the strategic team to examine these constitutional issues during the President's first term. This counselor should become well versed in the precedents of other countries with similar constitutional arrangements. In particular, it may be relevant to examine the French experience in some depth, through extensive reading and possibly also through presentations by foreign experts on French politics. Members of the Presidency and other Malians would thereby become better acquainted with the various opportunities for creative political intervention offered by their constitution.<sup>10</sup> In particular, studying other countries would especially highlight the informal channels of influence and monitoring which can be used to great effect.

---

<sup>10</sup> It is important for Malian officials to learn not only to live with the uncertainty of political roles under a French-style constitution, but also to use this uncertainty creatively.

**Recommendation 5. Foster a work environment that enables the Presidential staff to do rapid, high-quality analysis.**

**Objective: Raise the quality of the economic and political analysis done in the Presidency.**

Currently, adverse working conditions interfere with the ability of the Presidential staff to attain the level of quality and productivity of which they are capable. Specifically, staff members need easy access to computers, printers, fax and photocopy machines, basic office supplies, as well as more comfortable offices with windows or fans (if air-conditioning is prohibitively expensive).

Encouragement of the use of PCs in day-to-day work would be likely to raise productivity. Therefore, general training for the entire Presidential staff is recommended, starting with computer familiarisation and word processing. Training in the use of analytical tools such as spreadsheets for financial analysis and project management software should be provided as well, in response to specific needs and interests of the professional staff. Additional facilities for word processing (on the order of one PC for every two officers and one printer for each four officers) should be provided for the conseillers and chargés de mission. In due course, when all officers are located within one or two buildings, PCs can be linked together in one local area network (LAN).

A shift away from the current system, where the private secretaries type and retype drafts of documents for conseillers into a system where the conseillers do their own word processing would shorten the turnaround time of position papers produced in the Presidency and eliminate bottlenecks in production. The next recommendation, which proposes the development of an information system would also enhance the quality of the analysis done in the Presidency.

**Recommendation 6. Improve access to high-quality information on the Republic of Mali as well as on international and regional issues of concern to the President.**

**Objective:** To strengthen the information base upon which Presidential decisions are taken.

The unavailability of information, including national statistics, and lack of access to the information that does exist limit the extent to which the Presidential staff can examine issues in an analytically rigorous fashion. Creation of a national information database managed by a highly competent information scientist and a Presidential Policy Research, and Documentation Center led by an experienced librarian would address these information constraints. The new information networks and technology should stimulate the exchange of information and create synergies in group work.

**National Information Database** Creation of a national information database would provide all staff in the Presidency with ready on-line access to information. A capable information scientist who would manage the MIS (Management Information System) needs of the Presidency would design and develop the database, plan and gradually implement a local area network for all systems in the Presidency, and provide regular training for all users, as well as oversee all equipment needs. The new database system would store and regularly update national statistical information obtained from the government agencies at the central, regional, and local levels. This database should include national statistics obtained from the Direction National des Statistiques (DNSI), project related information for monitoring public investment, national economic surveys (produced by the Central Bank, BCAA) and the TOFE information produced by the Ministry of Finance. Over time, it will be important to gradually expand the database to include statistical data prepared by the Cellules de Planification et Statistique at each ministry. Data on each region should also be integrated into the system, once decentralisation has taken place.

The system should be designed using a standard database management package in order to allow for expansion, as new statistical data becomes available. The newly-recruited Information Director would manage the database in close collaboration with the strategic team, and the chargés de missions, who would oversee the collection of timely information at the Cellule de Planification et Statistiques (CPS) in the Ministry dealing with their area of specialty. Over time, the professional staff at the Primature and the Assemble Nationale could use the database, as well, when their offices are computerized.

## **Policy Research and Documentation Center**

The team found that there is a real need to establish a resource center in the Presidency where books, journals, reports and data on topics of interest to the Presidency, including finance, macroeconomics, rural development, law, politics, and international relations could be collected. The *Policy Research and Documentation Center* would ensure continuity of access to information, even staff changes and across Presidencies. A wide range of sources should be collected including international donor agency reports, university publications, publication lists from major publishers of interest, national, regional and international news reports (both newspapers and periodicals), and international statistics and reference works on CD-ROM (such as those published by the IMF). The center should also contain copies of all reports written for the government (either internally or by outside consultants, publications of all state institutions (from the Central Bank to CMDT), all laws promulgated in Mali, international laws and treaties to which Mali is or intends to be a signatory, and all Malian statistical publications. A standard library software package run on a PC should be used for indexing documents and managing lending out materials.

It could also be useful for the strategic team, and even the President, himself, to get on Inter-net as a gateway to access to an enormous volume of academic publications and information on economic and financial issues, political events, international news, and other potential topics of interest. For instance, the MIS expert could set up a customized news reader program allowing the *Conseiller de Communication* on the Strategic Team to quickly scan the news for relevant articles in the French press or other sources of interest to the President.

**Recommendation 7 Simplify mail procedures and organize a central filing system for all dossiers.**

Objective: To enhance the efficiency of mail distribution.

The team identified a cluster of serious problems related to the distribution of mail and dossiers in the Presidency. Staff members complained that complicated mail procedures prevent them from tracking mail and allow for substantial leakage out of the system. The processes for distributing dossiers are equally problematic, resulting in their late arrival, leaving inadequate time for officers to prepare them for the President's meeting with the Conseil de Ministres. Furthermore, the current dispersed system allows officers to use mail access as a tool of wielding power over other persons or offices contributing to divisiveness within the Presidency.

A complete overhaul of the mail system is necessary to remedy the current situation and assure that the President who is overloaded with work sees only the most critical mail . First, a single mail office should be created dealing with all incoming and outgoing mail as well as the maintenance of all files kept in the Presidency. An officer would be responsible for opening, recording and tracking each of three types of mail which would be color-coded: ordinary, confidential, and secret. Specific criteria should be used to decide which mail falls into which category. All mail arriving from ministères de Souveraineté, i.e. Defense, Affaires Etrangères et Justice could be classified secret and be delivered directly to the President. President must have the ultimate confidence in the officers he chooses to open his secret and confidential mail. The Director of Presidential Services and Affairs should filter and direct the mail and, most critically, decide which issues should be brought to the President's attention. He/she would wield substantial authority in playing this extremely important role of protecting the President's time. The DASP could pass confidential mail coming from the Prime Minister directly to the President (without notation), but confidential mail sent by the Government should only be sent to the President with a cover note attached. The DASP may wish to assign a priority level to all mail, like the British Prime Minister's Office does, in order to ensure that issues are dealt with in the order of their importance.

One archivist would be responsible for maintaining the filing system. All four core personnel should be physically located in the same building and work in air-conditioned rooms (which would protect the documents from decay). The officers should record the crucial information about each piece of mail, including its main points, level of urgency, and tracking details, in registers which should be computerised. The computerised system will have password controlled access, particularly for confidential and secret mail. The computer system should provide the archivist with a facility to conduct searches on past subjects dealt with in the Presidency, which would enable him/her to treat simple inquiries sent to the Presidency efficiently. The first page of each file (created for each piece of mail) should be a transmission tracking sheet aimed at ensuring that the mail office is aware of the location of all files at all times. All officers receiving files will have to sign for them, until the full LAN is established, when they will simply make a computer entry that they have borrowed a file. At any point in time, the system will be able to tell where a file is located and what its deadlines are. All outgoing mail should be registered at the mail office, with the same level of detail as incoming mail.

There should be only one *Central File Archive* at the mail office. Files should not be kept in any other office, except for short periods, when an officer has signed for a file and been given a fixed return date. The archives should be in a secure room, with separate locked cabinets (or inner rooms) for confidential and secret files. If either the President or the Directeur du Cabinet should require a separate copy of a file, the archivist should make a copy and stamp every page with COPY. Confidential and secret files copied or duplicated should be strictly numbered in order to maintain the confidentiality of files and access to them. When files are closed, they must be returned to the archive. Closed files in regular use may be duplicated and circulated to several officers at the same time (marked DUPLICATE).

**Recommendation 8. Develop a mechanism for the Presidency to report to an alternative oversight agency other than the government (through the Ministry of Finance) for its financial accountability.**

**Objective: To strengthen the DAF's authority to respond more effectively to the needs of the Office of the President, while ensuring transparency through accountability.**

Under the current system, <sup>11</sup> DAF prepares its budget through the Ministry of Finance and is subject to the same budgetary restrictions as the DAFs in all the other government agencies. Yet there is an inherent constitutional conflict in this system: the President is accountable to a Minister of the Government and yet he as President names the ministers of the Government. To resolve this conflict, Presidential appropriations could be subject to a different mechanism of accountability than other government agencies. For instance, the Cour de Comptes could be charged with the fiscal and financial oversight of the Presidency or, alternatively, the President could be accountable to the Assemblée Nationale, like the American President is financially accountable to Congress. Such a change in the financial status of the Presidency may require amendments to Articles 70 and 77 (concerning la Loi de Finances) of the Constitution. Under an alternative system of financial accountability, it would be important for the Head of DAF to be of high enough stature in the civil service to represent the Presidency before the new oversight agency (the Assemblée Nationale or the Cour de Comptes).

Currently, DAF's budgeted items and their corresponding amounts do not reflect the real needs of the Presidency. Under the proposed system, greater flexibility would ensure budget allotment and funding without the same rigid constraints which apply to other government agencies. Furthermore, introduction of more appropriate budget line items (nomenclature budgétaire) would greatly improve DAF's expenditure planning.

---

<sup>11</sup>See Ordonnance 46 bis of 17 February, 1961 which deals with financial procedures.

**Recommendation 9. Formalize DAF's reporting procedures and provide reliable financial information to the Presidency.**

**Objective:** To improve the DAF's accountability and efficiency and raise the quality of information for Presidential decisionmaking.

Currently, DAF's reporting procedures are not formalized. While DAF does prepare monthly reports on the execution of its budget, these reports are used for internal purposes only and are rarely diffused. There is little automation: the bulk of the information with deals with the day-to-day administration of the DAF's functions is prepared manually. The Ministry of Finance centrally manages payment for and recording of all expenditures, as well as all other accounting functions.

It is clear that DAF needs a financial management system and two other management systems, in addition, one for personnel and one for assets. The assets system has already been developed and is currently being installed as part of a pilot project on computerization (organised under the Control General d'Etat). The two new systems could be written in DBase, which was used for the assets system and is familiar to Malian computer experts. Under the auspices of the USAID PRED project, the new systems could be developed in the Presidency as a testing ground for later use in DAFs throughout the administration. Training for DAF staff on each of the three new systems should be provided.

In order to generate higher quality information, DAF staff must be expanded and strengthened. The staff of DAF is currently 12 persons less than the human resource requirements spelled out in Decree No. 90-291 (June 29, 1990), and should be upgraded (although it may not be necessary to add the full 12).

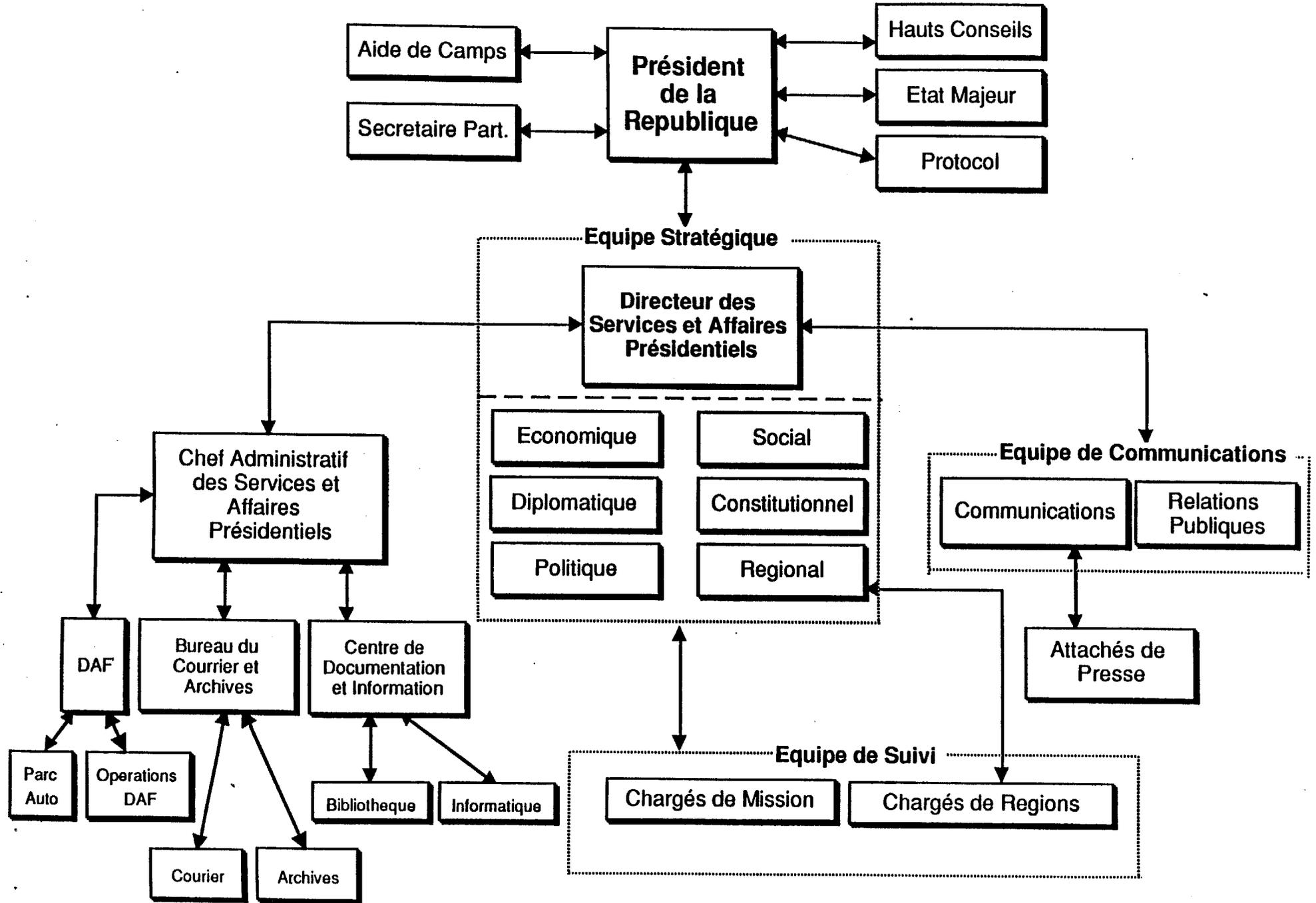
**Recommendation 10: Streamline the procedures for the use of vehicles in the Parc Automobile Présidentiel.**

Objective: to manage the Parc Automobile Présidentiel more cost-effectively and improve the security in the PAP.

Currently, the Parc Automobile Présidentiel (PAP) is poorly managed, which may result in the unauthorized use of motor vehicles. It lacks coherent, well-coordinated procedures for dealing with the use of motor vehicles as well as a clear definition of duties of its military and civilian personnel. The majority of the budget is spent on running and maintenance costs which exert a heavy burden on the PAP's limited financial resources. A large number of vehicles are more than 10 years old and the cost of repairs and maintenance is prohibitively high.

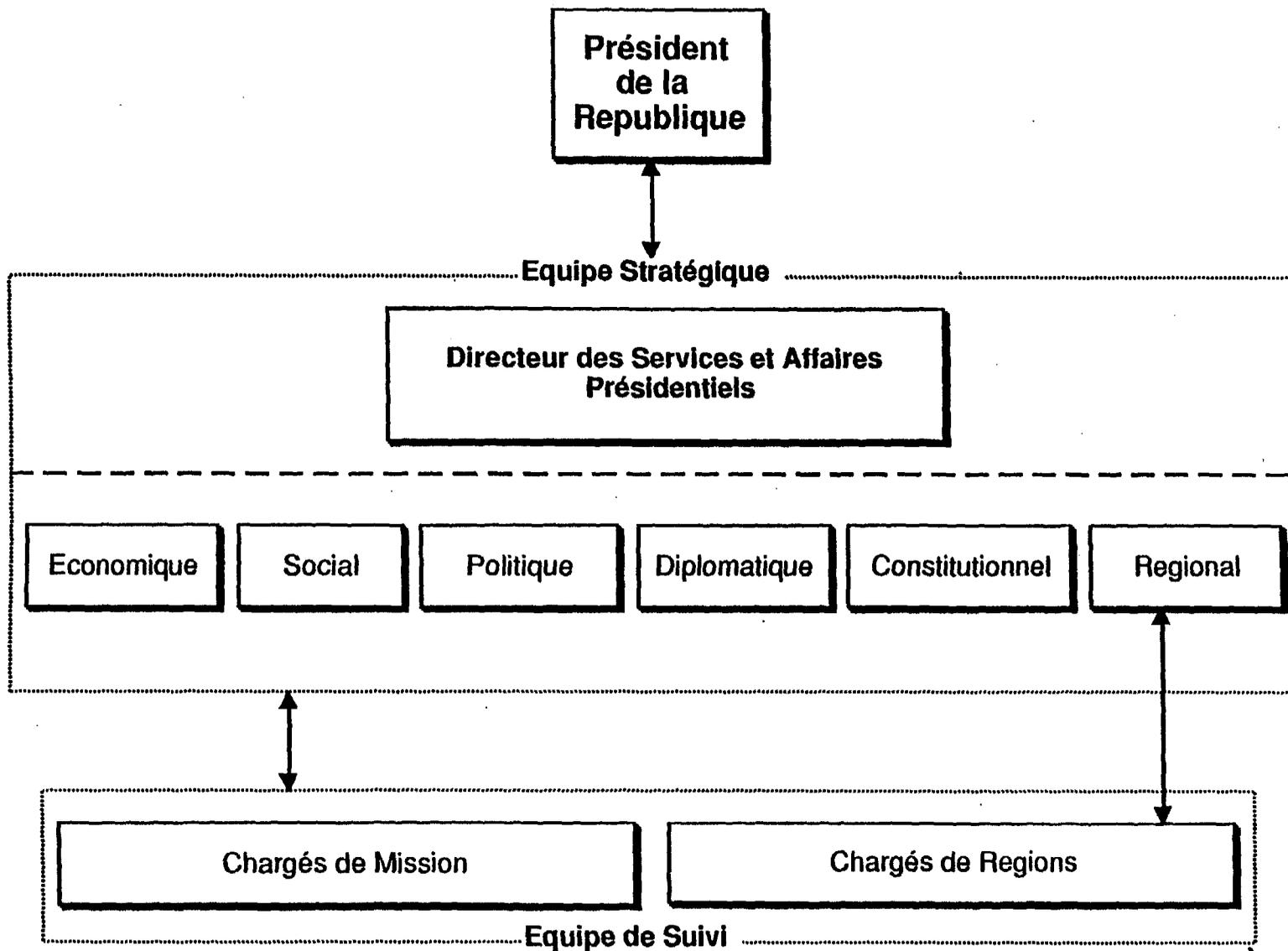
Procedures which provide for the rational and effective use of motor vehicles and controls which ensure compliance must be introduced. Specifically, four steps must be taken. First, an assessment of the number of vehicles needed for each category (President-Mali, Presidential Protocol and Vehicle de Service) must be done. Second, an inventory of motor vehicles should be done, after which broken down vehicles should be auctioned off and a comprehensive replacement program should be instituted. Third, a record-keeping system for vehicle use and detailed procedures for repairs and maintenance are needed to improve the cost-effectiveness of resource management. Fourth, explicit procedures must be designed specifying who is responsible for ordering vehicles.

**Tableau 1: Nouvelle Structure de la Présidence**

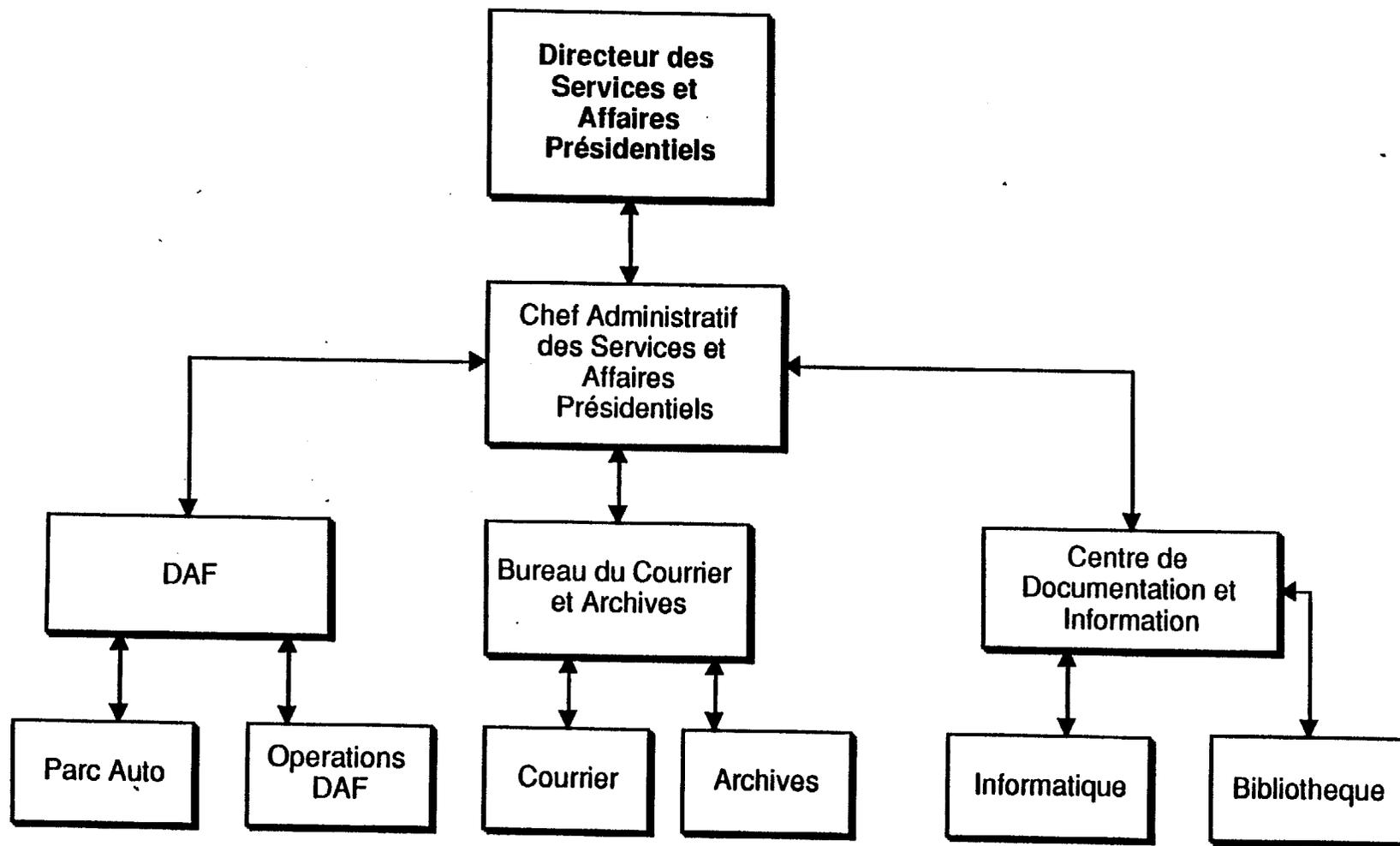


22

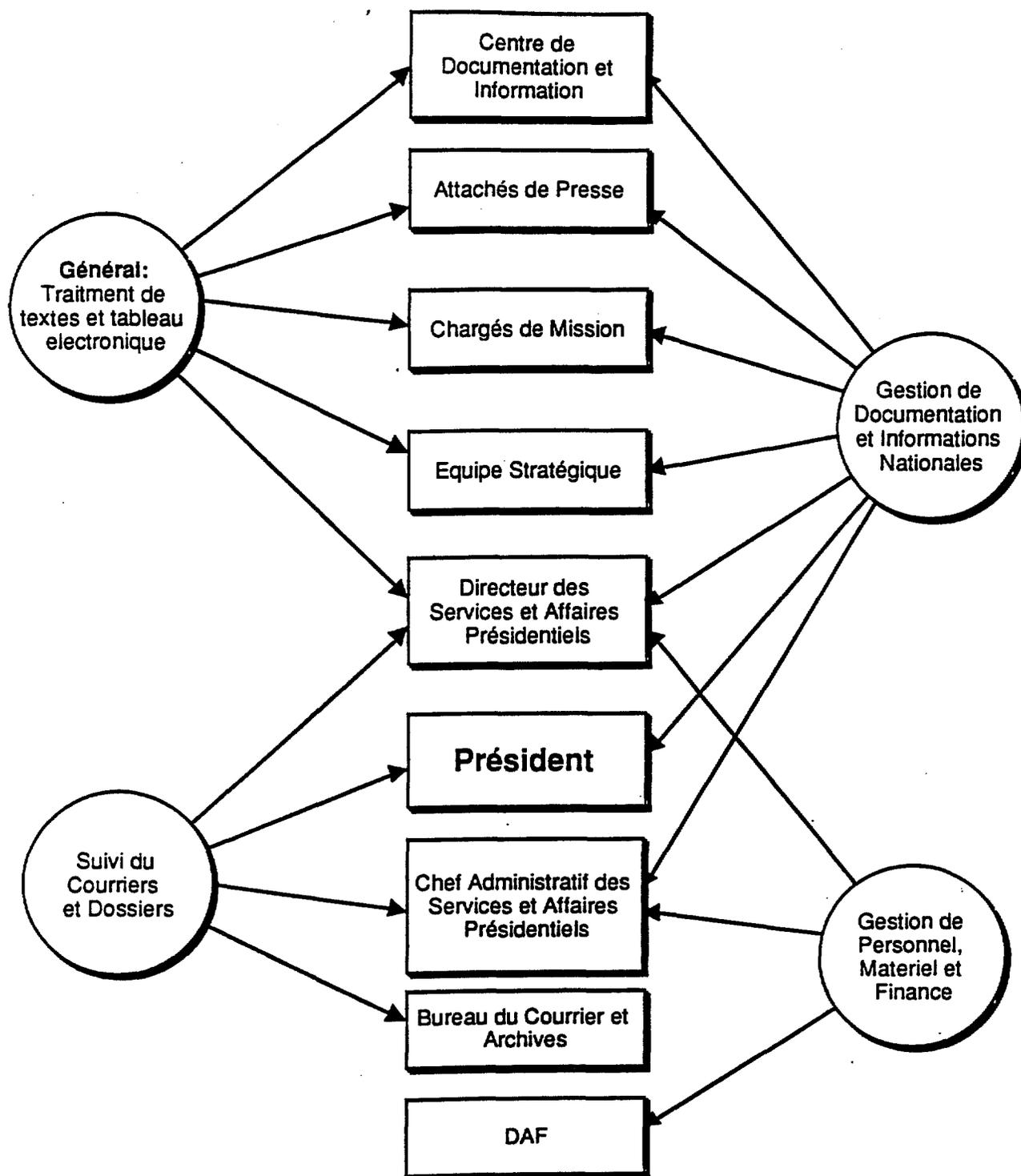
**Tableau 2: Equipe Stratégique**



**Tableau 3. Administration**



**Tableau 4: Besoins Informatiques de la Présidence**



**Note: Formation nécessaire pour tous systemes introduits**

**Tableau 5: Nouvelle Gestion et Suivi du Courrier et des Dossiers**

