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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the request of the Security Council contained in its resolution [2088 \(2013\)](#) and amended in its resolution [2121 \(2013\)](#). It provides an update on the situation in the Central African Republic and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) from 1 August to 31 December 2013. It also includes a detailed assessment of the performance and effectiveness of BINUCA.

II. Update on major developments

A. Latest developments

2. Since my last report ([S/2013/470](#)), the situation in the Central African Republic has seriously deteriorated. The most recent series of events was triggered by an attack by anti-Balaka and other armed groups against Muslims in Bangui on 5 December, which left more than 600 people dead and 214,000 internally displaced. The ex-Séléka forces reacted and eventually forced the assailants to retreat after prolonged exchanges of fire. Although the exact number of casualties in the rest of the country is unknown, it is estimated to be substantially higher than in Bangui. It is also estimated that there are an additional 425,000 internally displaced persons in other areas of the country. The attack has triggered widespread violence between Christian and Muslim communities in Bangui and across the country.

3. During the following days, systematic house searches and killings took place in different neighbourhoods of Bangui and elsewhere. There were reports of widespread human rights violations, including summary executions, extrajudicial killings, sexual violence, looting, destruction of property, the establishment of illegal checkpoints, extortion, arbitrary arrests, detentions and torture. In all of these actions, Muslims targeted Christians and Christians targeted Muslims as the country descended into chaos.

4. On 9 December, the Government of France launched Operation Sangaris by deploying 1,600 troops in support of the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX), the subregional peacekeeping force led by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Sangaris and



MICOPAX were able to canton and initiate the disarmament of some armed groups, mostly ex-Séléka, in Bangui. This was followed by a wave of attacks by the Christian majority against the Muslim minority, with both communities reportedly committing revenge killings and other gross human rights violations. The national police and gendarmerie have been unable to maintain public safety and law and order.

5. There has also been fighting outside of Bangui, namely in Begoa, Bossangoa, Bouar, Bozoum and Paoua. Tensions remain high and clashes occur continuously between anti-Balaka and ex-Séléka combatants, and among civilians along the Christian versus Muslim divide. The presence of Boko Haram elements has also been reported.

B. Political situation

6. Throughout the reporting period, my Special Representative for the Central African Republic has maintained permanent contact with key international partners in Bangui, particularly ECCAS, the African Union, the European Union and France. These close consultations allowed the representatives of the international community in the country to speak with one voice and issue a series of joint public statements. Joint demarches were also undertaken towards the Head of State of the Transition and the Prime Minister to help stop the violence. The Head of State of the Transition and the Prime Minister both issued statements, which have not had the desired impact.

7. My Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, my Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and a representative of my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict conducted a joint assessment mission to the Central African Republic from 17 to 21 December. The joint mission visited Bangui and Bossangoa where it held meetings with the transitional authorities, the diplomatic community, civil society, women's groups and victims of the recent violence. The joint delegation called for urgent national and international action to protect civilians, particularly women and children, and prevent the country from plunging into full-scale sectarian conflict.

8. The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs travelled to Bangui and N'Djamena from 19 to 23 December to deliver messages on my behalf concerning national reconciliation and the transition processes. He met with the Head of State of the Transition, the Prime Minister and key international partners in Bangui. He also attended the ceremony marking the transformation of MICOPAX into the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) and the resulting transfer of authority from ECCAS to the African Union. In N'Djamena, he participated in the thirty-seventh ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which was hosted by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, and held bilateral meetings with ministers of the region. The meeting adopted the N'Djamena appeal on the Central African Republic, which condemns the instrumentalization of religion, appeals for calm and welcomes the transfer of authority from MICOPAX to MISCA.

9. Finally, on 13 December I videotaped a peace message addressed to the people of the Central African Republic, which was aired in French and Sango on various

local television stations. The audio tape, in both languages, was also made available to local radio stations.

Transitional institutions

10. During the reporting period, despite the deterioration in the security situation, the transitional process stayed broadly on track. All transitional institutions were established or consolidated. The election of the new bureau of the National Transitional Council was held on 8 August and Alexandre Ferdinand Nguedet retained his position as President. In addition, Michel Djotodia officially became the Head of State of the Transition on 18 August 2013. His swearing-in ceremony marked the beginning of the transitional period.

11. The Transitional Government was reshuffled on 22 August. Contrary to the provisions of the Transitional Charter, Mr. Djotodia did not relinquish his position as Minister of Defence following his swearing-in. Instead, Bertrand Mamour was named Minister Delegate in Charge of Defence at the Office of the Head of State of the Transition. Meanwhile, General Nourredine Adam, an ex-Séléka commander, was removed from the post of Minister of Security and Immigration and reassigned to the Office of the Head of State of the Transition as Director-General of the Extraordinary Committee for the Defence of Democratic Gains, with the rank of a senior minister. Josué Binoua, who had held the same position in the Bozizé administration, replaced him in the Ministry of Security and Immigration. Jean-Jacques Demafouth was appointed Advisor to the Head of State of the Transition in charge of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform and relations with MISCA, with ministerial rank.

12. The adoption of the legal framework for the Transitional Constitutional Court and the subsequent appointment of its nine members, including four women, as well as the appointment of the High Council for Communication, constitute important developments in the establishment of the institutions of the transition. Other key milestones in this process were the adoption of a new electoral code, a road map for the transition and the signature by transitional authorities of a “Republican Pact” for peace and reconciliation in the Central African Republic under the auspices of the Sant’Egidio community. The Pact was elaborated between representatives of the transitional authorities and the country’s religious organizations and civil society. It seeks the promotion of a gradual return to security, peace and national reconciliation, as well as the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of the Central African Republic, and was signed by the three leaders of the transition.

Follow-up Committee on the Libreville Agreements

13. Throughout the reporting period, the Follow-up Committee on the Libreville Agreements continued to meet regularly at the technical level in Bangui. President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Congo, ECCAS Mediator for the Central African Republic and President of the Follow-up Committee, maintained an active engagement both personally and through his special representative based in Bangui.

14. BINUCA and the United Nations country team provided technical support to the Follow-up Committee and my Special Representative used his good offices to help overcome political challenges. For example, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) deployed a senior adviser to assist in the formulation of the

road map for the transition, under the overall supervision of my Special Representative.

15. Similarly, further to discussions within the Follow-up Committee and at the request of the Head of State of the Transition, BINUCA elaborated a stabilization strategy to address the security situation in the Central African Republic. The document is the result of wide-ranging consultations carried out by my Special Representative. The strategy was endorsed by the Follow-up Committee and ECCAS, and its contents are reflected in the road map for the transition.

Progress towards elections

16. On 7 November, the draft electoral code was adopted by the National Transitional Council and promulgated into law. The Head of State of the Transition, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Territorial Administration co-signed a decree on 16 December announcing the composition of the seven-member National Electoral Authority. The members, who include two women, were subsequently sworn in on 24 December and nominated a three-member board including Dieudonné Kombo-Yaya as President. In accordance with the Transitional Charter and the electoral code, the National Electoral Authority includes representatives of the transitional authorities, political parties and civil society. They will remain in position throughout the transitional process. Following the mini-summit on the Central African Republic held in Paris on 6 December, some international actors have started calling for elections to be held in 2014, earlier than the timelines established by the Transitional Charter. As part of its electoral support strategy, the United Nations will dispatch a multidisciplinary electoral needs assessment mission early in 2014. Meanwhile, a senior electoral adviser has already been deployed to BINUCA to assist in providing technical advice to the transitional authorities and the National Electoral Authority.

Role of regional and subregional bodies

17. Throughout the period under review, ECCAS remained very active in efforts to address the crisis in the Central African Republic. On 21 October, an ECCAS extraordinary summit of Heads of State held in N'Djamena decided, inter alia, to support MISCA; task ECCAS with the organization of an inclusive national conference; and establish the National Electoral Authority without delay.

18. The African Union Peace and Security Council closely monitored the situation in the Central African Republic. It expressed particular concern with the rising religious tensions and stressed that the current situation posed a threat to the very future of the country, as well as to regional security and stability. At a meeting held on 13 December, the Council increased the authorized strength of MISCA to 6,000 troops and called for support to create the conditions for the full deployment of this force. MISCA was officially launched on 19 December in a ceremony held in Bangui. In accordance with Security Council resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#), the United Nations and the European Union are supporting the African Union in the organization of a donors' conference in February 2014 in Addis Ababa to mobilize resources to support MISCA.

19. Meanwhile, an African Union technical assessment mission visited the Central African Republic from 18 to 25 August to refine the concept of operations of MISCA, and held consultations with BINUCA. The African Union and ECCAS both

participated in the inter-agency team that I dispatched in October and November 2013, in response to Security Council resolution 2121 (2013), to prepare the report on possible options to support MISCA (S/2013/677).

International Contact Group

20. During the reporting period, the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic met once, in Bangui, on 8 November 2013, under the co-chairmanship of the ECCAS Mediator for the Central African Republic and the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs headed the United Nations delegation to this meeting. International partners reminded the transitional authorities of their responsibility in the implementation of Security Council resolution 2121 (2013), including the importance of linking disarmament, demobilization and reintegration with security sector reform and the stabilization strategy with the aim of establishing professional, balanced, representative and affordable defence forces and security services. In that regard, international partners expressed their opposition to the decision announced by the Head of State of the Transition, in his opening remarks at the meeting of the International Contact Group, to integrate 3,500 ex-Séléka elements in the country's new national armed forces. The International Contact Group adopted the Bangui Declaration encouraging the transitional authorities to remain on track with the implementation of the transition, leading up to the holding of presidential and legislative elections. The next meeting of the International Contact Group is scheduled to take place in February 2014.

Coordination of international actors

21. As part of the efforts to contribute to the coordination of international support to the Central African Republic, my Special Representative organized weekly "Group of Five" meetings/conference calls with senior representatives of the African Union, the European Union, France and the United States of America. This contributed to the preparation of a meeting on the situation in the Central African Republic sponsored by the European Union, and held in Brazzaville on 11 and 12 September. In addition, as the crisis unfolded in the Central African Republic, BINUCA coordinated common positions among the Group of Five and joint statements were issued on their behalf.

22. The Special Representative for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, in close consultation with my Special Representative for the Central African Republic, facilitated talks between delegations led by ECCAS Secretary-General Ahmad Allam-Mi and former African Union Peace and Security Commissioner Ramtane Lamamra to harmonize their positions on MISCA. This meeting took place on 2 and 3 September in Addis Ababa and served as a springboard to advance strategic and technical coordination between the two institutions regarding the deployment of the mission.

23. The Peacebuilding Commission held an informal discussion with the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and my Special Representative on 13 November. The outcome of this discussion was subsequently communicated to the Security Council on 22 November. On 30 December, the Peacebuilding Commission unanimously elected Morocco as chair of its Central African Republic configuration.

C. Security and the rule of law

24. During the reporting period, the security situation in the Central African Republic continued to be characterized by the complete absence of law and order across the country. In addition to the latest developments described in paragraphs 2 to 8 above, there was a series of significant events.

25. On 26 August, the localities of Mongoumba and Boda, close to Bangui, fell into the hands of a new rebel group, the “Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy in the Central African Republic”, that was reported to be active in the area of Bétoko, near the border with Chad.

26. On 28 August, forced disarmament operations were conducted by the Séléka to take weapons away from civilians in the Bangui districts of Boy Rabé and Boeing. Violence and looting were rampant. As a result, the population of those districts sought refuge on the runway and tarmac of the M’Poko International Airport, causing the diversion of all international flights to neighbouring countries. The population demanded the resignation of the Head of State of the Transition. Following these events, my Special Representative and other international partners impressed upon the Head of State of the Transition the need to urgently address the deteriorating security situation. These events prompted the Transitional Government to make several adjustments to the security architecture, including the decision to relieve Séléka from maintaining law and order, and to reinstate the national police and gendarmerie in their roles. A decree by the Head of State of the Transition transferred the jurisdiction, budget and infrastructure of the gendarmerie from the Ministry of Defence to the Ministry of Public Security and Immigration.

27. A declaration by the Minister of Public Security, stating that neither Central African civilians nor foreigners were allowed to carry weapons, led to the first voluntary phase of the collection of weapons from Séléka elements between 3 and 13 September. Police and the gendarmerie, assisted by the ex-Séléka, conducted search operations, collecting weapons and arresting civilians holding weapons. The second stage of the operation started on 3 October, but had to be discontinued at the end of October owing to alleged interference by the ex-Séléka leadership which prevented the Central African Multinational Force (FOMAC), police and the gendarmerie from conducting it appropriately. Subsequently, ex-Séléka returned to the streets of Bangui to act as security forces.

28. On 13 September, the Head of State of the Transition issued a decree dissolving Séléka and declaring the Forces armées centrafricaines the sole legitimate armed force in charge of national defence.

29. The murder, by ex-Séléka elements, of several officers of the Forces armées centrafricaines during the month of November, and the murder of a senior magistrate on 19 November resulted in large-scale protests against the Head of State of the Transition in the second half of November, including an incident in Bangui where rocks were thrown at the motorcade transporting the Head of State of the Transition. The Head of State of the Transition subsequently dissolved the Comité extraordinaire pour la défense des acquis démocratiques (CEDAD), in compliance with the earlier request by the National Transitional Council.

30. Outside Bangui, particularly in Ouham prefecture, the situation remains worrisome. Violent confrontations between ex-Séléka and anti-Balaka elements, and retaliatory attacks against Christian and Muslim communities, have flared up to an

unprecedented level. These attacks have been particularly violent in Bossangoa, the capital of Ouham prefecture. My Special Representative met with the Head of State of the Transition and several Government ministers to identify practical solutions to the problems in this prefecture. The resulting “Bossangoa plan of action” includes the following measures: (a) withdrawal of ex-Séléka 30 km from Bossangoa; (b) FOMAC to send a reinforcement of 200 troops; (c) provision of support to the authorities for the redeployment of the local administration to Bossangoa, including a new zone commander; and (d) establishment of mediation and reconciliation committees.

31. Speaking at the swearing-in ceremony of the new Chief of Defence Staff, General Ferdinand Bombayeke, on 28 September, the Head of State of the Transition instructed him to restore security throughout the country. Stating that insecurity in the provinces was not a new development, and that poverty had fuelled ethnic rivalries and inter-community tensions, Mr. Djotodia regretted that previous authorities of the country had never addressed the root causes of the conflict. The outgoing Chief of Defence Staff, General Jean-Pierre Dolewaya, was appointed as Military Adviser to the Head of the State of the Transition in an effort to improve coordination between the Office of the Head of State of the Transition and the ministries of defence and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

32. Although they resumed their functions on 31 August, the police and gendarmerie remain poorly equipped and without operational capacity. On 16 November, a ceremony was held to mark the handing over of some weapons to the police and gendarmerie, consisting in one rifle and one pistol per police and gendarmerie station. On 21 December, the Peacebuilding Support Office approved funding for a project, jointly developed by BINUCA and UNDP, for the rehabilitation of eight police and three gendarmerie stations in Bangui. The six-month project, which will be implemented by UNDP in close coordination with a complementary project by the European Union, aims, among other aspects, to provide training to police and the gendarmerie in Bangui.

33. Consultations with international and national actors on launching a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme were initiated by my Special Representative on 17 October, leading to the establishment of a strategic committee and a technical committee for this purpose. Subsequently, on 15 November, a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration strategy was adopted by the strategic committee with participation of the Prime Minister, members of the Government and international partners. The adoption of the strategy paves the way for the development of the programme document to complement the strategy and help in the mobilization of resources. National and international actors stressed the importance of ensuring linkages between security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

34. Consultations on security sector reform with representatives of eight relevant Ministries and international partners took place on 25 November under the chairmanship of my Special Representative. Participants agreed to establish strategic and technical working groups to focus on the development of a short-term strategy and the establishment of foundations for long-term security sector reform. Ahead of the consultations, a two-week mission was deployed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, with funding support from UNDP, to provide technical assistance to BINUCA and the United Nations country team.

D. Lord's Resistance Army

35. During the reporting period, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) remained active in the south-east of the Central African Republic and reportedly increased its activities in the north-east, particularly in the mineral-rich Haut-Kotto prefecture. Seven LRA attacks were reported from May to October 2013, resulting in 17 deaths, 79 abductions and the displacement of 300 people. The African Union regional task force resumed its operations in the south-eastern Central African Republic in August 2013 after a four-month interruption. As of 29 October, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that the Central African Republic was hosting 21,008 internally displaced persons and 6,304 refugees displaced by LRA activity.

36. On 22 September, the transitional authorities informed BINUCA of the imminent surrender of a large number of LRA combatants in Nzako. This never materialized and instead, 19 LRA combatants, including nine Ugandan nationals, defected on 6 December in Zemio. The group was led by Lieutenant-Colonel Okello Okutti, who was abducted from Uganda in 1989. Observers note this is the largest LRA defection since 2008.

37. In November and December, LRA attacks and kidnappings were reported in Derbissaka, Mboki and Obo, causing panic among local populations and resulting in further internal displacement.

E. Human rights protection

38. The reporting period has seen an increasing number of attacks by anti-Balaka elements against ex-Séléka and the Muslim community. Religious authorities at national level continue to play a remarkable pacifying role, not without risk. At the local level, however, BINUCA witnessed the increasing breakdown in dialogue between religious communities.

39. In Bangui, allegations of politically motivated crimes continue to be reported. In particular, there are reports of illegal arrests and kidnappings, by ex-Séléka elements, of individuals perceived as Bozizé supporters or opponents of the regime. Reports also indicate that members of the Transitional Government have been operating illegal detention centres such as the CEDAD building, where torture was reportedly used extensively.

40. In the prefectures, human rights violations are compounded by the pervasive insecurity throughout the country and the absence of State authority and local administration at the district and prefecture levels. State authority remains in the hands of ex-Séléka forces, which lack basic discipline and training and operate, for the most part, outside unified command and control structures of the transitional authorities, owing allegiance to Séléka zone commanders. Fully functioning national security forces are still mostly inexistent. It is also difficult to distinguish between those ex-Séléka elements that have been integrated into the legitimate armed forces and those who continue to operate as rebels. It is in this context of the breakdown of law and order that violent confrontations between the ex-Séléka and anti-Balaka elements and retaliatory attacks against the Christian and Muslim communities have multiplied. These attacks and ensuing reprisals against the populations have resulted in serious human rights violations.

41. Increasing reports are also being received regarding abuses perpetrated by anti-Balaka groups against Muslims. On 14 September in Benzambe, 57 Muslims were killed. In Gaga (Ombella-Mpoko), as a result of a confrontation between ex-Séléka and anti-Balaka, 32 civilians, predominantly Muslim, were killed and 187 severely wounded. On 1 November an ex-Séléka commander conducted retaliatory attacks, which resulted in the summary executions of more than 40 civilians and the burning of more than 50 houses in Camp Bangui. On 26 October, self-defence militias attacked and occupied Bouar, a town in the west of the country on the main road leading to Cameroon. This led to clashes with ex-Séléka forces and resulted in the death of at least 20 civilians. At least 10,000 people have been displaced as a result of the fighting in and around Bouar.

42. The impact of the recent wave of violence on children has been dramatic. A substantial number of children are reported to remain in the ranks of the ex-Séléka. New waves of widespread child recruitment in villages by the anti-Balaka are reported as the movement spreads. The number of children associated with armed forces and groups in the country has risen to at least 3,500 and could be as many as 6,000. Children and youth have been drawn into a dynamic of violence and retaliation and have suffered grave violations of their human rights, including sexual violence, especially against girls. Killing and maiming of children is also prevalent, with 14 children maimed in one attack in Bouali on 2 December and several more during the attack on Bangui on 5 and 6 December. The vast majority of schools and hospitals in the countryside have been looted and are not functional, resulting in serious violations of the right to education. Incidents of threats to medical personnel following the 5 December events in Bangui have been repeatedly reported. The creation of new armed groups, in particular the organization of the civilian population into self-defence groups, has increased the risk of forced recruitment of children and other major violations of children's rights. Disappearances and abductions involving children and women have also been reported. Children represent an estimated 50 per cent of the total number of persons displaced in the country.

43. In Bohong in the western Central African Republic, from August to September, close to 70 people were reported killed and 191 wounded as a result of clashes between ex-Séléka and local self-defence groups. In Bossangoa, BINUCA found that between 7 and 21 September, ex-Séléka elements allegedly killed 67 members of the Christian community. A number of rape cases were also reported during the same period. BINUCA also recorded that 87 houses were looted and set ablaze. Widespread human rights violations, committed by ex-Séléka and anti-Balaka elements alike, included verified cases of summary executions, sexual violence, arrests and arbitrary detentions. Several hundred civilians, including two humanitarian workers from the non-governmental organization Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development, are reported to have lost their lives during the first two weeks of September. Because of the fighting, members of the Christian community have taken refuge in Bossangoa's Catholic mission, which houses up to 40,000 displaced people. Muslim civilians have also been displaced and around 8,500 of them have taken refuge in the sub-prefecture and the Liberty school premises in Bossangoa. At least 20 villages surrounding Bossangoa have also been affected by clashes, which have forced villagers to flee and hide in the bush in precarious conditions and in constant fear for their lives.

44. The official report of the fact-finding mission of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to the Central African Republic (A/HRC/24/59) was presented to the Human Rights Council in September. The fact-finding mission, which covered the period between December 2012 and July 2013, was able to collect credible, reliable and corroborated information from victims, families, witnesses and other reliable sources in Bangui and several localities in the Lobaye, Kémo, Ombella-Mpoko and Nana-Gribizi prefectures. The mission concluded that, during the conflict, both parties had engaged in summary executions and extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture and looting of private and public property. The Séléka also engaged in sexual violence and grave violations against children. Those acts constitute gross human rights violations and may amount to war crimes. After 24 March, gross violations of international human rights law, such as summary executions, sexual violence, recruitment of children and looting of property, including hospitals, schools and churches, committed by the Séléka continued.

45. In Bouar, on 26 October, ex-Séléka elements killed 20 people using heavy and light artillery in the Christian majority neighbourhood of Gogo, and an additional eight people were wounded by gunfire. Reports of casualties resulting from attacks and widespread violations perpetrated by ex-Séléka are increasing. On 30 October, an ex-Séléka commander reportedly executed four individuals in Zaire village outside of Bossembele and on 31 October, clashes between ex-Séléka and anti-Balaka elements reportedly resulted in three deaths.

46. Since my last report, BINUCA has conducted several field visits to document human rights violations. BINUCA visited Ouham (Bossangoa, Boaye, Benzambe and Oda-Kette, Ouham Bac), Ouham Pende (Bouca), Mbomou (Bangassou), Ombella-Mpoko (Yaloke, Gaga), and Nana Mambere (Bohong). My Special Representative issued several communiqués urging the national authorities to shed light on the wave of killings, assassinations and threats and to bring to justice the perpetrators of these crimes. My Special Representative also requested the transitional authorities to pursue and speed up the restoration of the capacities of the police and the gendarmerie and to entrust them with maintaining law and order. On 8 November, the High Commissioner for Human Rights warned that the deteriorating cycle of violent attacks and reprisals in the Central African Republic risked plunging the country into a new conflict.

47. In response to ongoing attacks against civilian communities and an overall deterioration in human rights protection, OHCHR deployed a team of human rights officers to the Central African Republic to support the BINUCA human rights component from 12 to 24 December. The purpose of the visit was to monitor the ongoing violence against civilians carried out by different armed groups and to document related human rights violations and abuses, in particular during December 2013 in Bangui and other parts of the country. The most serious incident began in the early hours of 5 December 2013 (see paras. 2-8 above).

48. The teams worked in Bangui and carried out field missions to Bouar and Bossangoa, interviewing victims, witnesses, leaders and representatives from Muslim and Christian communities, local authorities and representatives from different international and national organizations. OHCHR is seeking to rapidly scale up its presence of resident human rights monitors. On 19 December, the Peacebuilding Support Office approved \$1 million to fund the deployment of seven

international and two national human rights monitors, including one to work with civil society.

49. An overall deterioration in human rights protection was reported. It was noted with grave concern that attacks were ongoing throughout the western region of the Central African Republic, targeting, in particular, Christian and Muslim civilians. The majority of the testimony received from victims, witnesses and survivors focused upon the deliberate killings of civilians and indiscriminate use of lethal force by the ex-Séléka and anti-Balaka.

50. During the period under review, the transitional authorities undertook a number of positive initiatives. On 25 September, the Government requested an interactive dialogue with the Human Rights Council following the presentation of the report on the human rights situation in the Central African Republic at the twenty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The Ministers of Justice and Territorial Administration, Decentralization and Regionalization represented the Government of the Central African Republic at the session, with the former taking the floor on behalf of the Central African Republic. Delegates expressed their deep concern over the findings of the report presented on behalf of the High Commissioner. The meeting concluded with the adoption of a Human Rights Council resolution appointing an independent expert on the Central African Republic. On 3 September, the Prime Minister sent a letter conveying a standing invitation to special procedures mandate holders. On 25 October, the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review reviewed the Central African Republic and 70 Member States made statements on the human rights situation in the country. At its 17th meeting, held on 31 October, the Working Group adopted the report on the Central African Republic with a set of recommendations, which were endorsed by the Central African Republic delegation. Following international pressure, the Head of State of the Transition decreed the dissolution of CEDAD.

51. Despite this action, lack of accountability and persistent impunity for the perpetrators of violence are issues which the Transitional Government remains unable to address. From 27 to 29 September, 31 inmates escaped from the central prison of Ngaragba, including 13 ex-Séléka elements convicted of looting, theft and destruction of private property in the administrative district of Boy-Rabé in Bangui and who were serving eight-year sentences. Some of these escapees were freed after a former ex-Séléka general gave written instructions to the registrar for their release. This lack of accountability is reinforced by the virtual absence of any judicial authority outside of Bangui, as well as the destruction of the criminal justice system infrastructure, including courts and detention facilities. State authorities for the most part have not resumed their duties after the most recent crisis and the gendarmerie, police and magistrates are still absent from the interior of the country.

F. Women and peace and security

52. Women and children continue to be particularly affected by sectarian violence. There are numerous allegations of sexual violence, but given the lack of capacity to properly document cases, a trends analysis on the nature and scope of the phenomenon has not yet been carried out. However, preliminary reports indicate that women and girls have been targeted in retaliatory attacks, during house-to-house searches and through forced marriages. Women are afraid to report cases in view of

the continuing presence of presumed perpetrators and the lack of a functional justice system to address complaints. Medical and psychosocial assistance for victims remain limited. In many cases, insecurity coupled with illegal checkpoints has also resulted in violation of freedom of movement and economic and social rights. Economic activity has plummeted as the population is scared to go to the market or work in their fields.

53. The prolonged conflict in the Central African Republic has contributed to widespread poverty and disruption of livelihoods. As is often the case, women and children continue to be the most vulnerable groups. They lack the basic resources to economically re-establish their livelihoods. My Special Representative led a United Nations mission to Bria to support women affected by the conflict and a coordinated effort is being made by the United Nations system for a concerted response to their needs. In this regard, food processing machines, reproduction health kits, sewing machines, educational materials, torch lights and seeds for gardening were donated to women groups in Bria on 29 November.

54. On 24 November, 20 women who were running a sensitization campaign across the city in the run-up to celebrations for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women were arrested in the Bimbo neighbourhood of Bangui by ex-Séléka elements belonging to CEDAD. They were subsequently accused by the ex-Séléka of spreading subversive messages to destabilize the current regime. They were later released following the direct intervention of the Head of State of the Transition.

55. BINUCA and the United Nations country team have supported the development of a national action plan, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), on women and peace and security, that will enable the Transitional Government to improve its institutional and human capacities in promoting gender equality as well as the peace and security agenda for women.

56. Women are making gains in being represented at senior levels of government. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs; Rural Development; and Social Affairs, National Solidarity and Promotion of Gender are women. In addition, four of the nine elected members of the Constitutional Court are women. On 25 October 2013, two female police focal points were appointed by decree at the level of the police headquarters to support government efforts in security sector reform and to implement mandates on women and peace and security.

G. Humanitarian situation

57. The population remains the main victim of the politico-security crisis in the Central African Republic. The entire population of the country, 4.6 million people, half of them children, is affected, and an estimated 2 million people — around 45 per cent of the entire population — require humanitarian assistance. The protection of civilians is of high concern as there are continuous sectarian tensions in different areas, especially in Bangui and Bossangoa. There are an estimated 640,000 internally displaced persons throughout the country, a figure that has more than tripled since March 2013. In Bangui, more than 214,000 displaced people have sought refuge in over 50 sites, including an estimated 60,000 at Bangui international airport. Living conditions are already appalling in many of the sites but newly

displaced persons continue to be registered in the sites owing to targeted attacks in the outskirts of the city.

58. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has recorded an estimated 232,697 refugees from the Central African Republic in neighbouring countries, including 98,504 in Cameroon, 10,896 in the Congo, 45,269 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and 78,028 in Chad. More than 68,000 of these refugees have fled the country in the past few months.

59. Persistent insecurity in the Central African Republic, the absence of the rule of law, grave human rights violations and deplorable attacks against humanitarian personnel and assets constitute a major challenge to life-saving assistance, especially for people living in remote rural areas. Based on the humanitarian needs analysis carried out as part of the 2014 consolidated appeal, around 2 million of the people affected by the crisis are in dire need of food, potable water, health care, sanitation, shelter, and protection. Persisting intercommunal violence could exacerbate the situation unless appropriate, impartial and robust measures are taken to stop the killings between different communities and to facilitate a protective presence of humanitarian actors throughout the country.

60. Since the outbreak of violence in December, the World Food Programme (WFP) has provided 1,403 tons of food to 196,011 people in the Central African Republic, especially in Bangui, Bossangoa and Bouar. WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and health partners are providing medical supplies to hospitals, health centres and dispensaries at sites hosting internally displaced persons, including over 50 IDP sites in Bangui. UNICEF has been producing and distributing 120,000 litres of waters per day for the population displaced at the three major sites in Bossangoa and has brought an important stock of non-food items to boost ongoing distribution in Bangui; and protection activities are being implemented in different sites. However, the ongoing humanitarian response could be impeded by funding shortages. WFP, for example, is facing immediate shortfalls for January and February and could face a near complete break in food stocks. A joint rapid multisectoral assessment mission organized by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO and WFP left Bangui on 23 December to visit sites in Bouar and Bozzoum, in the north-western Central African Republic, and to collect data in five base towns (Bangui, Bouar, Paoua, Bossangoa and Kaga Bandoro) and their surroundings.

61. The emergency directors of eight Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) agencies visited the Central African Republic between 17 and 19 October to identify ways in which to expand the scale and reach of humanitarian deliveries and ensure the required headquarters support to the humanitarian country team. As a result, the United Nations-led humanitarian country team has decided to supplement the 2014 strategic response plan for the Central African Republic with a more specific operational plan for the 100 coming days, from December 2013 to February 2014. The action plan lays out the country team's top priority actions to ensure a rapid scale-up of humanitarian response capacity in Bangui and other key affected areas of the country. It also includes a clear set of deliverables for each cluster.

62. The IASC Principals declared a level-3 emergency for the Central African Republic on 11 December 2013 and reaffirmed the centrality of the 100-day plan to ensure that the maximum numbers of people are protected and that lives are saved. A sum of \$152.2 million is urgently needed to implement the plan. So far, more than

\$10 million has been allocated to the Central African Republic from the Central Emergency Response Fund.

63. Over the past two months, United Nations agencies have reinforced their presence in the field through permanent deployment (Paoua, Bouar and Zemio) or the deployment of mobile teams (Kaga Bandoro, Bambari, Bossangoa) in spite of the volatile security situation in some of these locations. The ongoing deployment of MISCA, supported by the French Sangaris operation in some of these towns, including Paoua, Kaga Bandoro and Bossangoa, is expected to have a stabilizing effect although the situation remains critical and more needs to be done to ensure a continued international humanitarian presence, particularly in rural areas.

64. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) ensures safe access to 27 locations countrywide for around 65 humanitarian organizations and is the sole means of transportation to reach most parts of the Central African Republic that are inaccessible because of very poor road infrastructure and insecurity. UNHAS is fully funded until December 2013 but is in need of US\$ 9 million to support its operation in 2014. With persisting insecurity in the country and the subsequent interruption of commercial flights, a fully funded UNHAS in 2014 would help humanitarian organizations, especially the United Nations humanitarian agencies, to reach vulnerable people throughout the country.

H. Financial situation

65. During the reporting period, the country's financial situation remained dire. The transitional authorities were able to pay salaries until the end of November, thanks to loans and contributions made by the Congo, Chad and the Economic and Monetary Commission of Central Africa. In November, a joint delegation of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the African Development Bank visited the Central African Republic. The objective of the mission was to assess the overall political and security environment ahead of a possible decision to resume disbursements for projects suspended since 24 March 2013.

66. As part of the Stabilization Strategy mentioned above, BINUCA and the United Nations country team collaborated with MICOPAX and the African Union to help the Government secure the Bangui-Béloko axis (at the border with Cameroon). This allowed for the restoration of part of the country's fiscal revenue collection.

I. Situation of United Nations staff and premises

67. Although all United Nations international staff are safe and accounted for, some were victims of looting as a result of the most recent developments. National staff and their families (a total of 97 people as of 24 December) who considered themselves at risk, have been extracted and relocated to the BINUCA compound, which remains, however, without protection. During the reporting period and prior to these developments, the targeting of United Nations national staff members by ex-Séléka continued. Several incidents were reported where phones, radio, and cash were seized, and there were instances of carjacking. One national staff, caught in an exchange of fire in a neighbourhood in Bangui, was killed on 24 December.

68. Meanwhile, on 29 October, the Security Council authorized the deployment of 560 troops to the Central African Republic as part of a guard unit responsible for the protection of United Nations staff and premises. Morocco was identified as the troop contributor and the first phase of the deployment (250 troops) began on 31 December. The BINUCA Guard Unit is not a peacekeeping force; it is mandated to provide perimeter security and access controls for United Nations facilities and premises in Bangui and across the Central African Republic. It will also provide mobile security and escort services to United Nations staff and conduct evacuation operations as relevant. The BINUCA Guard Unit will support the United Nations to help the people and Government of the Central African Republic.

69. On 20 December, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs held a town hall meeting with United Nations staff to hear their concerns about the security situation and reassure them about the measures being taken to address them.

J. Performance and effectiveness of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic

70. I dispatched a multidisciplinary assessment mission to the Central African Republic from 20 to 26 August 2013. The findings are contained in the annex to my letter to the President of the Security Council dated 16 September (S/2013/557). In the report, I emphasized the elements required in order to render the presence of BINUCA more effective on the ground. As a result, the Security Council adopted its resolution 2121 (2013), which strengthens and updates the BINUCA mandate in five areas. Subsequently, the Council adopted resolution 2127 (2013), which confers additional tasks on BINUCA in order to provide support to MISCA.

71. In the meantime, temporary measures have been implemented in order to respond to the new requirements. To support the transitional process, the Department of Political Affairs deployed a senior expert to the Central African Republic to support BINUCA with expertise on developing mediation and reconciliation processes, in particular in the context of intercommunal and sectarian tensions and violence. In addition, the start-up team for electoral issues has been identified. The senior electoral expert is already on the ground and assisting the National Electoral Authority. Concerning the stabilization of the security situation, a two-week mission was deployed by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to assess the status of unsafe stored ammunition causing an immediate threat to civilians as well as to United Nations personnel. Since the UNMAS technical assessment mission conducted in December 2012, 82 per cent of the obsolete ammunition and 98 per cent of small arms ammunition has been looted. The UNMAS team will return to Bangui to establish an effective coordination mechanism, provide risk education sessions and destroy remaining unsafe stockpiles. Concerning human rights, a team was deployed to the Central African Republic for two weeks, while awaiting the reinforcement of the human rights component as of January 2014. A senior adviser is being deployed by UNDP to assist with the overall coordination of the implementation of the national road map that was adopted on 7 November and presented to the International Contact Group on 8 November.

III. Observations

72. I remain deeply concerned about the continued violence and insecurity in the Central African Republic. The anti-Balaka attack on Bangui on 5 December and the counter-attacks by ex-Séléka seriously aggravated the security situation and deepened the sectarian divide between the Christian and Muslim communities in the country. Acts of violence and counter-violence, where victims and perpetrators constantly exchange roles, is rapidly spreading throughout the country and risks degenerating into a large-scale sectarian confrontation between Christians and Muslims. It is imperative to stop and reverse, with immediacy, this dangerous trend. I welcome efforts at reconciliation taken so far, including by religious leaders at the national level. All religious communities must reconcile and live together peacefully and in harmony.

73. The people of the Central African Republic live in constant fear and I am alarmed by the growing number and the magnitude of human rights violations being inflicted upon them. I particularly condemn the recent escalation in targeted attacks against women and children. I urge the national authorities to play their role in protecting civilians, curbing human rights violations, restoring the rule of law and bringing perpetrators to justice. Ensuring accountability of all parties and ending impunity will be critical to prevent further atrocities. The overall lack of State authority in the Central African Republic, however, makes all of the above, as well as the goals outlined below, extremely difficult to achieve. Moving forward, it will require serious consideration and sober reflection on the part of the international community.

74. Some 2 million people affected by violence, displacement and loss of livelihoods are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. I stress the importance of extending humanitarian operations across the country, including to rural areas, and of ensuring the protection of humanitarian personnel and assets. Despite the scale of the crisis, the humanitarian response to the emergency in the Central African Republic is woefully underfunded, with resources to cover only 53 per cent of the 2013 consolidated appeal, as of 24 December. I urge the international community to provide funding for the 100-day plan (\$152.2 million) and for the 2014 consolidated appeal, to allow humanitarian assistance to reach all those in need. I also commend Morocco for accepting to provide troops for the United Nations Guard Unit and to take on the chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Commission configuration on the Central African Republic.

75. I welcome the efforts of France and African countries to deploy troops to help stabilize the security situation. Building on these efforts, I urge the international community to do everything possible to prevent an even greater tragedy in the Central African Republic. This includes providing immediate coordinated assistance to MISCA; greater efforts to foster urgent progress in national dialogue, reconciliation and the political process; and increased resources to rebuild institutions, extend the presence of the State throughout the country and expand its ability to properly manage the country's abundant natural resources. We need to act now. The international community needs to act in concert and with one voice in the security, political, governance, humanitarian, human rights and other realms. In the meantime, I will continue discussion with all stakeholders in regard to the Council's request contained in paragraph 48 of resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) regarding the possible transformation of MISCA into a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

76. The early gains made by the French forces and the deployment of African contingents must be sustained and consolidated. I believe that security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration can best be addressed in the framework of a comprehensive peace agreement among all fighting forces. I call on the national authorities to create conditions conducive to a successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and long-term security sector reform. At the same time, I urge members of the Council and other partners of the Central African Republic to support national efforts in a coordinated manner and to step up support to restore law and order and address the root causes of the conflict. To this end, funding will be needed to rebuild the security sector and to create employment opportunities for ex-combatants in the framework of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. Reinsertion and longer-term reintegration programmes that offer economic incentives at the community level will be key to make disarmament and reconciliation measures sustainable. In particular, funding for the repatriation of foreign combatants and their resettlement is required.

77. Resolving the crisis in the Central African Republic will also require progress on reaching a comprehensive political solution. It is important that the authorities continue to work together to ensure that the transitional tasks are implemented successfully and in a timely fashion. The recent establishment of the National Electoral Authority is a positive step towards the organization of elections and the re-establishment of constitutional order in the country. BINUCA and the United Nations country team will spearhead United Nations efforts in support of the National Electoral Authority and the electoral process.

78. I would like to express my appreciation to bilateral partners, regional and multilateral organizations, in particular the African Union, ECCAS, the European Union, France, Morocco, and MISCA troop-contributing countries, for their valuable work in support of the stabilization of the Central African Republic. I pay particular tribute to the men and women of MISCA, Operation Sangaris and the United Nations staff on the ground for their courage, dedication and commitment to the protection of the people of the Central African Republic. Finally, I should like to thank my Special Representative, Lieutenant General Babacar Gaye, for his leadership during this particularly difficult time.