



Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

*Provisional***7246**th meeting

Tuesday, 19 August 2014, 3.25 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Wilson	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Oyarzábal
	Australia	Mr. Bliss
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mr. Adamu
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United States of America	Mr. Dunn

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic
(S/2014/562)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2014/562)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Babacar Gaye, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of Morocco and Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/562, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic.

I now give the floor to Mr. Gaye.

Mr. Gaye (*spoke in French*): I express my deep respect to the Security Council and thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to present the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2014/562).

Significant progress has been made at the political level in recent weeks, in particular since the summit of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in Malabo and the meeting of the International Contact Group of the Central African Republic in Addis Ababa. The convening of the Brazzaville meeting and the signing on that occasion of the cessation of hostilities agreement on 23 July marked the beginning of a political process that is essential to lasting stability in the Central African Republic. It is an important step

forward, since only political dialogue can lead to a consensus on key issues such as the establishment of a professional national army that is representative of the nation, as the Council has called for, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants and the holding of elections, as well as economic reform and governance.

The discussions before, during and after the Brazzaville meeting reflect the long way still to go and the essential role of international mediation in that regard. The mediator, the President of the Republic of the Congo, Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, supported by the mediators of the United Nations and of the African Union, Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily and Mr. Soumeylou Boubèye Maiga, respectively, played a central role in the signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement. The mediators continue to work in close coordination with the group of eight and with all stakeholders in supporting the implementation of the agreement and the preparation of the next phases of the process, including organizing consultations with grassroots communities and a forum on reconciliation and national reconstruction in Bangui.

The road will be long and difficult. Following the Brazzaville meeting, the Head of State of the transition appointed a Prime Minister on 10 August. That appointment triggered negative reactions among the main actors, in particular the ex-Séléka and the opposition parties who were invited to join the new Government. That situation is of concern. In that regard, we must encourage the transitional authorities to do everything in their power to ensure that the new Government is inclusive and respects the interests of all key stakeholders. Only an inclusive Government can move forward and complete the transition.

Disseminating the provisions of the agreement in the country, establishing a follow-up mechanism and investigating violations are now our priority. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), in cooperation with the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA), ECCAS and other members of the group of eight, proposed a monitoring mechanism in consultation with the Government, which has in principle been approved by the Head of State of the transition. It provides for a three-level mechanism, consisting of a monitoring committee, a technical implementation committee and local committees in

the prefectures and the hotspots. The committees are to be led jointly by the transitional authorities and international actors. MINUSCA will start talks with the new Government once it has assumed its duties in order to ensure that the mechanism is established and begins its work as quickly as possible.

In that context, it is critical to implement the provisions of the cessation of hostilities agreement on the cantonment of combatants and of all signatory groups. In that regard, I count on the Council's support to mobilize the necessary financial assistance for that cantonment.

In the light of the current situation in the Central African Republic, implementing the follow-up and investigating violations of the cessation of hostilities agreement will not be easy. Those who have signed the agreement do not necessarily have control over all their elements in the field, and some of their fighters do not know that a cessation of hostilities agreement has been signed. Besides the lack of coherence and consistency in the command and control of the armed groups, the lack of a means of communication is a factor to be taken into consideration. The radio broadcasting capacity does not currently cover the entire country, and approximately 70 per cent of the nation and more than half of the population have no access to any media. MINUSCA supports the strengthening of Government communications and, in that regard, is also committed to developing a plan so as to establish its own radio broadcasting capacity at the national level.

(spoke in English)

There has been a relative improvement in the security situation, particularly in Bangui, thanks to the international forces, including the European Union-led peacekeeping force, as well as in other locations, such as Bambari and Boda, where MISCA and Operation Sangaris are present. As a result, the number of internally displaced persons has significantly decreased in Bangui and some Muslim traders have returned from Cameroon. Thanks to the support of neighbouring countries, the World Bank and the Peacebuilding Fund, civil servants and members of the national security forces are being paid, which has helped to stabilize the situation.

However, clashes in Batangafo and, more recently, in Mbrès are a stark reminder that the security situation remains extremely volatile and that civilians remain at risk in most parts of the country. Twenty-six people,

including two MISCA peacekeepers, were killed as result of violence by anti-balaka against ex-Séléka in Batangafo on 31 July and there were subsequent reprisal attacks. Further violent clashes involving ex-Séléka elements and international forces on 5 August led to the death of at least 50 more people. In Mbrès, 38 people were killed due to sectarian violence.

The human rights situation remains dire. Although more limited in scope, sectarian violence and the cycle of violent attacks and reprisals continue in many places in the country where State authority remains largely absent. During my recent visit to Bambari, the local authorities noted that most of the violence was initiated by anti-balaka, who are hiding among displaced populations. They underscored the high level of tension and antagonism between Muslim and Christian communities, highlighting the de-facto partition of the city between Muslim and Christian neighbourhoods.

Addressing rampant impunity through effective measures remains a key priority in order to hold the perpetrators of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law accountable. In that context, the agreement with the transitional Government on the modalities for implementing urgent temporary measures is an encouraging first step. Supporting the Government in establishing the proposed special national jurisdiction, in which international judges and prosecutors will be attached to a special national body, will require the support not only of MINUSCA but also of the broader international community. Efforts are under way to support the transitional authorities in drafting the required national legislation, while we have begun identifying experienced personnel who would be part of that jurisdiction.

Humanitarian needs remain immense in all sectors. Two and a half million people — more than half of the population of the Central African Republic — are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Those needs are exacerbated by the precarious conditions and extreme vulnerability of the population. Immediate and sustained support for humanitarian operations therefore remains of the utmost urgency.

We are less than four weeks from the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the African Union and MISCA for their excellent cooperation over the past months on the basis of mutual respect and transparency. We will be re-hatting the majority of the MISCA police and military personnel and have recruited some

qualified civilians from that mission. Efforts are under way to combine the joint operations centres of MISCA and MINUSCA and to co-locate the MISCA and MINUSCA police and military headquarters.

A United Nations mobile training team is carrying out in-mission training of trainers for the MISCA military and police personnel that will be re-hatted. The curriculum encompasses material on United Nations standards, as well as key mandated tasks, including the protection of civilians, child protection and conflict-related sexual violence.

In parallel, the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support have been active in the generation of additional capabilities for MINUSCA. Force generation processes have been accelerated. Similar efforts are under way to speed up contracting and movement timelines.

Although completing the deployments of the additional military, police and civilian capacities will take time, we are confident that MINUSCA will reach its initial operating capability on 15 September. Efforts are also under way to open integrated field offices in Bouar, Kaga Bandoro and Bria before 15 September. The presence of MINUSCA military, police and civilian personnel outside Bangui will be essential in order to bring about an immediate improvement in people's lives and to create an environment in which sustainable peace can take hold.

(spoke in French)

Before concluding, I would like to recall that almost a year ago, on 14 August 2013, I briefed the Security Council in person (see S/PV.7206). I concluded my briefing by saying that it was time to act. One year and four resolutions later, we note the start of a political process, a United Nations peacekeeping operation that will begin operations within four weeks and the ongoing support of the region and the entire international community. I believe that we are fulfilling our duty, but it is truly our moral duty to continue to mobilize for the crisis in the Central African Republic and the suffering of its people.

The President: I thank Mr. Gaye for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Hilale.

Mr. Hilale *(spoke in French)*: I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to speak before the Security Council in my capacity as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the

Peacebuilding Commission to discuss the work of the configuration and its vision for the coming months. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Mr. Babacar Gaye, on his recent appointment, which demonstrates the confidence in and appreciation for the outstanding work that he and his team have carried out at the head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic and since the creation of MINUSCA under extremely difficult conditions. I reiterate to him my support and that of all the members of the configuration, who wish him every success in his endeavour. Finally, I would like to thank him for the quality and clarity of his briefing to the Council.

Although Morocco is aware of the difficulty of the task, it is committed to addressing the challenges facing the configuration. I take this opportunity to thank the transitional authorities, Council members and members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for this vote of confidence in us. I use the word "challenges" because we are in a unique situation, and we should put the configuration's actions in the proper context. This is the first time that the Peacebuilding Commission faces a situation in which a country on its agenda has relapsed into conflict and a multidimensional peacekeeping mission has replaced a special political mission, with all that that entails, particularly at the organizational level. It is also difficult to establish a long-term plan or a strategic framework for peacebuilding until the transition is definitively completed.

Despite the difficult situation, although continuing the configuration's activities was questioned at one point, we believe that, given the enormous needs in the Central African Republic, the configuration has a major role to play. That role will be gradually reinforced with the restoration of peace and security and the necessary support for strengthening the State. The configuration can make use of its unique nature and provide comparative advantages to all those working to restore stability in the country, in particular through its unique role as a political platform that brings together the Central African Republic's key partners, neighbouring countries, international financial institutions, regional organizations and other groups active in the Central African Republic.

Since January 2014, the configuration has held a series of informal restricted meetings, in a format inaugurated by the former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission in the absence of a Chair of the configuration, in order to encourage an open and interactive dialogue among the Central African Republic's main partners. During those informal meetings, we had the opportunity to talk with religious leaders, experts from the region and representatives of non-governmental organizations and to brief participants on the evolution of the situation on the ground, through briefings by the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and on the work by configuration members, including the World Bank and the European Union. Two meetings of all the members of the configuration were held, which served to reaffirm its members' interest and support.

As for the Peacebuilding Fund, it has already financed three projects in the Central African Republic. The first enabled the deployment of additional human rights observers. The second was used for the rehabilitation of police stations and barracks and for the purchase of vehicles. For the third, the Fund has worked closely with the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union, whom we thank, to ensure the payment of wages. That issue is critical to restoring calm, and we have actively raised awareness of it among all partners. The Fund is currently considering whether to provide financial support to the national reconciliation plan.

Following my predecessor's visit to Bangui, we were able to identify, in consultation with the transitional authorities and civil society, four priorities, namely, the restoration of security and the protection of civilians, support for transitional authorities, national reconciliation and political dialogue, and, finally, regional coherence, which is crucial to helping the country rebuild.

As we all know, the security situation remains volatile, with sporadic clashes, as Mr. Gaye has just highlighted, between ex-Séléka and anti-balaka forces in Bangui and between those armed groups and international forces, including the incident in Batangafo that killed nearly 70 people from 4 to 6 August and, more recently, in Mbrès. We hope that the deployment of MINUSCA, beginning on 15 September, will ensure a rapid return to safety and protection for the civilian population who need it most.

The ceasefire agreement signed in Brazzaville is a first step towards stabilizing the country and symbolizes a new momentum for the transitional authorities, giving rise to hope among the Central African people. In that respect, we call on all members of the Security Council and the entire international community to support that process, which, although fragile, remains indispensable.

We welcome the commitment of the mediator, His Excellency Mr. Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of the Congo, and all the actors who have facilitated the process, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa, Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, and the representative of the African Union, Mr. Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga.

Also, we take note of the appointment of Mr. Mahamat Kamoun as Prime Minister and call for the formation of an inclusive transitional Government, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General also highlighted, as soon as possible, given the instability that continues to prevail in the country.

We believe that the configuration can provide significant support to the political process, the national reconciliation process and regional coherence. We know the situation in the Central African Republic has a significant regional impact, given its geographical position and its historically close relations with neighbouring countries. In that respect, we express our thanks to the Heads of State of the region, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the African Union for their significant involvement in the resolution of the conflict, and we remain committed to greater uniformity in and coordination of regional actions.

The developments on the ground lead us to consider other priorities in the various areas where we believe we can provide useful support.

Support for the electoral process is an area in which the Peacebuilding Commission has acquired experience and expertise that is recognized by all. Restoring the criminal justice system is also an urgent element in the fight against impunity, and the success of the political transition and support for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform processes could be considered in consultation with the relevant partners.

On resource mobilization, although the momentum in international solidarity has enabled many projects to

be funded, the humanitarian appeal by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is unfortunately only 39 per cent funded, according to the most recent estimates. We deeply regret that fact. Many other needs should also be taken into account, including those related to the holding of elections. In that respect, we could consider holding a donor conference to support that important step on the road towards the restoration of peace, stability and the rule of law in the Central African Republic.

I will have an opportunity to speak on those topics during my next visit to Bangui. I also intend to visit the main partners, including neighbouring countries, the European Union, the African Union, ECCAS and the

African Development Bank, to enhance coherence in the international community's work.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the members of the Security Council for their continued advocacy for the Central African Republic to ensure that the crisis in that country does not become a forgotten crisis. Africa, and the Central African Republic in particular, needs the Council's support.

The President: I thank Mr. Hilale for his briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.