Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 2605 (2021), the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) until 15 November 2022 and requested the Secretary-General to report on its implementation every four months. The present report provides an update on major developments in the Central African Republic since the previous report of the Secretary-General of 12 October 2021 (S/2021/867).

II. Political situation

2. The declaration of a unilateral ceasefire by the President, Faustin Archange Touadera, on 15 October represented an important step in the implementation of the joint road map of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region within the framework of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. However, political tensions persisted owing to the absence of tangible progress made with respect to political dialogue and continued violence, undermining the impact of the ceasefire. Preparations continued for the local elections scheduled for September 2022, in line with the electoral calendar.

Peace process

3. While the ceasefire stipulated the end of military operations and all armed action across the country as from 15 October, President Touadera clarified that it would not prevent national defence and security forces from maintaining public order and exercising self-defence, MINUSCA from implementing its mandate and national authorities from administering justice.

4. Efforts to accelerate implementation of the Political Agreement showed limited progress owing in part to the stalled republican dialogue and a deterioration in the security situation. On 27 October, the President of the National Assembly announced the relaunch of the procedure to lift the parliamentary immunity of prominent opposition members, namely, Anicet-Georges Dologuélé, Martin Ziguélé and Aurélien Simplice Zingas. Subsequently, the opposition withdrew its representatives from the organizing committee of the republican dialogue, deploring the degradation of the political climate and calling for an inclusive dialogue. The opposition conditioned its return on the withdrawal of the judicial request to the National Assembly for lifting
parliamentary immunity and on the cessation of public threats by government spokespersons. On 3 February, the opposition announced the reintegration of its representatives in the organizing committee after being formally informed of the withdrawal of judicial proceedings against its members by the Minister of State for Justice, Human Rights Promotion and Good Governance, Arnaud Djoubaye Abazene. The holding of the republican dialogue has been scheduled for March 2022.

5. The Coalition des patriotes pour le changement remained weak, fragmenting into smaller groups under the leadership of mid- to lower-ranking commanders, conducting asymmetric attacks and preying on the population. On 12 November, the President of the Transitional Military Council in Chad, Mahamat Idriss Déby, announced that Chad was hosting the former President of the Central African Republic, François Bozizé, and other Coalition leaders at the request of the Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

6. On 19 November, in Bangui, the Minister of Livestock and Animal Health and former Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique leader, Hassan Boubia Ali, was arrested by internal security forces following the execution of a warrant issued by the Special Criminal Court and was detained in Camp de Roux. On 26 November, Court personnel were prevented by the national armed forces from gaining access to Mr. Boubia for his scheduled appearance before the Court. The Court held the hearing in absentia and issued a detention warrant, but Mr. Boubia was released the same day by the gendarmerie, in contravention of the warrant.

7. On 29 November, the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique leader, Ali Darassa, issued a communiqué in which he noted the Unité’s withdrawal from the Political Agreement, accusing national armed forces and other security personnel of perpetrating attacks against civilians, and President Touadera of violating the Agreement and the ceasefire. On 12 December, the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement appointed Mr. Darassa as its chief of staff. In a communiqué dated 24 December, following an attack allegedly committed by anti-balaka on civilians in Boyo, the Coalition condemned the attack and denied its involvement, attributing it to actors recruited by the ruling party, and reiterating its availability to participate in any inclusive dialogue process.

8. On 26 November, the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the European Union and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region met President Touadera by videoconference as part of the regular dialogue between those organizations and the Central African Republic on the peace process. A joint communiqué issued following the meeting reiterated that the Political Agreement remained an essential instrument for peace and stability in the country, while commending regional efforts in the peace process through the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region initiative.

9. On 14 January, in Bangui, the first follow-up meeting regarding the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region road map was held, co-chaired by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Angola, the Central African Republic and Rwanda. A communiqué was issued following the meeting which included recommendations to conduct an international investigation on the use of anti-personnel mines, enhance collaboration with international partners on the road map and reconvene on a quarterly basis.

10. On 9 February 2022, in Bangui, following the resignation of the Prime Minister, Henri-Marie Dondra, President Touadera signed a decree nominating the former Minister of State for the Economy, Planning and International Cooperation, Félix Moloua, as the new Prime Minister. The new Government was appointed on the same day, with all ministers from the Government of the former Prime Minister reappointed to their functions.
11. While the Political Agreement’s executive monitoring and national implementation committees did not meet during the period under review, on 29 October two decrees related to their coordination structure were signed, including the appointment of the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, Bruno Yapande, as Chair of the national committee. Women’s participation in the implementation mechanisms of the Political Agreement at the national level was at 16 per cent, and they had limited roles and responsibilities. A total of 12 of 14 local implementation mechanisms met regularly, all of them including armed groups in full or in part. In Mbomou Prefecture, the efforts of the prefect, with MINUSCA support, culminated in the return of anti-balaka to local implementation mechanisms after a six-month absence.

12. The work of the special mixed security units in Bouar and Paoua was suspended between late November and early January as former members of armed groups of the units protested against the delayed payment of salaries by the Government. Early in January, 241 elements in Bouar and 200 in Paoua reported for duty to qualify for the separate payment of a subsistence allowance.

Political developments

13. From 1 October to 28 December, the National Assembly held its second regular session of 2021 and its second ordinary session of the seventh legislature. On 20 December, it adopted the 2022 national budget totalling $514 million, of which $238 million is expected to be generated from national resources and $276 million from external aid. Responding to opposition criticism regarding the dependence on external resources, the then Minister of State for the Economy, Planning and International Cooperation, Félix Moloua, stressed the Government’s efforts to explore with financial partners ways to address economic recovery.

14. The Government expanded its diplomatic relations, diversifying bilateral cooperation. From 6 to 8 December, the President of the National Assembly travelled to Moscow to meet with his counterpart to enhance parliamentary exchanges. On 9 December, President Touadera met European Union representatives in Brussels to discuss the peace process. The President subsequently met his counterparts in Abu Dhabi and Istanbul, Turkey, on 12 December and 16 December, respectively, to discuss commercial and military cooperation, as well as enhanced diplomatic engagement.

Electoral process

15. On 25 October, the National Electoral Authority adopted the operational plan for municipal and regional elections scheduled for 11 September 2022. Technical and operational coordination between the Authority and international electoral assistance partners, specifically MINUSCA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union and the Belgian development agency Enabel, resumed during the reporting period.

16. A revised budget of $14.8 million for the elections was presented during the 26 November meeting of the strategic committee on elections. It provides for electoral operations that would improve the inclusivity of the elections, including updating the electoral map and voter list. To date, the Government has allocated approximately $2.8 million to local elections in its 2022 budget, while the European Union and Germany pledged $2.9 million and $2 million, respectively. As at 1 February, approximately $9.1 million remains to be raised. Resource mobilization efforts at the international level intensified throughout the reporting period.

17. From 7 to 9 December, the National Electoral Authority held a national workshop to evaluate and identify lessons from the presidential and legislative elections of 2020–2021 and develop recommendations to inform preparations for the local elections.
MINUSCA, in partnership with UNDP and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), organized workshops in 10 prefectures to promote the participation of women in the local elections, involving 3,000 participants, including community leaders. Planning for a revision of the electoral map that commenced on 10 November is ongoing, with MINUSCA support.

Local dialogue and reconciliation

18. MINUSCA continued to support local authorities and members of local committees in helping to advance peace and reconciliation, which contributed to creating an environment conducive to the return of displaced persons in some areas. During the reporting period, MINUSCA facilitated 57 community dialogue sessions on the return of internally displaced persons, transhumance and peaceful cohabitation for 1,504 participants, including 877 women.

19. In October, four community conflicts were peacefully resolved through community dialogue. Two of the conflicts related to cross-border transhumance involving Fulani herders and local farmers in Berberati and Sibut, while the others related to conflicting political and economic interests in Rafai area.

20. In Obo, Haut-Mbomou Prefecture, the prefectural implementation committee resumed meetings on 19 October with the participation of the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique, producing recommendations on social cohesion, freedom of movement, disarmament and the organization of a forum on the implementation of the peace agreement. From 17 to 20 November, MINUSCA and the committee conducted joint visits to Mboki to engage with the dissident Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique “Guenderou wing”, which reaffirmed its willingness to participate in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and asked for forgiveness from the people of Obo for its attack in May 2020.

III. Security situation

21. The security situation remained volatile. After a short pause following the declaration of the unilateral ceasefire, clashes between armed groups and national defence and internal security forces intensified in November, often accompanied by the targeting of civilians. National defence forces and bilaterally deployed and other security personnel continued their military operations, and national defence forces and other security personnel recruited anti-balaka combatants dissociated from local Coalition des patriotes pour le changement factions as proxies, in particular in mining areas. Armed groups responded with asymmetrical attacks to maintain territorial control. Acts of robbery, sexual violence, extortion and other exactions continued unabated.

22. As at 1 February, 396 security violations of the Political Agreement were recorded, a decrease from 559 in the previous reporting period. Civilians were the target of 290 violations, followed by violations related to illegal military activities (55), restrictions on movement (32) and obstruction of State institutions, humanitarian organizations or the United Nations (19). National defence and security forces allegedly perpetrated most reported violations (138), a decrease from 244 in the previous reporting period, followed by Retour, réclamation et rehabilitation (83), the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique (80), anti-balaka (38), Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique (34) and Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique (23).

23. In the west, confrontations between Retour, réclamation et rehabilitation and national defence forces and other security personnel resulted in abuses and displacement of civilians. The armed group has been active near the border with Cameroon in Mambéré-Kadéï, Nana-Mambéré and Ouham-Pendé Prefectures. It
employed hit-and-run tactics, primarily against national defence forces in Ouham-Pendé Prefecture. Explosive ordnance threats increased: from 1 October 2021 to 1 February 2022, 15 explosive ordnance-related incidents were reported in the west, killing 6 civilians, 4 national armed forces personnel and 1 bilaterally deployed and other security personnel, while injuring 4 peacekeepers and 16 national defence forces and bilaterally deployed and other security personnel.

24. National armed forces and other security personnel conducted operations around artisanal mining sites in Mambéré-Kadéï, Nana-Mambéré, and Ouham Prefectures, also increasing the number of checkpoints. On 15 November, other security personnel from Bossangoa reportedly raided mining sites near Kouki, Nana Bakassa and Nanga-Boguila in Ouham Prefecture, during which 10 civilians were killed. At least three instances of clashes between Retour, réclamation et rehabilitation and national armed forces and other security personnel were reported in January, including in mining areas. The national armed forces and other security personnel denied the MINUSCA force access to the areas under the rationale that the sites were private.

25. National armed forces and other security personnel reinforced their operations along the borders with Chad and Cameroon. On 13 November, the latter destroyed a bridge in Bekaye, Ouham-Pendé Prefecture, to prevent possible Coalition des patriotes pour le changement movements from Chad. Civilians were used by national defence forces and other security personnel to dig trenches along the border in Ngaoundaye for the same purpose. However, Retour, réclamation et rehabilitation elements continued to cross the border into Cameroon to resupply and reorganize.

26. In the centre, since October, national defence forces and other security personnel in Basse-Kotto and Ouaka Prefectures have allegedly recruited former anti-balaka combatants to fight the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique. In November, national defence forces and other security personnel launched an offensive against the Unité.

27. The security situation deteriorated, in particular after the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique's withdrawal from the Political Agreement on 29 November. The Unité subsequently splintered into smaller groups that, from 1 to 9 December, attacked national defence and security personnel to recapture areas of economic interest in Basse-Kotto, Ouaka and Nana-Grébizi Prefectures.

28. Between 24 November and 15 December in Boyo, Ouaka Prefecture, 51 civilians, 7 Central African soldiers and 4 other security personnel were allegedly killed during operations targeting Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique elements. From 31 December to 4 January, the Unité carried out predatory incursions into villages and supply routes around Alindao and Mbrès areas, which triggered displacement of the population.

29. On 13 December, Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique and Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique combatants reportedly under the command of Mahamat Sallet raided Nzacko, Mbomou Prefecture, following the withdrawal of other security personnel on 9 December. Five civilians suspected of collaborating with the other security personnel were killed. The combatants reoccupied positions and checkpoints vacated by the national armed forces and their allies, extorting civilians and committing sexual violence, as well as triggering displacement.

30. On 20 December, 110 Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique combatants surrendered to national armed forces and bilaterally deployed and other security personnel in Alindao, Basse-Kotto Prefecture. Ten additional Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique combatants surrendered on 7 January. At the end of December, in Mbrès, Nana-Grébizi Prefecture, MINUSCA resumed joint patrols with national armed forces, which had not been held since October 2021.

31. In the east, the security situation remained fragile and continued its negative trajectory. Alleged Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique combatants attacked a national
defence force checkpoint in Bria, Haute-Kot Cou Prefecture, on 12 October, injuring two civilians.

32. In Vakaga Prefecture, reports were received regarding the presence of Chadian and Sudanese traffickers exploiting mining sites near the Tiringoulou-Gordil-Sikikédé axis, posing risks of inflaming ethnic tensions. On 14 November, Sudanese Misseriya believed to be affiliated with the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique entered the villages of Am Dafok and Tissi-Fongoro, reportedly to extort money from civilians. Between 3 and 5 December, Coalition des patriotes pour le changement/Front combatants led by Mahamat Sallet carried out attacks in Ngouroundou and Iramou, Haute-Kotto Prefecture, killing eight civilians and triggering temporary displacement.

33. In Bria, Haute-Kot Cou Prefecture, national armed forces and other security personnel reportedly arbitrarily detained at least 16 disarmed and demobilized combatants, including from the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique, the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique, the Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique and the Mouvement des libérateurs centrafricains pour la justice, as well as community violence reduction beneficiaries. From 16 to 18 January, the national armed forces and other security personnel conducted an operation against alleged Unité combatants on the axis of Bria-Aigbando, Haute-Kotto Prefecture, resulting in 17 civilian deaths and displacement.

34. The security situation in Bangui was relatively calm, but unpredictable. The curfew notwithstanding, the criminality rate remained high but showed a slight decrease, with 2,775 criminal incidents recorded, compared with 3,102 in the previous reporting period. Insecurity was also caused by the inappropriate or excessive use of weapons by the national defence and security forces and unidentified elements. The national defence forces allegedly fired gunshots into the air on New Year’s Eve, killing 1 child and injuring 26 civilians. A gendarmerie-led operation in the PK5 neighbourhood resulted in one death, while a police station was burned down. National defence and security forces continued house search operations in Bangui.

IV. Regional engagement

35. On 27 December, President Touadera received a delegation led by the Minister of Defence, Veterans and War Victims of Chad, Daoud Yaya Brahim. Discussions reportedly focused on implementing the outcomes of the last meeting of the Central African Republic-Chad joint commission, in particular opening the border to facilitate the free movement of people and goods between the two countries, which are both members of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community.

36. In Brazzaville on 19 January, President Touadera participated in the twentieth Conference of the Heads of State and Government of ECCAS. During the conference, the ECCAS Chair and President of the Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, called upon the Governments of the Central African Republic and Chad to settle any tensions at their common borders through peaceful means. Following the conference, the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Félix Tshisekedi, officially assumed the role of Chair of ECCAS.

V. Humanitarian situation

37. The humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate, with 63 per cent of the population, or 3.1 million Central Africans, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, older persons and people with disabilities, requiring protection and humanitarian assistance – a level not seen in five years. Violence continued to trigger
displacement; a quarter of the population was affected (692,000 people were displaced internally and more than 736,000 had sought refuge in neighbouring countries) as at 1 February.

38. Human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, armed violence and economic recession contributed to a dire humanitarian situation. Data from the 2021 multisectoral needs assessment conducted in September revealed that one third of respondents were concerned about the safety of members of their households. Food security assessments completed in October by the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and partners indicated a sharp deterioration in food security and a 40 per cent reduction in local food production.

39. Humanitarian personnel continued to be targeted by armed groups, national defence and security forces and other security personnel. Recorded security incidents against humanitarian personnel decreased from 424 in 2020 to 396 in 2021, owing in large part to the restricted access and mobility for humanitarians in the centre and west of the country as a result of clashes and the threat of explosive devices. In 2021, 3 humanitarian personnel were killed and 28 injured while on duty. Robberies, burglaries and intrusions accounted for 52 per cent of incidents, while 36 per cent were obstructions of humanitarian assistance.

40. As at 1 February, 11.6 per cent of the $461.3 million required to provide life-saving assistance to 2 million people, in accordance with the 2022 humanitarian response plan, was mobilized, leaving a funding gap of $408.1 million. The humanitarian community provided multisectoral assistance and services to 1.8 million people.

41. As at 24 January, of approximately 82,062 people tested for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), 13,919 were positive, of whom 110 had died, according to data provided by national authorities. Official figures did not reflect in full the impact of the pandemic owing to limited testing. As at 24 January, 603,696 Central Africans (12 per cent of the population) had been vaccinated with doses acquired through both the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) initiative and bilateral agreements.

VI. Protection of civilians

42. There were specific protection challenges in Haute-Kotto, Nana-Grébizi and Ouaka Prefectures owing to ongoing confrontations between national armed forces and other security personnel and armed groups. Minority communities were targeted, in particular Fulanis and Muslims. Incidents increased since November in the Ouham and Ouham-Pendé Prefectures, owing to the increase in transhumance corridors, corresponding with the start of the transhumance season.

43. MINUSCA adjusted its early warning mechanisms, expanding community alert networks and community protection plans. During the reporting period, 13 additional community alert networks were created. Among these, 78 were active as at 1 February. The Mission trained 3,945 community alert network members, including 1,203 women.

44. The Mission responded to protection of civilian threats by intensifying patrols and adjusting its footprint in the main hotspots. On 24 December, following the arrival of the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique in Boyo, Ouaka Prefecture, MINUSCA reinforced its presence and expelled some 300 Unité fighters occupying civilian houses, facilitating the return of civilians. MINUSCA maintained its robust presence in the area to protect civilians from remaining Unité elements.

45. In December 2021 and January 2022, MINUSCA reinforced its Ippy temporary operating base and conducted operational activities in the areas of Ippy, Bambari and Alindao to reduce armed groups’ movement and to protect civilians.
VII. Extension of State authority and the rule of law

Extension of State authority

46. As at 1 February, 122 of 173 (71 per cent) local officials (prefects, sub-prefects, secretaries-general of prefectures and sub-prefectures) were present outside Bangui, a decrease compared with the prior reporting period, reportedly owing to insecurity, health problems and family obligations. As part of an initiative to modernize national public administration, MINUSCA supported the professional capacity-building of 40 civil servants, including 21 women.

Security sector reform

47. As part of efforts to sustain the security sector through strengthened governance and democratic control, on 19 and 20 October national authorities, with MINUSCA support, conducted consultations, including with national security actors and members of the National Assembly and the Government, to establish national vetting procedures for security institutions, taking into account human resources management, disciplinary measures and transparency in recruitment and promotion.

48. On 8 and 9 December, as part of the national security sector reform road map, national authorities organized, with MINUSCA support, a round table on a human security approach, including with national security actors and members of the National Assembly, Government and civil society. The event resulted in proposals for the revision of the 2016 national security policy, including emphasizing democratic control of the security sector.

National armed and internal security forces

49. As at 10 January, 6,528 internal security forces, including 3,225 police officers (821 women) and 3,303 gendarmes (525 women), were deployed across the country. MINUSCA and UNDP supported the training of 1,772 police and gendarmes (476 women) on various issues, including community policing and conduct and discipline.

50. On 15 December, the European Union Military Training Mission announced the temporary suspension of its training of the national armed forces. The European Union Mission continued to provide strategic advice and education to the armed forces.

51. During the reporting period, MINUSCA conducted 22 quality assurance visits with national authorities of weapons and ammunitions storage facilities of the national defence forces in Bangui. The visits revealed a lack of trained personnel in the armouries owing to high turnover.

52. As at 1 February, the Mission conducted awareness-raising training on explosive ordnance for 317 (75 women) personnel of the United Nations and humanitarian community, and 6,388 people, including 1,167 women and 4,543 children, in Baoro, Boali, Bossembêlé and Bouar.

Disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation

53. From 4 October to 21 November, the Government, with MINUSCA support, disarmed and demobilized 441 combatants (including 5 women) in Haute-Kotto (332), Ouham (103) and Ombella Mpoko (6) Prefectures from the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique, anti-balaka/Mokom, the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique, the Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique, the Rassemblement patriotique pour le renouveau de la Centrafrique and Révolution et justice/Sayo. A total of 362 weapons of war, 10,175 rounds of ammunition and 100 grenades and other explosives were collected. At the end of the operation in Markounda, Ouham
Prefecture, the local commander of Révolution et justice/Sayo signed a commitment acknowledging the dismantlement of the armed group in the area. Forty-one Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique dissident combatants have voluntarily participated in the national programme for the first time since its launch in December 2018.

54. Community violence reduction programmes continued in Bangui, Bangassou, Bossangoa, Bouar, Bria and Kaga Bandoro, as well as in the new locations of Birao and Ndélé, where the programmes had been launched in October and November, respectively. As at 1 February, 5,298 beneficiaries were registered (including 2,248 women) nationwide. In Bangui, vocational training for the first wave of 1,302 beneficiaries is ongoing in 10 training centres.

Justice and the rule of law

55. As at 1 February, 80 per cent of first instance and appellate courts were operational, up from 72 per cent in the previous reporting period.

56. Between 1 October and 1 February, MINUSCA transferred to national authorities in Bangui 18 individuals who had been arrested, including through the Mission’s urgent temporary measures. A total of 26 investigations into attacks against peacekeepers are ongoing; 2 investigations were concluded and are ready for trial. MINUSCA supported social reintegration projects in seven prisons to build skills and support prisoners’ eventual reintegration and to prevent recidivism.

57. As at 1 February, approximately 77 per cent of national civilian penitentiary personnel were present in their posts in 11 operational prisons throughout the country; 150 civilian prison trainees were deployed to 8 prisons in October as part of their training. The Government began to integrate 146 newly recruited civilian prison officers into the public service, of whom 45 have been deployed in Bangui.

58. On 22 November, two new international judges of the Appeals Chamber of the Special Criminal Court were deployed in Bangui. The Special Prosecutor’s Office opened seven preliminary investigations and judges continued to investigate nine cases. On 17 December, the Pre-Trial Chamber of the Court held its first public hearing on the case of the attack on Koundjouli and Limouna, Ouham-Pendé Prefecture, by alleged members of Retour, réclamation et rehabilitation in May 2019.

VIII. Human rights and the fight against impunity

59. Between 1 October and 1 February, MINUSCA documented 413 confirmed incidents of human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law that affected 990 victims, including 125 women, 102 boys and 82 girls, and caused 229 conflict-related civilian deaths. This represents a slight decrease, by 0.03 per cent, in the number of incidents but a 5.5 per cent increase in the number of victims compared with the previous reporting period.

60. Among the major incidents recorded were the killing of at least 29 civilians on 5 October in Matchika, Ouaka Prefecture, by unidentified perpetrators; the killing of at least 31 civilians on 29 November in Kaita, Ouham-Pendé Prefecture, by Retour, réclamation et rehabilitation combatants; and the killing of at least 51 civilians, including 7 children, on 6 December in Boyo and surrounding villages, Ouaka Prefecture, by anti-balaka combatants.

61. Armed groups allegedly perpetrated 57.4 per cent of documented human rights abuses, including the killing and rape of civilians. They were involved in 237 incidents that affected 532 victims. Of the 413 documented incidents of human rights violations and abuses, 175 were allegedly perpetrated by national defence and
security forces and other security personnel, affecting 430 victims, representing a
decrease of 24.9 per cent and 17 per cent in the number of victims, respectively,
compared with the previous period.

62. Targeted arrests and instances of ill-treatment disproportionately affected
vulnerable communities. During the reporting period, MINUSCA documented at least
23 incidents of arbitrary arrests, affecting 160 victims, mostly Fulanis and Muslims.
On 13 November, during an operation by national defence and security forces and
other security personnel in Bria, Haute-Kotto Prefecture, at least 58 persons were
arbitrarily detained, 36 of whom were from the Fulani community. Four Mouvement
patriotique pour la Centrafrique ex-combatants, who had joined the Government-led
voluntary disarmament process, were also arrested and allegedly ill-treated.

63. In its engagement with national authorities, including through the Ministry of
Justice’s information-sharing forum on human rights, MINUSCA highlighted human
rights violations committed by national forces. The Ministry requested MINUSCA
support in December 2021 to develop its national human rights policy for the
Government to assess public policies using a human rights approach.

64. MINUSCA continued to implement the human rights due diligence policy. In
January, the Mission reassessed the suspension of support for the Office central de
répression du grand banditisme, recommending limited resumption of support
through co-location in an effort to deter a recurrence of human rights violations.
MINUSCA continues to review the progressive resumption of logistical support to
the national armed forces.

Transitional justice

65. From 5 to 8 October, the Commission on Truth, Justice, Reparation and
Reconciliation held a retreat, during which it finalized its rules of procedure.

66. The Mission organized four workshops with 250 women, young people and
human rights organizations in Bangassou, Birao, Ndélé and Sibut to discuss women’s
needs and support their participation in transitional justice mechanisms. Workshop
participants developed a communication plan to continue to raise awareness in other
parts of the country about women’s participation in local elections, local governance
and transitional justice mechanisms.

Conflict-related sexual violence

67. Between 1 October and 1 February, MINUSCA received allegations concerning
162 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence, mostly rape, against 190 survivors
(114 women and 76 girls). Of these, 118 incidents were verified, while insecurity and
inaccessibility posed obstacles to conducting investigations into all reported
incidents. Members of armed groups were allegedly responsible for 137 incidents,
while 10 incidents were attributed to the national defence and internal security forces
and 7 to other security personnel. During the reporting period, national authorities
opened an investigation into allegations of widespread conflict-related sexual
violence in Bakouma sub-prefecture and Mbomou Prefecture, during the Coalition
des patriotes pour le changement/Front populaire pour la renaissance de la
Centrafrique occupation from December 2020 to April 2021.

68. The Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, in
collaboration with MINUSCA and UNDP, conducted a training session for 15
magistrates in Bangui on prosecution and investigation techniques for conflict-related
sexual violence that is considered a crime under international law. In October,
MINUSCA referred 29 victims to available services in Bangui.
Children and armed conflict

69. Between 1 October 2021 and 1 February 2022, the national task force on monitoring and reporting verified 429 grave violations against 266 children (141 girls and 125 boys). The violations were attributed to armed groups (346), national defence forces (30), other security personnel (10), jointly deployed national defence forces and other security personnel (20), unidentified armed individuals (15) and explosive ordnance and stray bullets (8). Grave violations included the recruitment and use of children (149), rape and other forms of sexual violence (126), killing and maiming (47), abduction (80), attacks on schools (6) and hospitals (4) and denial of humanitarian access (17). Parties to the conflict occupied eight schools for military purposes.

IX. Economic situation

70. In November, the International Monetary Fund raised its growth forecast for 2021 from -1 to 1 per cent owing to the reopening the Bangui-Cameroon trade corridor, allowing economic activity to recover faster than expected and easing inflationary pressures observed earlier in the year. Continued economic recovery in 2022 should bring the growth rate to 4 per cent. Inflation was expected to slow down gradually, to 3.5 per cent, by the end of 2021 and to less than 3 per cent in 2022. The current account deficit was expected to increase to 10.5 per cent of gross domestic product in 2021, compared with 8.5 per cent in 2020, owing mainly to the 5 per cent drop in official transfers resulting from the postponement of budget support by international partners.

71. The United Nations country team continued its support for the Government in mitigating the deteriorating socioeconomic situation, which has occurred owing in large part to a structural account deficit, including though $9 million in cash transfers for 500,000 people to meet their basic needs.

X. United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Military component

72. As at 1 February, the military component of MINUSCA had deployed 11,718 personnel (6.63 per cent women), of an authorized strength of 14,400, including 381 staff officers (91 women) and 129 military observers (37 women).

73. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2566 (2021), 531 of the additional 2,750 troops authorized were deployed as at 1 February, specifically: (a) an advance party (300) of an infantry battalion; (b) an advance party of a quick-reaction force (23); (c) 50 special forces personnel; (d) 78 engineering personnel; (e) 15 military police; and (f) 65 staff officers.

74. Planning and preparations continue to complete the reinforcement, specifically: (a) the remainder of the infantry battalion (450 personnel) to secure the main supply road; (b) four quick-reaction forces (540 personnel) and the remainder of a quick-reaction force (157 personnel) in Bangui, Bangassou, Bouar and Ndélé; (c) an additional infantry company (150 personnel) in Carnot and a light battalion in Mbaiki (450); (d) additional engineering capability (250 personnel); (e) medical (level 2 hospital) capabilities (32); (f) military police (34); and (g) 35 staff officers.

75. The process to enhance air-to-ground targeting capability continues. The procurement process to replace the mobile unmanned aerial systems is under development.
Police component

76. As at 1 February, the MINUSCA police component had deployed 2,387 personnel (12.72 per cent women), of an authorized strength of 3,020, including 513 individual police officers (111 women) and 1,874 personnel (193 women) in 11 formed police units and 1 protection support unit.

77. Pursuant to resolution 2566 (2021), 343 of the 940 additional police authorized were deployed, specifically: (a) 200 additional personnel for five formed police units deployed, in Bambari, Berberati, Bouar, Bria and Kaga Bandoro; and (b) 143 individual police officers deployed throughout the country. The remaining 57 individual police officers of the 200 authorized will be deployed to Batangafo, Mbaiki, Mobaye, Nola and Sibut once logistical support is completed. Preparations continued to deploy the new formed police units of 180 personnel each in Bangassou, Batangafo and Ndélé within the next six months.

Civilian personnel

78. As at 1 February, 1,483 civilian personnel (26 per cent women), including 267 United Nations Volunteers and 99 government-provided correctional personnel, were serving with MINUSCA. This represents 90 per cent of the 1,648 approved positions.

Status-of-forces agreement

79. From 2 October to 1 February, MINUSCA recorded 17 violations of the status-of-forces agreement between the United Nations and the Government involving members of national defence forces and other security personnel. Breaches included obstruction to the freedom of movement of MINUSCA patrols and threats against United Nations personnel. National armed forces and other security personnel intercepted MINUSCA force patrols and convoys 10 times.

80. On 1 November, members of the presidential guard fired at a marked United Nations bus transporting unarmed, newly deployed personnel of a MINUSCA formed police unit; 10 officers sustained gunshot wounds, 1 of whom was seriously injured and medically evacuated out of the country. The incident also resulted in the death of one Central African child.

81. Disinformation campaigns against the United Nations, members of the international community, political opposition and civil society continued, mainly from platforms and individuals close to the ruling party. MINUSCA regularly engaged with national authorities to take action against violations and campaigns that hinder MINUSCA mandate implementation. Incidents of disinformation and status-of-forces agreement violations decreased slightly in January 2022.

Safety and security of United Nations personnel

82. From 1 October to 1 February, 142 security incidents involving United Nations personnel were recorded. The incidents included direct attacks, indirect attacks with collateral damage and threats, criminal acts, violent demonstrations and road traffic accidents. Two personnel died from illness and 19 were injured (6 in mine incidents, 10 in an armed attack and 3 in road traffic accidents). Six armed attacks and three physical assaults against United Nations personnel and 48 road traffic accidents were reported. Ten personnel were evacuated. Two staff members were detained by gendarmerie in Ndélé, Bamingui-Bangoran Prefecture, 13 personnel were questioned by internal security forces and 4 staff residences were searched by national defence and security forces. Seven demonstrations against the United Nations were held. MINUSCA imposed restrictions on its personnel in some locations owing to increased security risks. On 13 December, in Bambari, Ouaka Prefecture, national armed forces fired at a MINUSCA drone, which fell inside the MINUSCA base. No casualties were reported.
83. As at 1 February, the United Nations had administered 22,182 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to United Nations personnel and staff of eligible non-governmental organizations. A total of 8,120 doses of the vaccine were delivered to MINUSCA on 31 January for its new vaccination campaign, which began on 2 February. The number of active cases increased significantly in December and much of January but declined towards the end of January owing to preventive measures. As at 1 February, 1,451 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed among United Nations personnel, which included 72 active cases, 1,359 recoveries and 11 deaths.

**Serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse**

84. Between 1 September and 30 November 2021, nine allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were reported, implicating 71 military personnel from 5 troop-contributing countries, including 65 formerly deployed peacekeepers from 1 troop-contributing country. Of the nine allegations, one is related to an incident alleged to have occurred from 2017 to 2018, three in 2019, two in 2020 and three in 2021. MINUSCA referred 58 victims (17 children) to humanitarian partners for appropriate medical, psychosocial and protection assistance. In addition, 16 allegations of other types of serious misconduct received against MINUSCA personnel are under investigation.

85. In line with Security Council resolution 2272 (2016), a military contingent was repatriated in September 2021. Conscious of the need to prevent large patterns of sexual exploitation and abuse, MINUSCA, jointly with concerned stakeholders, has undertaken a strategic review with a view to shifting its sexual exploitation and abuse risk management to a more integrated, proactive and decentralized approach. This approach will enable early identification, reporting and management of risks in specific zones and build the capacity of partners and communities. Preventive measures, including closer oversight of single nationality contingents deployed to remote locations and the improvement in the facility and camps, are undertaken by MINUSCA to support the well-being of United Nations personnel.

86. MINUSCA continued its victim-centred approach, in close collaboration with the United Nations country team, strengthening integration processes to better coordinate assistance to victims, including by assigning a Senior Victims’ Rights Officer to the Central African Republic. Follow-up of assistance to victims has been enhanced through increased advocacy with different actors for improved assistance and support. A project benefiting victims in Alindao, Pombolo and Mobaye has been approved by the trust fund in support of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, supporting an international non-governmental organization that partners with United Nations agencies. MINUSCA continued to implement preventive measures through strengthened cooperation with civil society, including through field missions to Bambari and Bossangoa. The Mission consolidated arrangements with local partners to provide legal assistance with paternity and child support claims, access to birth certificates, and immediate care and lifelong support to victims.

87. From 1 to 3 December, MINUSCA and Headquarters held a workshop on prevention, enforcement and assistance to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, following a review undertaken in October 2021 that assessed the factors contributing to the significant number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, which led to the repatriation of a contingent. The Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Department of Peace Operations, in consultation with MINUSCA, developed recommendations aimed at furthering key mandate and Action for Peacekeeping obligations, including to strengthen risk management on the basis of an integrated approach. MINUSCA will also update its strategy to address identified gaps and challenges.
Support considerations

88. MINUSCA continued to improve its environmental practices and reduce its environmental footprint. The wastewater risk assessment is ongoing for all operating bases; Kolongo landfill remediation continued; and the Mission received 6 incinerators for regular solid waste management in December 2021, in addition to the 15 already received. Biomedical incinerators were installed in Bangui, Bambari, Birao, Kaga Bandoro and Paoua. MINUSCA completed the installation of the full solar energy system at the Bangui logistics base on 28 September; the same project is 95 per cent complete at the UCATEX site. The installation of the photovoltaic system at the MINUSCA PK11 site was completed on 5 October.

Action for peacekeeping and performance optimization

89. MINUSCA readjusted its layout following the repatriation of a military contingent in September; the rotation of the high-readiness protection battalion was postponed one month to cover the gap. MINUSCA has taken measures to expedite the deployment of the light infantry battalion that will replace the repatriated unit.

90. Following several assessments of MINUSCA capabilities in mitigating explosive ordnance threats and in line with the recommendations of the independent strategic review of the United Nations response to explosive ordnance threats conducted in November 2021, MINUSCA is strengthening its explosive ordnance disposal capacity. The Mission’s mine action component administered 32 training sessions on explosive ordnance threat awareness to 900 military personnel and provided expertise on post-blast investigation to the force.

XI. Financial considerations

91. The General Assembly, by its resolution 75/298 of 30 June 2021, appropriated the amount of $1,036.6 million for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. As at 27 January 2022, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for MINUSCA amounted to $554.2 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at that date amounted to $3,504.9 million. Reimbursement of the costs of troop and formed police personnel, as well as for contingent-owned equipment, have been made for the period up to 30 September 2021, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

XII. Observations

92. New momentum in the peace process was sparked by the engagement of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and reaffirmed with President Touadera’s unilateral ceasefire declaration. However, the implementation of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region road map and the Political Agreement needs to accelerate and deepen through practical measures in critical areas that have a real impact on the lives of Central Africans. Central African leaders have a responsibility to respond to the collective aspirations and resilience of the Central African people for durable peace. I urge all parties to the conflict to commit themselves to the ceasefire, beyond symbolic declarations, and launch a political dialogue without delay.

93. The first follow-up meeting on the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region road map is welcomed. I commend this collective effort for peace in the country and the coordinated efforts among international and regional partners of the Central African Republic. I call upon the Government to demonstrate its commitment
to advancing the peace process through the implementation of the road map with a clear timeframe and defined roles for all stakeholders, fully aligned to the framework of the Political Agreement. Opportunities created by the engagement of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Presidents of Angola and Rwanda to reinvigorate the peace process must be capitalized upon quickly, underpinned by strengthened regional efforts. I commend the appointment of the Chair of the national implementation committee of the Political Agreement and further call upon the Central African authorities, with the strong support of the guarantors of the Agreement, to convene its implementation mechanisms on a regular basis.

94. Political dialogue should address the grievances of all segments of society. Mutual trust and concessions, built on continuous engagement with all stakeholders, paves the way for holding a genuine, credible and inclusive political dialogue. I urge the Government, national institutions and all political leaders to take the measures necessary to improve the political climate and open the political space required to take forward the long-awaited republican dialogue. Obstacles to doing so should be addressed in a manner that fosters goodwill and confidence. I take note of President Touadera’s commitment at the ECCAS Heads of State summit in January to launch the republican dialogue in the near future. I welcome the concrete steps taken to overcome obstacles to the holding of an inclusive dialogue, including the mediation efforts that led to the withdrawal of prosecutions against the opposition members on 31 January. National ownership is critical to furthering a comprehensive political process that brings in a broad spectrum of voices from across Central African society.

95. Progress in preparing the local elections is encouraging. However, advancing the political process is critical to ensuring the credibility of these elections, in particular with a view to creating the conditions conducive to the free and fair participation of all segments of Central African society. It is equally important to foster an inclusive political environment, enabling the expansion of democratic space and sustainment of the decentralization process, while ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, returnees and displaced persons. The required legislation should be passed in a timely manner to enable the start of the electoral mapping and voter registration. I further reiterate my call to international partners to support these efforts, including by providing the necessary financial and technical support.

96. I remain deeply concerned that prospects for dialogue and peace remain compromised owing to a continued overreliance on a military approach to conflict by all parties. Such an approach has an unacceptable impact on civilians, with killings, injury and displacement, and could jeopardize the fragile gains achieved to date, including in fostering social cohesion and the extension of State authority. I reiterate that there is no military solution; only an inclusive political solution will lead to lasting peace.

97. I remain appalled by the continued increase in human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law perpetrated by all parties to the conflict, including excessive use of force. It is unacceptable that the most vulnerable continue to face the greatest threats, including gender-based and conflict-related sexual violence, and that the recruitment and abuse of children by armed groups continues unabated. I call upon national authorities to take judicial action on the findings of the special investigation commission and to hold all perpetrators accountable. I also urge national authorities to take demonstratable and immediate action to prevent grave human rights violations by national security forces and other security personnel, including abuses targeting ethnic and religious minorities. I strongly condemn the violence perpetrated by armed groups, which must stop immediately. This cyclical violence, if left unchecked, risks plunging the country back into full-scale conflict, including along ethnic and religious lines. We have a collective responsibility to prevent this scenario.
98. I remain concerned that progress made on reforming the security sector could be undermined owing to the current security environment, which is shaped by an overreliance on force. I call upon national authorities to fully respect the established security sector reform framework and halt any parallel recruitment, including the use of proxies, which may be detrimental to the peace process and fuel ethnic and religious tensions.

99. The countrywide deployment of capable and supported national defence and internal security forces is essential to sustain stabilization gains and protect the population. Their deployment can be sustained only by strengthening governance, democratic oversight, and command and control. I encourage national authorities to coordinate with partners to deepen support on the dual fronts of redeploying the security forces and security sector reform, given that they are mutually reinforcing. It is critical that the security forces deployed not only be operational, but also respect human rights.

100. Borders must be controlled to prevent the cross-border movement of combatants and illicit goods. I call for enhanced cooperation to this end between the Central African Republic and countries with which it shares a border.

101. I further urge national authorities to preserve the integrity of the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation efforts by abiding to a single national framework on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation and the community violence reduction programme, preventing any initiative that would undermine these efforts.

102. I reiterate my call upon the Government to effectively coordinate all security actors operating in the country, ensure that they abide by applicable international humanitarian and human rights law and hold all violators accountable. I also call upon all parties to spare civilians, including humanitarian actors, from acts of violence and to respect the civilian character of public infrastructure such as schools and health facilities.

103. I remain concerned by the continued dire humanitarian situation. More than 1.4 million people across the country have been forced to flee, and humanitarian and protection needs have never been higher in the past five years. I am, however, encouraged by support from Member States for the 2021 humanitarian response plan and thank donors for their support.

104. Justice must go hand in hand with reconciliation to foster sustained peace. I encourage national authorities, with the support of international partners, to continue efforts to reinforce the judiciary so as to uphold the law in an impartial and independent manner, foster due process and strive for humane conditions for all detainees. I commend the holding of the first public hearing by the Pre-Trial Chamber of the Special Criminal Court, which demonstrates progress in the efforts to combat impunity. I call upon the Government to respect the independence and impartiality of the Special Criminal Court and to foster an environment that allows the Court to discharge its mandate in full, including to conduct investigations and prosecute cases.

105. I strongly condemn the use of explosive ordnance by armed groups, which has led to casualties and injuries to civilians, peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel, as well as limited the access of persons affected by the conflict to life-saving humanitarian assistance. The use of such explosive ordnances must stop, and I call upon the region to support efforts to halt the illicit trafficking in such devices.

106. I re-emphasize that attacks targeting United Nations personnel may constitute war crimes under international law and call upon the national authorities to swiftly investigate the attacks and bring perpetrators to justice so as to avoid impunity. I
welcome progress on the investigation into attacks against United Nations personnel and encourage the Central African authorities to advance all investigations.

107. I strongly condemn the attack by the presidential guard of the Central African Republic against a MINUSCA vehicle on 1 November, which injured 10 unarmed MINUSCA peacekeepers. I call upon the Central African authorities to collaborate with MINUSCA in a constructive effort to clarify responsibilities and hold accountable the perpetrators of this unacceptable attack. I deeply regret the death of a Central African child subsequent to the attack.

108. The implementation by the Government of the status-of-forces-agreement has been improving, and I trust that it will continue to do so. I call upon the Central African authorities to also address disinformation campaigns and hostile threats and incidents by national security forces and other security personnel that continue to pose a grave risk to the safety and security of peacekeepers. I once again invite President Touadera to follow through on his commitment to ensuring that such hostile action ends immediately to hold perpetrators accountable, and to call upon all Central African stakeholders to cease any action that inflames tensions or spark violence.

109. I condemn any act of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel and recall my commitment to zero tolerance. MINUSCA has taken steps to improve its performance and continues its efforts to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and uphold the rights and dignity of victims. I call upon all troop- and police-contributing countries to uphold their obligations by addressing allegations referred by the United Nations to national authorities with a view to holding perpetrators of sexual exploitations and abuse accountable.

110. I wish to express my appreciation to my Special Representative for the Central African Republic and Head of MINUSCA, Mankeur Ndiaye, for his leadership and his good offices to advance peace in the Central African Republic. I call upon all stakeholders to provide him with their full support in furtherance of lasting peace, stability and sustainable development. I am grateful for the dedication of United Nations civilian and uniformed personnel to performing the Mission’s mandate, and to troop- and police-contributing and donor countries, regional, multilateral and non-governmental organizations, and all other partners for their invaluable contributions to bringing durable peace and development to all Central Africans.
# Annex I

**United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic: military and police strength as at 1 February 2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Military component</th>
<th>Police component</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experts on mission</td>
<td>Staff officers</td>
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<td>Country</td>
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