



# Security Council

Distr.: General  
14 June 2022

Original: English

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## Letter dated 14 June 2022 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

In paragraph 13 of its resolution [2588 \(2021\)](#), the Security Council requested that I provide a further update on progress achieved by the authorities of the Central African Republic on the key benchmarks established in the statement by the President of the Security Council dated 9 April 2019 ([S/PRST/2019/3](#)). The benchmarks had been established to serve as a basis for the Council to assess the contribution and relevance of the arms embargo in supporting the relevant aspects of the security sector reform process, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process, and the management of weapons and ammunition. The present letter serves to provide an update on progress made against the five key benchmarks since my letter dated 15 June 2021 ([S/2021/573](#)).

An assessment team from the Secretariat visited the Central African Republic from 11 to 15 April 2022. The present letter reflects the consultations of the Secretariat team with the Central African authorities, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic,<sup>1</sup> the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic, the African Union Observer Mission in the Central African Republic, the World Bank, the diplomatic community based in Bangui and civil society in the Central African Republic, including women's groups.

In response to appeals by the authorities of the Central African Republic and in recognition of the progress that they had made against the benchmarks, the Security Council adjusted the arms embargo measures on several occasions, most recently following my letter dated 15 June 2021. In its resolution [2588 \(2021\)](#), the Council further eased the measures on the Government of the Central African Republic by deciding that the arms embargo exemption approval process should no longer apply to supplies of mortars with a calibre of 60 mm and 82 mm and of ammunition specially designed for such weapons, and to the provision of related assistance to the country's security forces, including State civilian law-enforcement institutions. The national authorities may also continue to receive weapons and ammunition with a larger calibre, subject to the approval of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) concerning the Central African Republic.

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<sup>1</sup> Three members of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic were appointed by the Secretary-General on 18 April 2022 (see [S/2022/329](#)), after the completion of the term of the previous panel on 31 August 2021. A fourth expert was appointed on 1 June 2022 (see [S/2022/451](#)).



Since my letter dated 15 June 2021, the Government of the Central African Republic,<sup>2</sup> regional States,<sup>3</sup> regional organizations<sup>4</sup> and civil society organizations of the Central African Republic<sup>5</sup> have continued to call for the lifting of the arms embargo on the Government. They consider that the embargo continues to prevent the national armed forces and internal security forces of the Central African Republic from acquiring the equipment necessary to fight the armed groups.

The Committee continues to play an essential role in the management of exemptions to the arms embargo. Since the imposition of the embargo on 5 December 2013, the Government of the Central African Republic has submitted to the Committee a total of 22 exemption requests and 21 notifications. Member States and international organizations, including MINUSCA, the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union, have also submitted to the Committee a total of 73 exemption requests and 120 notifications. To date, the Committee has approved all exemption requests submitted within the framework of the arms embargo. This brings the total number of weapons and rounds of ammunition approved by or notified to the Committee since December 2013 to approximately 20,746 weapons and 29,354,629 rounds of ammunition.<sup>6</sup> The national armed forces continue to be the primary recipient of the weapons and ammunition, followed by the internal security forces (police and gendarmerie). From 11 to 15 October 2021, the Chair and the members of the Committee visited the Central African Republic. As with previous visits by the Committee, the Chair and the members continued their engagement and dialogue with the Government on the situation in the country and the sanctions regime, including on the arms embargo.

In the following sections, I provide an update on progress made against the five key benchmarks since my letter dated 15 June 2021. The progress achieved by the Central African authorities should be assessed in the context of the political and security developments in the country, as well as of the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. As detailed in my regular progress reports to the Security Council (most recently [S/2022/119](#)), efforts to advance the peace process continued with the adoption by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region on 16 September 2021 of the joint road map for peace in the Central African Republic, aimed at revitalizing the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation

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<sup>2</sup> During meetings of the Security Council held on 18 October 2021 and 22 February 2022, the President of the Central African Republic, Faustin Archange Touadera, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Francophonie and Central Africans Abroad of the Central African Republic, Sylvie Valérie Baipo Temon, respectively, reiterated their country's call for the lifting of the arms embargo (see [S/PV.8882](#) and [S/PV.8971](#)).

<sup>3</sup> The Permanent Representative of Gabon, on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (Gabon, Ghana and Kenya), underscored the need to lift the arms embargo during the Council meeting held on 22 February 2022 (see [S/PV.8971](#)). He had also called upon the Council to lift the arms embargo during its meeting of 7 February 2022 (see [S/PV.8962](#)).

<sup>4</sup> During a Security Council meeting held on 23 June 2021, the Acting President of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region recalled that he and the Chair of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), respectively, were mandated to address the Council on behalf of the States and the peoples of the two subregions and request the lifting of the arms embargo. During that meeting, the representative of the Congo read out a message from the President of the Congo, in his capacity as Chair of ECCAS, requesting the Council to lift the arms embargo (see [S/PV.8802](#)). On 22 February 2022, the Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region reiterated the request of the Chair of the Conference to lift the arms embargo (see [S/PV.8971](#)).

<sup>5</sup> On 18 October 2021, during a meeting of the Security Council, the President of the National Youth Council of the Central African Republic called upon the Council to lift the arms embargo (see [S/PV.8882](#)).

<sup>6</sup> This represents an increase of 2,540 weapons since June 2021 (see [S/2021/573](#)). No additional rounds of ammunition were notified during the reporting period.

in the Central African Republic of 2019. It was followed by the declaration of a unilateral ceasefire by the President of the Central African Republic, Faustin Archange Touadera, on 15 October 2021. Political tensions around the organization of the republican dialogue had an impact on progress in the implementation of the Political Agreement and the joint road map. Military confrontations continued between armed groups affiliated with the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement and the national defence and internal security forces supported by bilaterally deployed and other security personnel.

### **Update on progress achieved on benchmark A**

Benchmark A relates to the effective implementation by the Government, within sustainable budgetary resources, of the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme, and in particular the socioeconomic reintegration of former members of armed groups and the integration of vetted former members of armed groups into all uniformed personnel.<sup>7</sup>

Since my letter dated 15 June 2021, the Government has continued its efforts to implement the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme in a challenging context marked by the ongoing armed confrontation between the national defence and internal security force and armed groups affiliated with the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement. The national unit responsible for the implementation of the programme continued to focus its efforts on armed groups that remained committed to the Political Agreement, as well as on dissident factions or elements that had dissociated themselves from the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement and expressed their willingness to join the national programme. This approach was officially endorsed by the President during the meeting held by the Strategic Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Repatriation, Security Sector Reform and National Reconciliation on 18 August 2021. From September 2021 to February 2022, high-level advance governmental missions led by the ministry in charge of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation and of the implementation of the Political Agreement visited Bambari, Bangassou, Besson, Bria, Mobaye, Obo and Zemio to engage local communities and to assess the readiness of the combatants to enter the programme.

Disarmament and demobilization operations since my previous assessment have been conducted in Haute-Kotto, Nana-Grébizi, Nana-Mambéré, Ouham, Ombella-Mpoko and Vakaga Prefectures, as well as in Bangui. The main activities during that period were carried out between September 2021 and June 2022, resulting in 803 combatants, including 20 women, being disarmed and demobilized. Some 392 weapons of war, 318 grenades and other unexploded ordnance and 18,013 rounds of ammunition were also collected. A total of 3,826 combatants, including 219 women, out of an initially predicted caseload of 5,000 national combatants established in the national programme document of 2017 have been disarmed and demobilized since the official launch of the national programme, in December 2018.<sup>8</sup> They have all been screened and received the three-month reinsertion allowance. A total of 2,699 weapons of war (individual or collective types of weapons of war), 2,046 grenades and other unexploded ordnance and 131,815 rounds of ammunition were collected.

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<sup>7</sup> See [S/2020/622](#) for the parameters of the programme, including the number of ex-combatants and children to be disarmed, demobilized, reintegrated and repatriated and the required budget and funding sources.

<sup>8</sup> An additional 438 combatants, including 18 women, were disarmed and demobilized during the pilot programme conducted in 2017. Of those, 198 ex-combatants, including 18 women, were processed for socioeconomic reintegration, while 232 ex-combatants, including six women, were integrated into the armed forces (see [S/2019/609](#)).

In a mapping exercise conducted in September 2021, the national unit responsible for the implementation of the programme and international partners estimated that 4,000 armed group combatants remained to be disarmed and demobilized, half of whom were affiliated with the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement, the rest being combatants who remained committed to the Political Agreement. Further to disarmament and demobilization activities carried out between September 2021 and May 2022, it is now estimated that approximately 3,000 combatants remain to be disarmed and demobilized.

Socioeconomic reintegration activities also continued. They are funded by the World Bank through the Reintegration of ex-Combatants Project and implemented by the unit responsible for the national programme through its implementing partners, namely, the International Organization for Migration and the Agence d'aide à la coopération technique et au développement (an international non-governmental organization). After a slow start, owing to a variety of factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic and challenges in the process for selecting ex-combatants for integration into the national armed forces or the special mixed security units, the pace of socioeconomic reintegration activities has now accelerated. This has allowed for significantly reduced delays between the demobilization of combatants and the beginning of their reintegration process.

As at 1 June 2022, the socioeconomic reintegration of 1,041 ex-combatants, including 56 women, had been completed. They comprised 428 ex-combatants, including 29 women, in the north-east (Bria, Léména and Ndélé) and 613 ex-combatants, including 27 women, in the north-west (Beloko, Besson, Bouar, Bozoum, Dilapoko, Kouï, Ndim and Paoua). In addition, as at 1 June 2022, a total of 938 ex-combatants, including 96 women, were enrolled in vocational training for their socioeconomic reintegration (out of a target of 1,346 ex-combatants). They comprised 592 ex-combatants, including 43 women, in the north-east (Birao, Bria, Kaga Bandoro and Mbrès), and 346 ex-combatants, including 53 women, in Bangui.<sup>9</sup> Vocational training that had started on 19 April 2022 and involved a total of 128 ex-combatants in Ouanda Djallé was suspended owing to threats of attacks by armed groups affiliated with the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement. A further 675 ex-combatants, including 17 women, have been identified as beneficiaries of future socioeconomic reintegration. They comprise 420 ex-combatants, including three women in the north-east (Am Dafok, Boromata, Bria, Sikikédé and Tiringolou ), 198 ex-combatants, including eight women, in the north-west, (Bossembele and Markounda), and 57 ex-combatants, including six women, in Bangui.

As noted in my previous letters, the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme was almost fully funded by international donors.<sup>10</sup> I welcome the decision of the United States of America to extend until March 2023 its grant for demobilization and disarmament activities in order to complement the support provided by MINUSCA. I also welcome the decision of the World Bank to extend until June 2023 its current funding for the Reintegration of ex-Combatants Project, as well as its readiness to provide additional funding for new stabilization and governance projects beyond June 2023. However, the funding currently provided by the World Bank is likely to be exhausted before its new funding is granted and is insufficient to include all the combatants who have yet to be disarmed and demobilized into the national programme. I therefore call upon the national authorities to make further efforts to prevent a funding gap for reintegration activities. I also reiterate my call upon international partners of the Central African Republic to

<sup>9</sup> They included 58 ex-combatants, including two women, originating from Bangui who had been demobilized during operations carried out in Bouar in November 2019.

<sup>10</sup> See S/2020/622 and S/2021/573.

continue to support this important programme. The national authorities also informed the assessment team that the support of international partners would be required to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate a small number of Lord's Resistance Army combatants in the east of the country.

During the visit, the Secretariat assessment team did not receive factual information on the status of the special mixed security units established pursuant to the Political Agreement.<sup>11</sup> In the light of the persistent challenges cited in my letter dated 15 June 2021, the national authorities indicated that there was a need to reflect on the future of those units. Should they be closed, it would be essential for a sustainable reintegration solution to be found for members of the existing units.

According to the information provided by the national authorities, since November 2020, between 222 and 297 ex-combatants have been integrated into the national armed forces and internal security forces.<sup>12</sup> No other ex-combatants appear to have been integrated since that time. No further progress has been registered in the establishment of a commission on the harmonization of the ranks, as provided for in the Political Agreement, to facilitate the integration of ex-combatants and the reincorporation of former national armed forces personnel who had joined armed groups.

The effectiveness of the national programme for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation is contingent on several factors, such as the genuine commitment of armed groups, including those that have joined the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement, to fully engaging in the process, and the safety and physical security of disarmed and demobilized combatants. During the period under review, at least 16 such ex-combatants were arbitrarily detained in Bria by national armed forces and other security personnel.<sup>13</sup> It is also contingent on the commitment of the national authorities to resolving the outstanding issues to sustain the national programme through political engagement, within the frameworks of the Political Agreement and the joint road map for peace in the Central African Republic. Effectiveness is also contingent on preserving the integrity of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation efforts within a single national framework and preventing any parallel initiatives that could undermine those efforts. In its report submitted to the Security Council on 25 June 2021, the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic noted that, in response to the attempted coup d'état by the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement in December 2020, members of armed groups had been recruited or instrumentalized by members of the Government and its security forces.<sup>14</sup>

In parallel with the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme, the Government continued to implement community violence reduction programmes supported by MINUSCA in operational partnership with the United Nations Office for Project Services. The programmes are targeted at elements affiliated with armed groups who do not meet the eligibility criteria of the national programme, young people prone to violence and at high risk of being

<sup>11</sup> The original concept for the special mixed security units was the establishment for an initial transition period of 24 months of a 2,000-strong force with 660 members deployed in each of the three defence zones outside of the Bangui autonomous zone, to protect the civilian population, strengthen public order, secure seasonal migration corridors or guard mine sites. Sixty per cent of the units was to come from the demobilized ex-combatants, with the rest coming from the national armed forces and security forces (see [S/2019/609](#)).

<sup>12</sup> A total of 232 ex-combatants, including six women, were previously integrated into the armed forces as part of the pilot disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme of 2017 (see [S/2019/609](#)).

<sup>13</sup> See [S/2022/119](#), para. 33.

<sup>14</sup> See [S/2021/569](#), sect. IV.

recruited by armed groups, and other community members, with an emphasis on women. Since my letter dated 15 June 2021, such programmes have continued in Bangui, Bangassou, Bossangoa, Bouar, Bria and Kaga Bandoro and have been started in Birao and Ndélé. As at 1 June 2022, a total of 5,799 beneficiaries, including 2,466 women, were enrolled in ongoing community violence reduction projects in Bangui and the aforementioned seven field locations. The programmes offer vocational training, start-up income generating activities, awareness-raising of social cohesion and community projects with cash-for-work opportunities. Since the inception of community violence reduction programmes in late 2015, over 30,000 beneficiaries (30 per cent of whom are women) have participated in such programmes across the country, which also resulted in the collection of 587 weapons of war, 14,127 artisanal weapons, 27,836 rounds of ammunition and 827 unexploded ordnance. The national authorities stressed to the Secretariat assessment team the need for better coordination under the umbrella of the ministry in charge of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation among the international and non-governmental organizations implementing similar programmes in order to optimize their effectiveness and ensure that they meet the needs across the country.

#### **Update on progress achieved on benchmark B**

Benchmark B relates to the establishment of a planning document detailing the needs of the national authorities in terms of weapons and ammunition storage facilities, as well as in terms of the training and vetting of national armed forces and internal security forces for the management of weapons and ammunition and storage facilities.

In its planning document produced in 2019, the Government estimated that, by 2023, it would need 295 facilities for the storage of 28,826 weapons and at least 9,492,562 rounds of ammunition, as well as 1,180 trained and vetted personnel responsible for their storage and management.<sup>15</sup> During the visit, the national authorities indicated that their projected needs for weapons and ammunition storage and management facilities had evolved since the surge in violence by the armed groups affiliated with the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement in late 2020. However, to date, the Government has not shared further details on its new projected needs.

During the period under review, MINUSCA, through the Mine Action Service, rehabilitated 13 additional weapons and ammunition storage facilities in Boali, Bocaranga, Bossangoa, Bouar, Bria, Dekoa and Sibut. Twelve of those have already been handed over to the national authorities. While the regional ammunition depot in Bouar has been handed over to the national authorities, it is not yet being used by the national defence forces.

The Mine Action Service/MINUSCA has also provided a total of 14 temporary storage facilities (also referred to as “kits”) to the national authorities. These facilities are located in Bambari, Bangassou, Bangui, Berberati, Berengo, Boali, Bocaranga, Bossangoa, Bria, Dekoa, Mongoumba, Nola, Paoua and Sibut. The 14 facilities comprise a total of 60 containers: 32 for the storage of weapons and 28 for the storage of ammunition. Each weapons container has a 120-weapon capacity (average armament of a company), bringing the total storage capacity to approximately 3,840 weapons.

Since March 2021, the Mine Action Service/MINUSCA has trained 28 additional members of the national armed forces and internal security forces on weapons and ammunition management. Ten were trained as ammunition storekeepers and 18 as

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<sup>15</sup> See [S/2019/609](#).

weapons storekeepers. This brings the total number of national defence and internal security forces trained in weapons and ammunition management to 388 since 2014.

Recent quality assurance visits of storage facilities of the national defence forces in Bangui conducted by MINUSCA with the national authorities revealed a lack of trained personnel in the armouries due to a high turnover.<sup>16</sup> During its visit to Camp Kassai, Bangui, the Secretariat assessment team also observed that not all ammunition and explosives were properly stored, which represented a risk for the safety of all personnel on site. During the visit, the national authorities acknowledged the challenges that they continued to face in ensuring the effective use of trained personnel, which was attributed in part to the lack of career prospects in weapons and ammunition management. The national authorities hoped that other ongoing reforms, such as the establishment of a computerized human resources management process, within the national armed forces and internal security forces (police and gendarmerie) would allow for better management of staff in terms of careers, promotions and transfers. In the meantime, I call upon the national authorities to deploy personnel trained in weapons and ammunition management to those storage facilities and not use them in other capacities.

Further to my letter dated 15 June 2021, the Government has yet to establish a standardized procedure, including a vetting process, in the national armed forces and internal security forces to authorize personnel dedicated to the management of weapons and ammunition. During the Secretariat assessment visit, the national authorities indicated that the standard vetting process currently in place within the national armed forces was to be followed in the interim by the internal security forces.<sup>17</sup>

The Government invited the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to support the conduct of a nationally led assessment of weapons and ammunition management capacities, practices and procedures, in line with relevant international standards. The assessment was conducted from 5 to 8 April 2022, as a follow-up to a baseline assessment carried out in 2017.<sup>18</sup> It identified challenges and options to further strengthen the national weapons and ammunition management framework.

### **Update on progress achieved on benchmark C**

Benchmark C relates to the finalization by the Government of an arms registration and management protocol for weapons delivered to its armed forces and internal security forces. It also relates to the establishment of a system of individual receipt of weapons and of a system for applying individual accountability measures in case of loss, theft or diversion of weapons.

The national authorities have continued to work on numerous decrees to implement law No. 20.021 on the general regime for conventional weapons and their components, parts and ammunition, which was promulgated by the President on 7 August 2020. In the interim, the national authorities continued to apply the technical guidelines for the verification of weapons and ammunition entering the country and notified to or approved by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) concerning the Central African Republic. The guidelines,

<sup>16</sup> See [S/2022/119](#), para. 51.

<sup>17</sup> In accordance with the ministerial instruction on recruitment in the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic dated 14 September 2016, the vetting process requires a background check carried out by an officer from the gendarmerie and the provision of a criminal background investigation attestation issued within the previous three months.

<sup>18</sup> For more information on the 2017 assessment, see United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, “Central African Republic: weapons and ammunition management”, Country Insight Series, 2020.

which have been used by the national authorities since 2019, remain the document of reference pending the issuance of the decree on transfers, as envisaged in said law.

The national authorities have made further progress on the national marking format and the national plan and standards for the tracing of State-owned weapons. During the assessment team visit, the national authorities indicated that the national marking format had been agreed upon by all relevant governmental authorities and should soon be approved by decree. The national authorities, with UNODC support, plan to launch in July 2022 a pilot marking project for approximately 2,000 weapons collected through the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme. In 2021, with the support of the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States and UNODC, the Central African Republic acquired the software and server necessary for registering State-owned and non-State-owned weapons. In addition, two marking machines and a number of record-keeping kits were delivered by UNODC in June 2021. UNODC also trained 26 members of the national armed forces and internal security forces on weapons marking in October 2021. UNODC stands ready to further support marking operations in the country, including through the purchase of additional materials, subject to the availability of funding.

During its visit to the armoury of the gendarmerie headquarters located at Camp Izamo, Bangui, the Secretariat assessment team observed that an individualized system was in place for the withdrawal and returning of weapons from and to the armoury. The assessment team also visited the armoury of the national armed forces at Camp Kassai, Bangui, but could not confirm whether a similar system was in place as the registries were not available on site.

With regard to the establishment of a system for applying individual accountability measures, the national authorities reiterated to the assessment team that, in the event of loss or theft of weapons, the Penal Code, the Military Justice Code and the military discipline rules allowed for the application of individual sanctions to ensure accountability.<sup>19</sup> The national authorities highlighted that the Military Justice Code applied to all uniformed personnel of the national armed forces and internal security forces, as well as to their civilian employees, should they commit such acts while performing their official duties.

#### **Update on progress achieved on benchmark D**

Benchmark D relates to the operationalization of the National Commission to Combat the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, which is the primary institution responsible for the implementation of the national action plan on small arms and light weapons.

The Commission has made progress in implementing the national action plan, including through its role as Chair of the Committee for the Coordination of Mechanisms for the Control and Management of Arms and Ammunition in the Central African Republic, which was established on 26 February 2021. Issues such as the aforementioned national marking format, the pilot marking project and the drafting and oversight of the implementation of relevant decrees are addressed within the framework of the Committee.

The Commission employs 22 staff members and has been allocated 220 million CFA francs (\$320,608) from the national budget to ensure the implementation of the

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<sup>19</sup> For example, article 110 of the military justice code of 2017 provides that a sentence of 2 to 20 years may be imposed for the loss or misuse of weapons, ammunition, vehicles, funds or material provided for the use of the military. The individual penalty may include life imprisonment, depending on the value of the material lost or misused.

national action plan.<sup>20</sup> The allocated amount mainly covers the operational costs of the office and the payment of the staff salaries. Operational activities outlined in the national action plan continue to be mostly financed through funding from international donors. In 2022, MINUSCA supported the Commission with 55 million CFA francs (\$88,220) for an awareness-raising campaign for the voluntary surrender of weapons and ammunition by the population.<sup>21</sup>

The National Commission plans to create four regional offices in 2022 to facilitate the implementation throughout the country of the national action plan on small arms and light weapons. The offices would be created in those prefectures where State authority has been restored and disarmament and demobilization operations have concluded.

#### **Update on progress achieved on benchmark E**

Benchmark E relates to the establishment of a protocol for the collection and destruction or transfer to the national armed forces or internal security forces of surplus, unregistered or illicitly held weapons and ammunition seized by the national authorities.

The Committee for the Coordination of Mechanisms for the Control and Management of Arms and Ammunition in the Central African Republic has yet to approve the draft protocol that has been developed. In the meantime, as mentioned in my letter dated 15 June 2021, the national authorities continued to rely on administrative practices already in place to manage the seizure, collection, destruction or transfer of weapons.

In early April 2022, the national authorities decided to allow the national armed forces to use the weapons collected during disarmament and demobilization operations.<sup>22</sup> From 4 April to 10 May 2022, the Mine Action Service/MINUSCA and the disarmament cell of the national unit responsible for the implementation of the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme verified the serviceability of approximately 2,400 collected weapons. At the end of the verification, 1,648 weapons were declared to be in good condition and 750 were identified as obsolete. At an official ceremony held at the MINUSCA camp in Mpoko on 29 April 2022, the national unit handed over 1,379 of the weapons in good condition to the national armed forces.

During the reporting period, the Mine Action Service/MINUSCA also assisted the national authorities in the disposal of obsolete ammunition, including ammunition collected from armed groups, destroying a total of 134,579 rounds of ammunition, comprising 132,183 rounds of small arms ammunition and 2,396 rounds of other ammunition.

The national authorities indicated that, notwithstanding the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the holding of the bilateral joint commissions, the Central African Republic maintained its engagements with neighbouring countries. The national authorities met with their counterparts from the Congo from 2 to 4 November 2021 and those from Cameroon on 15 November 2021 to discuss possible solutions for ensuring cross-border security and countering cross-border crime. On 27 December

<sup>20</sup> In 2021, the Commission was allocated 148 million CFA francs (\$276,377).

<sup>21</sup> Brice Ledoux Saramalet, “Centrafrique : la MINUSCA octroie 55 millions de franc CFA pour appuyer la COMNAT ALPC à lutter contre la prolifération des armes et munitions”, Oubangui Médias, 23 February 2022.

<sup>22</sup> In compliance with the arms embargo approval process, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) concerning the Central African Republic was notified of this decision by the national authorities.

2021, the President met with the Minister of Defence, Veterans and War Victims of Chad to discuss the implementation of the outcomes of the previous bilateral commission meeting.

### **Conclusion**

The Government has continued to make progress in the implementation of the key benchmarks with the support of MINUSCA and other regional and international partners.

Nonetheless, further progress is needed, in particular to implement the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme. Progress in the implementation of the joint road map for peace in the Central African Republic offers an opportunity to bring armed groups affiliated with the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement back under the frameworks of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic and the national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme. Further progress is also needed in operating an effective weapons and ammunition management system. While continuing their efforts to develop the relevant regulatory framework, the national authorities should build upon the pilot marking project to demonstrate immediate incremental progress.

It is important to ensure that the arms embargo, as well as other targeted sanctions against armed groups, yield the necessary and desired outcomes, with a view to improving the political and security situation in the country. In this regard, the national authorities shared their concerns with the assessment team over the recent increase in the use of explosive ordnance by armed groups,<sup>23</sup> as well as the discovery of anti-personnel mines in the Central African Republic in early April 2022. The Panel of Experts has an important role to play in reporting on violations of the measures and identifying the supply routes of seized weapons and ammunition, as well as the suppliers and facilitators of illegal transfers of arms to the armed groups. The States in the region also have a critical role to play in halting the illicit transfers across national borders of arms and ammunition to the armed groups, including explosive ordnance, which has led to casualties among civilians, peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel.

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<sup>23</sup> See also [S/2022/119](#), para. 23.