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Sixty-eighth year

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Monday, 25 November 2013, 3 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Bliss
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	France	Mr. Araud
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Gasana
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic pursuant to paragraph 22 of Security Council resolution 2121 (2013) (S/2013/677)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic submitted pursuant to paragraph 22 of Security Council resolution 2121 (2013) (S/2013/677)

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Allam-mi, Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Adonia Ayebare, Senior Adviser for Peacebuilding and Development of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/677, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic submitted pursuant to paragraph 22 of Security Council resolution 2121 (2013).

I welcome the Deputy Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Jan Eliasson, and I give him the floor.

The Deputy Secretary-General: I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to brief the Council on the rapidly deteriorating situation in the Central African Republic.

We face a profoundly important test of international solidarity and of our responsibility to prevent atrocities. A country in the heart of Africa is descending into complete chaos before our eyes. The situation requires prompt and decisive action to place the protection of the people of the Central African Republic at the centre of our attention. That is why the Secretary-General issued a strong warning to the Council last week, and that is

why he has asked me to present a more detailed report today on the findings of the technical assistance team that has recently returned from the Central African Republic, and on our observations on these findings. In the past few days, he has also been in contact with African leaders, who have expressed their concern over the situation and the need for a robust international response to it.

As the report before the Council (S/2013/677) shows, the country faces a desperate security situation. There is a breakdown of law and order. The population is enduring suffering beyond imagination. As we see far too often, women and children are at the greatest risk. The use of child soldiers is rising. Sexual violence is growing. There are widespread reports of looting, illegal checkpoints, extortion, arbitrary arrests, torture and summary executions. The Secretary-General is particularly concerned over the alarming increase in intercommunal violence. Traditional harmony among communities has been replaced by polarization and widespread horror. The manipulation of religious affiliations for political purposes has fuelled never-before-seen sectarian violence between Muslims and Christians, particularly in the north-west and south-east of the country.

Former Séléka elements are deemed responsible for most humanitarian rights violations against the civilian population. Yet we are also deeply concerned by abuses by "anti-balaka" — well-organized self-defence or vigilante groups. This confrontation may develop into a conflagration. The influence of religious leaders to prevent violence is diminishing as the conflict has brought to light years of the marginalization of and discrimination against the northern, predominantly Muslim population.

I welcome the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Babacar Gaye, and the transitional authorities to establish mediation and reconciliation committees and take other steps to find practical solutions and to defuse tension in Bossangoa and elsewhere. As recognized by the Council in resolution 2121 (2013), the human rights capacity of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic is sorely inadequate. It is also hampered by a lack of access in the present security situation. We welcome the upcoming deployment of a United Nations human rights monitoring mission and a planned joint mission by the offices of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict and

the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict.

In his report, the Secretary-General calls for urgent measures to end the pervasive impunity and to ensure accountability. I appeal to the Council to respond to this end by considering accountability mechanisms, such as a commission of inquiry and/or targeted sanctions. At the same time, humanitarian needs are escalating. Virtually the entire population of 4.6 million people has been affected by the emergency. One out of three people in the country is in dire need of food, protection, health care, water, sanitation and shelter.

Access to populations in need remains difficult, and funding is woefully short. The consolidated appeal of \$195 million has received less than half of the funding required. And the needs keep rising. Our humanitarian colleagues have developed a six-point action plan at the global, regional and national levels, and I call for an urgent response to this humanitarian crisis.

The restoration of security, law and order is a precondition for addressing the political, human rights and humanitarian problems. The capacity of the country's armed forces and security services to prevent and confront such threats is virtually non-existent. According to the Ministry of Defence, nearly 7,000 of the Forces armées centrafricaines have returned to Bangui but are neither deployed nor operational. Former Séléka units have assumed the responsibility of the national defence and security forces. Some 5,000 former Séléka are to be integrated into the security services.

However, there is no agreed plan or budget for the reconstitution of the national security forces. The Central African Republic is becoming a breeding ground for extremists and armed groups in a region that is already suffering from conflict and instability. If this situation is left to fester, it may develop into a religious and ethnic conflict with long-standing consequences, or even into a civil war that could spread into neighbouring countries. It is critical for the international community and the Council to act now.

The need for decisive action is also essential for ensuring that preparations for the elections can proceed in accordance with the transitional charter. As reiterated by the Council and the International Contact Group, the elections should be held within 18 months of the inauguration of the Head of State of the Transition, that is, by February 2015. We have no time to lose.

In response to 2121 (2013), the Secretary-General dispatched an interagency technical assessment mission to the Central African Republic from 27 October to 8 November, led by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Edmond Mulet, who is present here today. The mission was tasked to develop options for international support to the African-led International Support Mission for the Central African Republic (MISCA), including its possible transformation into a United Nations peacekeeping operation, subject to appropriate conditions on the ground and to the decision of the Security Council.

We thank the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), who were a critical part of the mission, and we are gratified that the African Union is represented here today by Ambassador Ayebare. We also welcome the presence here today of the Secretary-General of ECCAS, Mr. Ahmad Allam-mi. I also thank the authorities of the Central African Republic for welcoming the mission, and am pleased to see them represented here today. The African Union and ECCAS agree that there is an urgent need for the international community to act, and that a United Nations peacekeeping mandate with a robust mandate will be required.

As I mentioned earlier, in recent days the Secretary-General has had productive discussions with the African Union Commission Chairperson, Ms. Dlamini-Zuma, President Deby Itno of Chad and Mr. Ahmad Allam-mi to underline his deep concerns about the situation and his agreement with them that a strong peacekeeping force is needed in the Central African Republic.

While in the country, the mission listened to a wide range of national and international stakeholders, who were unanimous in their calls for rapid action, including the deployment of an effective and impartial force to protect civilians, deter human right violations, restore security and prevent the occurrence of mass violence. The technical assessment mission observed that, despite its best efforts, the capacity of the ECCAS-led peacekeeping force — the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX) — to protect civilians is seriously limited. While the recent deployment of MICOPAX has had a deterrent effect in some locations, some contingents are perceived as siding with particular communities based on religion. MICOPAX troops are also struggling with limited logistical support, with a shortfall in equipment and means of communication, and with mobility

constraints. Significant external support would therefore be required to enable MISCA to implement its mandate and stabilize the situation.

The report before the Council presents five options for international support to MISCA: first, bilateral and multilateral support arrangements; secondly, United Nations support funded through a trust fund, in addition to a bilateral and multilateral support; thirdly, limited United Nations support, funded through assessed or voluntary contributions combined with bilateral and multilateral support; fourthly, a comprehensive United Nations support package funded through assessed contributions; and fifthly, the transformation of MISCA into a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

The majority of those with whom the mission met called for the fifth and last option — a United Nations peacekeeping operation. Support for this option has also been requested by a number of civil society organizations. The transformation of MISCA into a United Nations peacekeeping operation with an estimated strength of 6,000 troops and 1,700 police personnel would lay the foundation for transparent, accountable and resilient institutions. A United Nations peacekeeping operation would ensure a multidimensional integrated approach and, we would hope, enhance the international community's ability to apply political leverage.

Since the mission was deployed and the Secretary-General's report was issued, the Head of State of the Transition has written to inform the Secretary-General of his request for assistance from France. The Head of State of the Transition has characterized the current situation as a threat to international peace and security. The virtual meltdown in the Central African Republic requires a coherent, integrated and multidimensional response that would address both the root causes and the present manifestations of the crisis. In the Secretary-General's assessment, the response must be commensurate with the complexity of the crisis and the protection needs of the population. It must be robust and prevent what has a high potential to result in widespread atrocities.

The Secretary-General has recently renewed the commitment of the United Nations to upholding our responsibilities whenever there is a threat of large-scale violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. He is committed to bringing such serious violations to the attention of the appropriate

United Nations bodies, in particular when national authorities are unable to respond. Reporting to the Council today is part of that commitment to placing rights up front, as fundamentally laid down the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We believe that a United Nations peacekeeping operations will be needed in the Central African Republic. However, the transformation of MISCA into a United Nations peacekeeping operation would require some lead time for necessary preparations. We therefore urge the international community not only to support MISCA in as comprehensive and predictable a manner as possible, but to also to begin considering the option of a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

The people of the Central African Republic have hardly ever had the opportunity to fully experience peace and security. They need our help. Some call this a forgotten crisis. The world is haunted by the horrors of crises spiralling into atrocities as we have watched from a distance. The United Nations, the African Union, ECCAS and the Central African Republic authorities all recognize the urgent need to stop this crisis from escalating beyond control. It is now for the Council to decide how it can best contribute to this goal.

The President: I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Dembassa Worogagoi (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): I should like on behalf of the Central African people to thank the Council for its special attention to our country in its current difficult situation. As we say at home, it is in difficult times that one recognizes true friends. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/677), the latest developments on the ground, and the French and American positions all warn of genocide if nothing is done.

The Central African Republic therefore expresses its gratitude to each of the 15 members of the Council in general and in particular to all bilateral and multilateral partners, including the Economic Community of Central African States, its Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic, the African Union, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie, the United Nations,

France, the United States and the United Kingdom, which have to date assumed the heavy responsibility of managing this crisis.

The transition leading to the holding of free, transparent and credible elections within 18 months of 18 August is threatened by severe instability in the country. Despite the efforts of the transitional authorities to restore security in the country through the dissolution of the Séléka, to canton former rebels in localized sites and to undertake other tasks, the security situation remains precarious. That is why the support of the United Nations remains crucial to saving the country from its multiple ills.

The stability of the Central African Republic depends on success in helping the transition to implement resolution 2121 (2013), and in particular to respect the road map established by the International Contact Group until the elections are held. In that context, the highest authorities of the transition have written to the Secretary-General and the members of the Security Council to inform them of and seek their agreement to their request that France provide military assistance in support of the African-led International Support Mission for the Central African Republic (MISCA).

The Central African nation aspires only to peace and security. The African-led MISCA is being deployed in the field. We should like to see it supported and equipped by the United Nations, with the logistical support of France, so as to assist it in fully securing Bangui, restoring peace to the interior of the country, and restructuring the Central African army. It must have a strong mandate under Chapter VII of the Charter that will help it in its heavy but noble mission in the service of peace and stability in the Central African Republic. That is the appeal of the Central African people to the Security Council so that they may one day dare to hope in the future of their country.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to Mr. Allam-mi.

Mr. Allam-mi (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to welcome the recent report of the Secretary-General introduced by Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson (S/2013/677), to which the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) made its contribution. I also thank you, Sir, and the other members of the Council for having allowed me to participate in this meeting on Central Africa.

ECCAS is also gratified to see that the situation in the Central African Republic is now of concern to the international community at the highest level, in particular the Security Council. Indeed, while Central Africa has been tending to the Central African Republic for more than a decade and is desperately attempting to find a lasting solution to the crisis, with the support of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) and its European friends, including France, it would seem that the international community has suddenly grasped the scope of the crisis following the toppling of the Bozizé regime by the Séléka coalition. The alert was sounded at the high-level meeting held here in New York on 25 September following the deterioration of the humanitarian and security situation, which had become disastrous.

Today, the Central African Republic is a failed State run by a fragile transitional Government that is powerless, given the daunting task of bringing the country out of the crisis. Without a doubt, the Government needs help in stabilizing the country, but we must continue to demand that our expectations be met regarding the protection of civilians and respect for human rights. In that regard, it is also crucial to bring the Central African political class to the table, as well as the opinion-makers, so that they can bolster the political consensus formed through the National Charter for Transition, adopted by the National Council for Transition, in the framework of implementing the political agreement of Libreville of January 2013 and the N'Djamena declaration of April 2013. The Economic Community of Central African States is pleased that the transition authorities in the Central African Republic have transformed that consensus into a transition road map that lays out various actions to be undertaken, as well as timetables for them.

I travelled to New York today to thank the Security Council for its support for the Economic Community of Central African States, which has untiringly addressed the issue of the Central African Republic. I also request that that support continue in the future. We hope to be able to continue, alongside the African Union, to help political actors and other stakeholders to reach some kind of reconciliation and agree on a common path, so that the Central African Republic can regain its security, stability and democracy.

Bearing in mind the examples of the African Union Mission in Somalia and, more recently, the

Regional Brigade of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ECCAS believes its Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX), within the International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA), will effectively contribute to restoring peace in the country, if its future mandate provides it with the necessary prerogatives and bolsters its capacities in line with the recommendations of the most recent joint United Nations-African Union-ECCAS evaluation.

The generation of troops for ECCAS will provide it with more than 4,000 troops in the theatre of operations, including an aerial unit. I would like to recall that the financing of MISCA — also known as MICOPAX II — has been underwritten by ECCAS since 1 August, when MISCA was established. The situation in the Central African Republic is under the control of MICOPAX II but continues to be of concern. Total disaster has been averted, but the risks of the situation deteriorating and sliding into chaos, general civil war and ethnic and sectarian conflicts are real .

Free and transparent elections will not be enough to extricate the Central African Republic from the crisis that it has been undergoing for over a decade. We must address the root causes of the conflict.

First, a legitimate and representative democracy must be established in the Central African Republic that serves the general interest of the Central African people, rather than those of a clan or ethnic or religious group. One of the causes of the ongoing conflict stems from the seizure of power and resources of the country by a group of Central Africans who came to power through violence and/or elections. That led to an uprising of marginalized people.

Secondly, they must establish genuine Government defence and security forces that are professional, balanced and representative, instead of clan-based militias.

Thirdly, they must re-establish an ongoing dialogue among the political actors, with the assistance of the international community and in the framework of a follow-up committee and on the basis of a shared political agreement to save the Central African Republic. The Central African political actors must participate in the transition, and then later support the elected authorities, instead of engaging in public smear campaigns against one another or counting on

the international community to solve their problems in their stead. The international community can only help them, but it cannot act in their stead.

Fourthly, financial, economic and humanitarian assistance must be mobilized immediately in order to address the multiple security issues in the country and tackle the poverty in which those people live. For let us not forget that one of the root causes of the conflict in the Central African Republic is the abject poverty of marginalized people, who live extremely difficult lives, thus being forced to take up arms and resort to violence in order to obtain their needs by attacking the affluent.

The emergency deployment of a multidimensional mission is absolutely necessary in order to save the Central African Republic and its people in distress. MICOPAX II/MISCA needs to be strengthened. The planned United Nations option should provide for substantial support to MISCA, build its operational capabilities and guarantee its financing. Allow me to also reiterate the request of the Heads of State and Government of ECCAS at their recent summit in N'Djamena on 21 October for a robust mandate under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, so as to enable MICOPAX, which is the core of MISCA, to fully carry out its stabilization mission in the country and create the best conditions possible for the civilian component of MISCA, with the support of a reinforced BINUCA.

There is no longer time for useless criticism of the stark reality affecting the Central Africans people, nor for shedding crocodile tears regarding their misfortunes. The time has come to act and to support France, ECCAS and the African Union in their efforts to help the people, help the transition in the country to succeed and ensure the implementation of the road map to overcome the crisis affecting the country. The international community should provide MISCA/MICOPAX with the necessary means to take action and support the transition, while ensuring, of course, that the process be productive and transparent, so that our goals are achieved, namely, peace and security for the Central African people, who are the innocent victims of a hellish reality, lasting stabilization and the rebuilding of their country, thereby strengthening security and stability in the countries of the region.

In conclusion, let me reiterate ECCAS's willingness to continue its legitimate efforts to achieve a lasting and final solution or settlement of the Central African

crisis in the framework of a mechanism of effective cooperation and coordination with the United Nations and the African Union, without forgetting our participation in the international contact group and our mediation role taken up by the Congo.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to Mr. Ayebare.

Mr. Ayebare (African Union): At the outset, I thank the Security Council for convening this meeting at a key turning point in the history of the Central African Republic. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2013/677) and more generally for his efforts towards the promotion of peace, security and stability on the African continent in general.

This meeting is taking place against the background of a particularly worrisome situation in the Central African Republic. As we all know, the situation is marked by a total collapse of public law and order and by widespread and continued abuses against the civilian population by elements of the ex-Séléka rebellion, including extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detention, acts of torture and sexual violence, as well as the recruitment and use of child soldiers. That has led to the emergence of self-defence groups and other armed groups.

The African Union (AU) is actively seized of the situation in the Central African Republic. We have worked closely with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and fully supported regional efforts to address the situation following the resumption of armed hostilities in December 2012 by the Séléka rebellion, in violation of the decisions of the leaders of the region. Those efforts resulted in the landmark Libreville Global Peace Agreement of January 2013, which provided a viable basis for a lasting solution to the crisis facing the country.

As early as December 2012, the AU drew attention to the danger that the resumption of hostilities would pose. We indeed feared that it would undermine the efforts of the leaders of the region and result in widespread violence against the civilian population, and that it could heighten tensions among the different communities, with far-reaching consequences for the country and the region as a whole. Following the entry of the Séléka rebellion into Bangui, the AU Peace and Security Council took immediate action to suspend the country from participating in AU activities and adopted

targeted sanctions against some individuals. We sought Security Council support in that regard.

Over the past few months, we have been working closely with ECCAS in support of the efforts of the leaders of the region. Allow me at this juncture to once again express the AU's deep appreciation to Chadian President Idriss Deby Itno, current Chair of ECCAS, and to Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso, Chair of the ECCAS follow-up committee on the Central African Republic. The region has demonstrated the utmost commitment in addressing the situation. ECCAS has convened peace talks, deployed peacekeepers and provided financial assistance in support of the Central African Republic. That proactive engagement should be acknowledged and fully supported by the Council.

The decisions of ECCAS provide the basis upon which the transition in the country should be managed. We should insist once again on the need for the transitional authorities to fully comply with those decisions, in particular with respect to the duration of the transition of 18 months and the ineligibility of the current authorities to compete in the elections that will be organized to restore constitutional order. We would insist that the transitional authorities fully assume their responsibilities, notably with regard to the protection of the civilian population and the control by the State of its sources of income.

Together with ECCAS, we continue to mobilize the international community through the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic. The Group has met three times so far. The most recent meeting, convened in Bangui on 8 November, outlined a number of steps to be taken by the transitional authorities. It is critical that the Security Council lend its support to those steps.

Given the precarious security situation on the ground, the AU, working closely with ECCAS, decided to enhance the Mission of the Economic Community of Central African States for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX) through the deployment of an African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA). With a total strength of 3,652 military, police and civilian elements, the Mission is mandated to assist in restoring law and order, stabilizing the country, protecting the civilian population, reforming the defence and security sector, and creating conditions for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. In so doing, the force will

build on the sustained efforts made by MICOPAX in a particularly challenging environment.

The AU and ECCAS have closely worked together to facilitate the transition from MICOPAX to MISCA. Following consultations with ECCAS, the Chairperson of the Commission appointed the leadership of the Mission. The transfer of authority between the two Missions is scheduled to take place on 19 December. Permit me to emphasize this point: the AU and ECCAS are working hand in hand to ensure that the continent effectively addresses the challenges at hand. We are one, and we are on the same page. Central African challenges are Africa's challenges. Overcoming them successfully requires the mobilization of the entire continent.

Against that backdrop, the priority of the international community, particularly the United Nations, should be to enhance the current efforts through the provision of adequate support for the deployment and sustenance of MISCA. Such support will be consistent with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations on the role of regional arrangements in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security. We take note of the options contained in the report of the Secretary-General. In taking a decision, it is important that the Security Council bear in mind the need for predictable and sustainable support for the Mission.

I would like to express our appreciation to the AU partners that have already expressed their commitment to supporting the Mission. I wish to refer here to the European Union, France and the United States of

America. On the ground, we will work out the modalities for operational coordination with the French forces. The AU Peace and Security Council, at its meeting of 13 November, looked forward to that cooperation with MISCA. I would call on AU partners to come forward and extend much needed support for MISCA.

It is our conviction that the effective support of the United Nations will go a long way towards enabling the Mission to create the required conditions for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation that would support the long-term stabilization and reconstruction of the country. We call on the Security Council to extend its full support to the political efforts of ECCAS. The leaders of the region have never relented in their efforts. They deserve full and continued international support.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the AU's determination, working closely with ECCAS, to address the situation in the Central African Republic. In this endeavour, it is our expectation that the international community will extend the required support and assistance. We look forward, in that respect, to the early adoption of a Security Council resolution that would enhance the joint efforts of ECCAS and the AU and underline the active international solidarity with the suffering people of the Central African Republic.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.