



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

*Provisional*

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Monday, 18 October 2021, 10 a.m.  
New York

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Kimani/Mrs. Toroitich . . . . .	(Kenya)
<i>Members:</i>	China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
	Estonia . . . . .	Mr. Jürgenson
	France . . . . .	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
	India . . . . .	Mr. Raguttahalli
	Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Byrne Nason
	Mexico . . . . .	Mr. Ochoa Martínez
	Niger . . . . .	Mr. Abarry
	Norway . . . . .	Ms. Heimerback
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. DeShong
	Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Ladeb
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America . . . . .	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield
	Viet Nam . . . . .	Mr. Dang

## Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic (S/2021/867)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.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 (S/2021/867)**

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

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera, President of the Central African Republic.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Mankeur Ndiaye, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic; His Excellency Mr. Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union; His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and Ms. Pamela Audrey Derom, President of the Conseil National de la Jeunesse Centrafricaine.

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/2021/867, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ndiaye.

**Mr. Ndiaye** (*spoke in French*): I thank the Secretary-General and the members of the Security Council for the honour today to present to the Council the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2021/867), in line with the request set out in resolution 2552 (2020) — the last such report before the end of the current mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) on 15 November.

I would like to begin by thanking Council members for their continued attention to the situation in the Central African Republic and their unanimous support to MINUSCA in carrying out its work.

I also very much welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera, President of the Central African Republic, who is kindly taking part in this meeting. I thank him for being here. I believe the Council will listen to him with great interest in describing developments in the situation in the Central African Republic.

I also welcome the presence of the Central African Republic's international partners, including the European Union, with which we have an excellent working relationship when it comes to implementing the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the European Union with regard to peacekeeping and managing crises. I also welcome the participation of the African Union. And I would like to make special mention of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The African Union and ECCAS are co-guarantors of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. As well, I welcome the very important contribution of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and of the civil society representative participating in this meeting.

I would especially like to commend the Council on the recent visit, from 10 to 15 September, by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) on the lifting of sanctions on the Central African Republic. We welcome the fact that such a visit, which MINUSCA robustly supported, will contribute to a constructive dialogue on the progress made by the Government of the Central African Republic towards achieving the benchmarks related to lifting the arms embargo currently in place. It was also a political opportunity of great significance to understanding the challenges faced by the Government and to explore with it relevant solutions with a view to achieving lasting security, along with the support of MINUSCA and the Central African Republic's international partners.

With the conclusion of the presidential and legislative elections, in a complex security environment, and the inauguration of the new Government on 23 June, the Central African Republic took a not-insignificant step towards institutional stability. It also underscored its adherence to the process of

democratization, while also responding to the profound aspiration of the population, who braved significant security challenges, sometimes at the cost of their lives, in exercising their right to vote. Sustaining that positive momentum requires the Council's extension of MINUSCA's mandate for electoral assistance in order to further foster the process of decentralization via the holding of local elections, the last of which took place back in 1988. In addition to being a democratic milestone towards inclusive governance, those local elections are the result of a major political compromise that underpins the critical balance in the power-sharing regime enshrined in the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. Consequently, any delay or failure to hold the elections could undermine the integrity of the agreement and endanger the peace process.

The ceasefire declared by President Touadera on 15 October is another example of progress that merits the Council's attention. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the President and his Government for that major step in the dialogue. The declaration of the ceasefire should launch the operational phase of the joint road map to revitalize the peace process in the Central African Republic, adopted under the auspices of the President of Angola, Mr. João Lourenço, on 16 September, by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. I would like to commend the vitality of the regional momentum that managed to reinvigorate the peace process with a road map that provides an opportunity to revitalize the essential provisions of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation. I also commend the very important and decisive role played by President Lourenço.

The positive complementarity of the joint road map and the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, signed on 6 February 2019, facilitates the pooling of the efforts of the guarantors — the African Union and ECCAS — and of the States of the subregion, as facilitators, to inject synergy into their interactions to relaunch its implementation.

It is therefore essential that, without exception, all the armed groups and their leaders genuinely adhere to the peace process by fulfilling in good faith all their obligations pursuant to the agreement of 6 February and the joint road map. MINUSCA intends to remobilize all its partners and make optimal use of its good offices and its force to increase the contribution of international

partners to the peace process and ensure, together with all stakeholders, the credibility and the integrity of the agreement.

It should be said that the success of the revitalization process of the 6 February agreement and the implementation of the new joint road map will depend upon strict respect by all parties and the capacity of the guarantors and the facilitators, including MINUSCA, to create an effective framework for accountability that avoids violations without consequences, as we saw in the recent past.

The reason for our keenness in the effectiveness of the ceasefire declaration of 15 October is that it could potentially contribute to the creation of an environment conducive to the smooth holding of the inclusive “republican dialogue” that the Government intends to launch with the political parties and the key forces of the Central African Republic.

The political class and civil society have a role to play, with the Government and the support of the international community, in the promotion of national ownership of that important process in the search for lasting peace, stability, security and national reconciliation. We hope to see those two processes contribute to the creation of an environment that better protects the civilian population and that is conducive to the effective implementation of our mandate throughout the territory of the country, given the correlation between the safety and security of United Nations civilian and uniformed personnel and the performance and implementation of their tasks.

Security challenges remain in some parts of the country, with military operations being conducted in response to the operations by members of the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement armed groups. In that regard, we have seen the displacement of persons and tensions among communities, in particular in the west and centre of the country. Moreover, certain armed groups have tried to retake their former strongholds in the north-west, the centre and the south-east of the country, the consequences of which have been felt by civilians, who are the primary victims of that violence, including an increase in a host of human rights violations and other violations of international humanitarian law.

We therefore encourage the Government to accordingly provide the judicial follow-up necessary with regard to the conclusions of the special investigation commission established on 4 May to

investigate allegations of human rights violations. In that regard, the United Nations system as a whole is following with great hope the investigations of the Special Criminal Court and will continue to provide its support to the judicial system as a whole in its efforts to combat impunity. We particularly look forward to attending the first trial of the Special Criminal Court and the setting up of the Commission on Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation, which undoubtedly will be an irreversible step towards putting an end to the cycle of impunity, including realizing victims' right to truth, justice and reparation, which are essential elements of genuine lasting national reconciliation.

Furthermore, we will need to go beyond the fight against impunity to make it possible for the Government to better ensure the effectiveness of its role as protector of civilians and in promoting human rights with professional and effective defence and security forces. To that end, along with all our international technical and financial partners, we will have to continue to support the Central African authorities in implementing the recommendations of the strategic review of the security sector that is under way. We believe that optimizing our support for the reform of the security sector will depend on our capacity to invest more in three strategic areas, that is, governance with a view to performance, ensuring accountability and coordination to ensure coherence and complementarity. No investment in security sector reform will be too much given the security situation, which has become more complex with an increase in incidents involving explosive devices, in particular in the west of the country. That contributes to the continuing deterioration of the security situation, which impacts the protection of civilians, the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the safety and security of Blue Helmets and threatens the implementation of MINUSCA's mandate. I therefore call on Council members to duly take that concern into account in the process of renewing the mission's mandate.

It is regrettable to note that, despite humanitarian workers' courage and determination and the efforts in the framework of the political process and the extension of State authority, the Central African Republic has not overcome its humanitarian crisis. Since 2014, there have been an unprecedented number of internally displaced persons, and 63 per cent of the population, some 3.1 million people, need urgent humanitarian protection and assistance. There is therefore a need to fund the humanitarian response plan — only 60 per cent of its

budget is funded — in order to provide vital assistance to some 1.8 million people and avoid a deterioration of the social fabric, which would be damaging to efforts to achieve peace and stability. The same applies to the economic situation in the context of the coronavirus disease, which requires budgetary measures to protect the security and stability of the country.

Among the emerging challenges are the continued violations of the headquarters agreement, with 41 documented violations reported between 1 June and 1 October. Those violations can be overcome. For that reason, we have maintained our dialogue with the Government in order to provide lasting solutions, as such violations undermine the confidence, partnership and peaceful coexistence between conventional forces, national authorities and MINUSCA. I welcome President Touadera's commitment to put an end to that situation, which is particularly deplorable, as MINUSCA never had to face such incidents on a regular basis before the deployment of the bilateral forces and the emergence of the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement.

The structural responses to all those security, humanitarian and operational challenges requires that the political and peace process be credible by revitalizing the 6 February agreement and holding of the "republican dialogue". Indeed, it will be necessary, with our international partners and the support of all members of the Security Council, to engage both separately and collectively with all essential regional and Central African actors to make an immediate cessation of hostilities and ceasefire a reality.

Compliance with all those preconditions by all parties can lead to a gradual restoration of trust among all the actors and maintaining an environment conducive to implementing effectively a multidimensional mandate in the interest of the protection of civilians, humanitarian assistance, the holding of local elections and lasting solutions for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, which are objective indicators of progress towards the definitive return to peace in the Central African Republic.

We are also aware of the critical role that the mandate and the robust posture of MINUSCA is playing in making the political process credible. We are therefore counting on optimizing its use with the arrival of additional troops and resources deployed through the authorization of the Security Council to improve performance related to the tasks of protecting civilians,

supporting the provision of humanitarian assistance, providing our good political offices and securing local elections in close cooperation with the Government of the Central African Republic.

In order to maintain the momentum of resolution 2566 (2021), I call on Council members for their support to enable MINUSCA to achieve its goals in strengthening its uniformed personnel as soon as possible. In that regard, I commend contributions already announced by troop- and police-contributing countries, and I stress the imperative need to accelerate the deployment of military and police personnel to support MINUSCA operations and the smooth implementation of its mandate.

At the same time, I would like to highlight and condemn the resurgence in incidents related to sexual abuse and exploitation. Such unacceptable and unjustified acts can unfortunately ruin the reputation of the Organization and jeopardize the legitimacy of our mandate — hence the imperative to enforce the zero-tolerance policy of the Secretary-General, which I am implementing on the ground, and to recalibrate our global and integrated strategy of prevention and victim-centred response to sexual abuse and exploitation, which I am personally currently carrying out. Nevertheless, we are counting on Council members and the effective cooperation of the troop- and police-contributing countries to end that scourge by strict compliance with the obligations incumbent upon all of us.

Lastly, the renewal of the MINUSCA mandate, the engagement of the international technical and financial partners of the Central African Republic, national ownership of political and peace processes and the strong political determination of the Government — I am convinced — are key to the adoption and the implementation of lasting political solutions. With the support of all Council members, we will commit ourselves to making constructive use of our good offices to promote a transparent, coordinated and coherent approach in order to make the contributions necessary for resolving the crisis in the Central African Republic.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Ndiaye for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Adeoye.

**Mr. Adeoye:** Everyone will agree with me that the situation in the Central African Republic remains volatile and highly unpredictable. That is despite

the progress made following the successful general elections and the inauguration of President Touadera and the legislature in accordance with constitutional timelines. A series of bloody attacks has continued to contribute to the precarious situation.

I must say that the African Union is particularly concerned about the renewed and unrelenting clashes between the fighters of the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement (CPC) and other armed groups. The African Union takes this important opportunity to strongly condemn the CPC and its affiliated groups. We call for an immediate ceasefire and the return to the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. It is also important that we particularly warn all belligerents in the Central African Republic that they will be held accountable for the safety and the security of peacekeepers and their assets. We call on the Government to ensure that such hostile acts immediately cease and that perpetrators be held accountable.

At this juncture, allow me to underscore that the African Union fully welcomes and supports the 16 September call for a ceasefire made by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. I want to assure the Council that the ceasefire declared by President Touadera, if effective, will be a game-changer.

In the same vein, the African Union welcomes the preparations for the “republican dialogue”, and we emphasize that its success will depend on its inclusiveness and ownership. It is important that all stakeholders, including armed groups that have renounced violence, opposition political parties, civil society, women, youth and religious leaders all over the country, should be allowed to participate and given a chance to build trust and confidence for a lasting peace in the Central African Republic.

Equally, special attention should be paid to addressing the widespread humanitarian situation, knowing full well the work of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) in that respect.

As a guarantor of the peace agreement, it is important that the African Union continue to be active in providing institutional assistance, promoting the implementation of and support to the activities of the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation



Commission and assisting in preparations for the “republican dialogue”.

Furthermore, the African Union will be ready to deploy human rights observers as soon as possible, knowing full well that we have already deployed military observers in furtherance of the transitional security arrangements under the peace agreement.

Let me assure the Council that MINUSCA and its leadership have been doing a tremendous job that we commend highly, and we continue to look forward to its greater effectiveness and to support for additional personnel and equipment.

Finally, I want to recommend to the Council, on behalf of the African Union, that MINUSCA should be supported to continue carrying out its valuable work in the Central African Republic by having its mandate extended and, of course, being given all the tools necessary for it to work towards continued, sustainable peace and stability in the Central African Republic.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Adeoye for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Skoog.

**Mr. Skoog:** I am sure that Security Council members will not hear much discrepancy between my briefing and the one given on behalf of the African Union, given how closely we cooperate in this regard.

I want to start by congratulating you, Sir, and Kenya for presiding over the Security Council.

As all know, the European Union (EU) is a long-standing and trusted partner of the Central African Republic. We have mobilized all our available political, humanitarian, development cooperation, security and crisis management instruments through a dedicated security and defence mission whose role is explicitly recognized in the relevant Security Council resolutions. We have also supported peacebuilding activities and the democratic development of the Central African Republic. Our unique engagement has also included a substantive contribution to ensure credibility in the various recent electoral processes.

First of all, let me emphasise that we encourage all regional efforts to achieve lasting peace in the Central African Republic, in particular the adoption of the Luanda road map. In that context, we welcome the important political gesture by President Touadera in announcing a ceasefire last Friday. And I want to acknowledge the presence of President Touadera at

this meeting. All actors, without exception, should immediately cease armed actions.

Today I would like to share our assessment of the progress made, as well as recall some worrisome developments that have persisted in the country since our previous briefing to the Council in June (see S/PV.8802). We have seen some positive political developments, and it is important that they be built upon to create a conducive environment for the critical processes that are unfolding. A new Government committed to reforms has been appointed, and the electoral cycle was finalized in July. Those are two important milestones for the consolidation of democracy in the Central African Republic.

With regard to reform priorities, we specifically note that the Government programme envisages concrete steps in the field of justice and the fight against impunity and corruption. There is recognition of the benefits of opening up the economy, revitalizing the peace process and fostering investments in human capital. We will need to see if those pledges lead to visible, concrete progress. Many challenges and high expectations among the population remain. In that regard, we encourage continuous Government support for the Special Criminal Court and the Commission on Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation.

We also welcome the installation of the organizing committee for the “republican dialogue” on 1 September. The dialogue itself has to be credible and inclusive, and set permanent structures to ensure long-term contact between the parties; that is the only way to bring about a lasting solution to the crisis. The participation of all relevant stakeholders, including the opposition, civil society, minorities, women and youth, is essential for that dialogue to be successful. The European Union is ready to continue to provide advice, support and expertise as part of our mediation support.

Finally, we welcome President Touadera’s commitment to the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, which is the only common and viable framework. The effective implementation of the recommendations made during its evaluation is of utmost importance. That process involves all the signatories and requires close coordination with the guarantors, facilitators and partners. The road map adopted at the Luanda mini-summit, including the swift implementation of the

ceasefire provisions and the recognition that this is a shared obligation, will be especially important.

Maintaining a positive and conducive environment for peacemaking will be crucial. While we have seen those positive political developments in the country, since the most recent briefing to the Council (see S/PV.8802) we have also witnessed some developments on the ground that remain particularly worrying.

In the last few months, we have received several reports of not only violations of human rights and international humanitarian law but also targeted abuse and stigmatization of ethnic and religious minorities committed by armed groups and national armed forces as well as so-called instructors. Such actions are unacceptable. The special commission of inquiry has an important role to play in that regard if its initial findings are taken forward appropriately. That is a first positive signal in the fight against impunity; we now expect concrete follow-up and legal action against those responsible, including from outside the country.

We are also deeply concerned by the human rights and international humanitarian law violations and abuses, including conflict-related sexual violence, attacks on the Fulani community and the increased use of explosive-ordnance devices and mines. International partners such as the European Union, France and MINUSCA have also been the victims of repeated attacks, aggressive campaigns, hate speech and disinformation, as we just heard from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Further, the EU firmly condemns all violations of the status-of-forces agreement against MINUSCA, including limiting the freedom of movement of its troops, which prevents the Mission from fulfilling its mandate. We express our full support to MINUSCA.

We remain concerned by the presence of bilaterally deployed and other security personnel with unclear objectives and targets. Full transparency and coordination between partners in the country is necessary. The authorities of the Central African Republic have to ensure that all stakeholders work in the same spirit and in the same direction, with clear and transparent rules of engagement.

Those strong concerns and expectations were expressed on many occasions to the authorities of the Central African Republic during EU high-level visits in the last months. Together with our international and

regional partners, we expect quick and concrete signals and strong guarantees from the authorities to pursue our engagement in the country.

The Central African Republic remains an extremely fragile country facing an acute humanitarian crisis, with 2.8 million persons in humanitarian need and 712,000 internally displaced. The entire international community must therefore remain mobilized and united and continue to provide an urgent and appropriate response to the pressing humanitarian needs of the country and its people.

The restoration of security in the country is a priority for us; the progressive reinforcement of MINUSCA should make it possible to make a lasting and long-term contribution to securing the territory of the Central African Republic.

However, a lasting solution to the crisis cannot be solely military. Dialogue between the parties and the re-engagement and willingness of armed groups to return to the process after renouncing violence is also crucial. That will need to be accompanied by greater inclusion and a greater role for civil society, especially women, youth and political parties. In that regard, we support the renewed efforts of our partners in the region, the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. We particularly welcome the organization of the summit on the Central African Republic in order to find a lasting solution, and we encourage the harmonization of ongoing initiatives.

In the framework of ongoing programming for our next cooperation period, EU engagement will be based on a renewed and strengthened framework of mutual engagement, in a spirit of full transparency, reciprocal trust and commitment. The EU has been, is and will remain one of the closest partners of the Central African Republic. Through our multidimensional action, we are committed to accompanying the country on the path of reform in the service of the population. We will act in full transparency and expect the same from all friends of the Central African Republic.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Skoog for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Derom.

**Ms. Derom** (*spoke in French*): My name is Pamela Audrey Derom, President of the National Youth Council of the Central African Republic. I am speaking as a young person with the same aspirations as a

young person in Europe, America, Asia or Oceania. I am speaking on behalf of the young people who have been relegated to the sidelines. I am speaking today on behalf of Central African youth, who were ignored during the major consultations and forced to conform to the context imposed on them.

I thank the Security Council for providing this framework for interaction. The methodological approach it has adopted suits us because what is done without us is done against us. When the realities and intentions of young Central Africans, their eyes shining with dreams and hopes, are discussed, the debate is a real one.

In February 2019, I and my team at the National Council of Central African Youth were given the mandate to represent all youth leaders, making me the first woman to occupy this representative position with a sovereign mission to defend the interests of youth in the political context in which we are living at the moment, which is, as Council members know, consequential. Since independence, public discourse, including slander, is intensifying in a development routine that has caused my country to waver. The media have projected a crisis that will last 50 years and promote the idea of an “incapable youth” that is unfit to ensure its own destiny.

These analyses and observations are frightening and un motivating when it comes specifically to projects in the Central African Republic. Notwithstanding those atrocious views, the Central African Republic is changing and changing considerably. Indeed, these changes will be the eternal legacy of the youth of my country. Central African young people have decided to take charge of the change they want, and this has occurred as a result of the commitment of the National Council of Central African Youth to being involved in the peace process. Also worth mentioning are the outreach message of 500 youth activists dedicated to raising awareness on coronavirus disease, the vigilance of a young girl who was one of 800 youth observers during the December 2020 elections and the “no” of young Central Africans during the preliminary consultations for the next “republican dialogue”. Many other actions could be listed to show that Central African youth are part of a paradigm of change.

Let me assure the Council that these changes are real and visible. Within the framework of youth participation and integration into active life, we have

assisted more than 50 young interns in the Ministries and other institutions of the Republic. We have organized intergenerational dialogues, which have been an excellent opportunity to bring the governing class and the governed together in more than six prefectures of the Central African Republic. This initiative will result in proposing a law specific to Central African youth, which is where the commitment of the National Council of Central African Youth lies.

In figures, the need for education is an emergency for young people, and especially for Central African girls. According to the humanitarian report published by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in 2020, the Central African Republic has 1.3 million people in need and requires \$36.1 million in financing to meet basic education needs. Today 70 per cent of the working population are young people with dreams and ambitions for developing their country. My organization has over 44,000 elected members throughout the Central African Republic, which makes us a consequential sovereign body. These figures constitute a kind of pressure and a warning for the years to come.

In my capacity as guarantor of youth, I can assure Council members that we will live up to our responsibility to meet the challenges of the Central African Republic. What is important is to engage young people in a real process of transformation — not to consider them as passive actors of change, but as active ones, no longer as beneficiaries but as partners in the implementation of development projects and programmes.

Central African youth is calling for the Security Council to completely lift the arms embargo. This will allow the State authorities to truly establish State authority and guarantee national integrity.

I would conclude by saying that the Central African Republic needs multilateralism to face the development challenges of this era. The youth of the Central African Republic are counting on the Security Council for peace in their country.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Derom for her briefing.

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

**President Touadera** (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude for the interest that all members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations are showing



in the situation in the Central African Republic. This interest is evident in the increase in troops and assets of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) authorized by resolution 2566 (2021) and in the recent mission, from 11 to 15 October, of members of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) with regard to the sanctions regime, in order to better assess progress made in relation to security, political and economic challenges in my country.

There were challenges when we least expected them. As we were all focused on the implementation in good faith of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation of 6 February 2019 and the preparation of presidential and legislative elections, the arrival on the scene of the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), with its plan to destabilize constitutional institutions and sabotage the electoral process, resulted in a sudden and almost general deterioration of the security situation through systemic violence. Properly sizing up this situation and taking into account the constitutional powers conferred on me for safeguarding territorial integrity and protecting the institutions of the Republic, people and property, I decided to call upon Russian instructors and Rwandan bilateral forces within the framework of our bilateral agreements — and thanks to the authorization of the Security Council.

Accordingly, I would like to reiterate the thanks of the Central African people, because the arrival of the bilateral forces allowed us to readjust our security options around two major strategic axes, which proved conclusive in the light of the results observed. With these strategic options, we were able to optimize the protection of civilian populations, support the provision of humanitarian assistance and the secure the presidential and legislative elections, with the help of MINUSCA forces, on the one hand, and bilateral forces and the Forces armées centrafricaines, on the other, which, together with the support of instructors from the Russian Federation and forces from Rwanda, invested in operations designed to curb the threats of the CPC and reclaim portions of territory under occupation, so as to restore the territorial integrity and authority of the State.

This division of labour was the best way for us to take into account the specificity of the rules of engagement and the mandate of MINUSCA and optimize the complementarity of the forces involved.

However, it has never been our choice to pursue an exclusive military approach indefinitely. That is why the doors to a “republican dialogue” with the political parties and negotiation with the leaders of the armed groups of the CPC have never been closed.

Our military posture, the effective implementation of the MINUSCA mandate and our openness to dialogue remain the mix that has enabled us to implement the electoral calendar. Just after the presidential election was held, in conjunction with finalizing the legislative elections, I therefore initiated consultations for an inclusive “republican dialogue” with all the political stakeholders of the Central African nation. We also supported the initiative of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), which, with the direct involvement of the President of Angola, Mr, João Lourenço, and the support of the States of the region, whom I thank in passing, led to the adoption of the joint road map for peace in the Central African Republic by the Heads of State and Government of the ICGLR on 16 September. The joint road map, which is part of revitalizing the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, refocuses critical priorities around the following six strategic factors.

The first priority is the commitment by armed groups to an immediate cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of their leaders from Central African Republic territory and engagement in the country’s peace process.

Secondly, the Government must declare a ceasefire to reduce the suffering of civilians, restore confidence among the parties and facilitate the free movement of people and goods, as well as enable the necessary security conditions for the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Thirdly, the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration (DDRR) process must be implemented, with an emphasis on the socioeconomic reintegration of former combatants and mobilization of the necessary resources, with the support of the ICGLR and the Economic Community of the Central African States.

Fourthly, security sector reform (SSR) must take place to support the establishment of a professional national army and continued efforts to lift the United Nations arms embargo.

Fifthly, a border security strategy must be developed to ensure that Central African Republic territory is not used as a haven for illegal activities in the region.

Sixthly, there must be a political process and a focus on restoring State authority and supporting the “republican dialogue”.

On 15 October, I declared a unilateral ceasefire and an end to military operations, in accordance with the joint road map. I count on the support of the members of the Security Council in safeguarding the integrity of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation and the joint road map, which cannot succeed without the responsibility of the signatories and the attendant accountability of all parties.

For my part, I have instructed my Government to assess the needs in order to estimate the resources required for the implementation of all the provisions of the road map and the Political Agreement of 6 February 2019, since a delay in funding for implementation would be detrimental to the preservation of those agreements.

To that end, I depend on any help that the members of the Security Council can give, together with the assistance of the organizations and States of the region and the leadership of MINUSCA, in mobilizing the concrete support of the Secretary-General through the implementation of his mandate and the remobilization of international partners.

My ceasefire declaration illustrates once again, if need be, that we have no other ambition than to remobilize all Central Africans to explore a lasting political solution to the crisis that we are experiencing. Successful political and peace processes are therefore both an imperative for inclusive democratic governance and a strategic priority that cuts across all our public policies, given the comprehensive nature of the Political Agreement and the joint road map, which include institutional reforms, including achieving SSR, public security through DDRR and the transformation of armed groups, the disbanding of which remains an essential objective, as well as decentralization and participatory local development. Such a collective effort requires a favourable political and security climate, which we intend to consolidate through the recommendations that will result from the “republican dialogue”.

Consequently, through the “republican dialogue” and by revitalizing the Political Agreement, including the joint road map, we could together achieve the

progress expected by the civilian population, who are suffering from violence, the refugees and displaced persons, who aspire to a free and safe return, our businesses for the revival of the economy and our households for access to basic social services.

In doing that, we do not intend to ignore human rights violations and other serious crimes, because justice is also a social demand to be met. Our will to put an end to chronic impunity is clearly visible through the gradual implementation of transitional justice mechanisms, such as the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Criminal Court. More recently, following the publication of the report on human rights violations by MINUSCA and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, we set up a special commission of inquiry, whose conclusions will receive all the judicial follow-up that they deserve.

We will continue our efforts and work closely with MINUSCA to preserve the security gains made, including in the extension of State authority and the safeguarding of territorial integrity, in cooperation with all States of the subregion. That mandate is still essential to the political and peace processes, as well as the protection of the civilian population and the unrestricted provision of humanitarian assistance. It will be equally essential to the conduct of electoral activities and the security of local elections, which are at the heart of the Political Agreement.

I appeal to the members of the Security Council to unanimously renew the strengthened mandate of MINUSCA. It follows from my introductory statement that tangible progress is being made and political perspectives are being developed with all stakeholders, in consultation with all regional organizations and international partners.

It is our assessment that, with the legendary wisdom of the Security Council, another review of the sanctions regime is possible given the efforts made to achieve the objectives and indicators set for us. We call on the Security Council to evaluate, with considerable flexibility, the burden of the embargo regime in order to take into account the requisite effectiveness of our defence and security forces to tackle any sudden threat and not to depend exclusively on bilateral arrangements so as to guarantee the territorial integrity of one of the most fragile regions of the continent. Members can count on our solemn commitment before the Security

Council to accelerate the achievement of the objectives, criteria and benchmarks.

Consequently, through me, the Government and the people of the Central African Republic reiterate their request for the lifting of the arms embargo. We continue to call for the unanimous and tireless support of all members of the Security Council for lasting peace and security in the Central African Republic.

**The President:** I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mrs. Broadhurst Estival** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic; the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union; the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and Ms. Pamela Audrey Derom, civil society representative, for their briefings.

I also welcome President Faustin Archange Touadera to today's meeting, following his announcement on 15 October of an immediate ceasefire in the Central African Republic.

France welcomes that announcement, which, as we know, is the outcome of several months of efforts by States of the subregion, in particular Angola and Rwanda. It is an extremely encouraging sign, which, if followed up with action, will enable the Central African Republic, with the support of the international community, to resume its path to stability and development. However, the most challenging task remains. All parties must fully respect the ceasefire. France therefore calls on all armed groups, the armed forces of the Central African Republic and all forces present in the country to put an immediate end to the fighting.

France is ready to propose to the Security Council new individual sanctions on those who violate the ceasefire. The international community will play an important role in ensuring respect for the ceasefire. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) should play an active role by using all means in its mandate, as well as regional mediation efforts and its good offices, to facilitate dialogue among the parties to the conflict. I take this opportunity to

thank the Special Representative for his commitment to reconciliation in the Central African Republic.

With the ceasefire now in place, the time for dialogue and peace must follow the fighting. That dialogue must be sincere and inclusive. Above all, it requires an immediate and definitive end to violence against the civilian population, which is key for reconciliation in the Central African Republic. The presence of the Wagner Group in the Central African Republic is extremely destabilizing. It is a factor that leads to war, not to peace. There is mounting evidence of the atrocities committed by the Group. Extrajudicial arrests, summary executions, sexual and gender-based violence, threats against human rights defenders and obstacles to humanitarian work are all unacceptable and documented in the report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic (see S/2021/569) and the joint report by MINUSCA and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/867) under consideration today.

Furthermore, the Wagner Group takes advantage of its position to carry out systematic exploitation of natural resources. Such resources should benefit the economy of the Central African Republic. I therefore call for the removal of ambiguity in United Nations reports caused by references to "other security personnel", which is confusing. If such personnel were bilaterally deployed and notified to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), concerning the Central African Republic, then the State in question should take full responsibility for those atrocities. If atrocities were committed by Wagner Group mercenaries, the Sanctions Committee has never been notified of their presence, which is not in line with the embargo renewed by the Council in July.

With regard to the statement by the Minister of Justice of the Central African Republic on 1 October, which acknowledged those atrocities, France calls on the authorities of the Central African Republic to ensure that there is no impunity for those responsible for the atrocities and that they be brought to justice swiftly. More broadly, it has implications for the future of the Central African Republic and will pave the way for reconciliation in the new chapter.

Next month, we will renew the MINUSCA mandate. As recalled, MINUSCA is the best ally of the Central African Republic — everyone must know that. It has

played a key role in countering the offensives of the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement last winter. It is the only mission with the legitimacy, skills and resources to support the strengthening of institutions and the army of the Central African Republic. It has the support of other partners, such as the European Union. However, MINUSCA cannot work when it is subjected to slander on social media and in the press and when faced with violations of the status-of-forces agreement, which place Blue Helmets in direct danger. France therefore calls on the Government of the Central African Republic to do its utmost to rebuild trust with MINUSCA.

France will propose a draft resolution that will take into account the new political and security situation, but also underscore the need to very swiftly implement the increased troop ceiling, as agreed by the Council in March. We hope to have the input of all members of the Council.

**Mr. Ladeb** (Tunisia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council — Kenya, the Niger and Tunisia — as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1).

The A3+1 appreciates the presence of His Excellency Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera, President of the Central African Republic, and thanks him for his statement.

I thank Mr. Mankeur Ndiaye, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his informative briefing on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). I also thank Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union; Ambassador Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, and Ms. Pamela Audrey Derom, President of the Conseil National de la Jeunesse Centrafricaine, for their equally insightful briefings.

We commend the leadership of Special Representative Ndiaye and express our strong support to MINUSCA in discharging its mandate effectively amid an increasingly challenging environment. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2021/867).

We will focus on four main points in our statement, namely, the political situation, security challenges

and the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic, as well as the renewal of the MINUSCA mandate. But before that, on behalf of the A3+1, let me welcome President Touadera's announcement of a ceasefire on 15 October. We call upon the armed groups to follow suit. We encourage all parties to abide by the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation and cease hostilities.

On the political front, we note with satisfaction the Government-led efforts on, and commitment to, the organization of the "republican dialogue". We encourage the authorities of the Central African Republic to forge ahead with that process. In that respect, we support the efforts of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region aimed at organizing an inclusive dialogue that will pave the way for long-term stability in the Central African Republic.

We underscore the necessity of ensuring the implementation of the Political Agreement, which we believe remains a fundamental tool to unlock stability, security, peace and economic development in the Central African Republic. The A3+1 is encouraged by the active engagement of President Touadera with regional organizations and neighbouring countries aimed at further strengthening their cooperation and helping support the peace process in the Central African Republic.

We believe that regional organizations, mainly the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States, in their capacity as guarantors of the Political Agreement, and out of the need for African solutions to African problems, play a very important role and contribute effectively to advancing the peace process. In that regard, we equally appreciate the constructive efforts of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and other partners for their unwavering support to the peace process in the Central African Republic.

We note with satisfaction the adoption of a new calendar for the next municipal, regional and senatorial elections. We encourage adherence to the voter registration schedule, which will allow for the participation of internally displaced persons, refugee returnees and young adults. The full, equal and meaningful participation of women is of equal importance to the electoral process. We consider that to be a positive step towards strengthening an inclusive democratic process in the Central African Republic.



On the security front, we are deeply concerned about the volatile situation in the west and centre of the Central African Republic, which has resulted in civilian casualties. We have high expectations that the recently announced ceasefire will contribute to stabilizing the tense security situation.

Furthermore, we welcome the Government-led activities, with the support of MINUSCA, in the areas of security sector reform and national reconciliation, as well as justice and rule-of-law reform and disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation. Those are encouraging steps on the path towards consolidating good governance and democratic institutions.

Nevertheless, we remain deeply concerned about the reported increase, during the reporting period, in cases of serious human rights and international humanitarian law violations against vulnerable and internally displaced persons, as well as incidents of conflict-related sexual violence, child recruitment and continued threats and attacks against the civilian population, humanitarian actors and United Nations peacekeepers.

The A3+1 strongly denounces the reported disinformation campaigns, hate speech and targeted attacks against MINUSCA and other international partners of the Central African Republic. We call on Government authorities to fast-track investigations of such violations and abuses and bring the perpetrators to justice. In that regard, we commend MINUSCA's efforts to support the authorities of the Central African Republic in ensuring transitional justice and the protection of victims and combating impunity.

The prevailing hostile security environment has gravely impacted the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic, where the civilian population bears the brunt of the sustained tensions and increased armed violence in several parts of the country, leading to an increase in violence, forced displacement and human rights violations. We are also deeply concerned about the ever-growing threat of incidents involving explosive devices, particularly in the west of the country.

Against that backdrop, we salute the efforts of all humanitarian actors who are fulfilling their duties to assist people in need in such a challenging environment, and we urge international and regional donors and partners of the Central African Republic to fill the funding gap in order to sustain the humanitarian activities.

Before we conclude, we commend MINUSCA's efforts to protect civilians in accordance with its mandate and encourage the Mission's engagement with all stakeholders in order to improve coordination between MINUSCA and national defence forces.

In the light of MINUSCA's upcoming mandate renewal, the A3+1 supports, in principle, the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate for one year, until 15 November 2022, and stresses the importance of providing the Mission with sufficient and robust capacities and resources so as to enable it to effectively discharge its mandate.

In conclusion, the A3+1 believes that the road to sustainable peace is not easy and that violence can lead but to violence. We call on all parties in the Central African Republic to prioritize the interests of their country, put an end to the suffering of the people and engage constructively in dialogue in order to stabilize the situation. The people of the Central African Republic deserve to live in peace and security and have the right to enjoy sustainable development and sustained prosperity.

**Ms. Heimerback** (Norway): I also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ndiaye, Mr. Skoog, Commissioner Adeoye and Ms. Derom for their briefings, and we appreciate the participation and remarks by President Touadera in today's meeting.

Like others, Norway welcomes the unilateral ceasefire announced by President Touadera last Friday. We commend his choice to give peace a chance. We urge all armed groups, particularly the members of the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement (CPC) that have not yet acceded to the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic — the Front populaire pour la renaissance de Centrafrique and the Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique — to follow the Government's example and join the ceasefire.

This ceasefire could not be timelier. Since our most recent meeting to discuss the Central African Republic (see S/PV.8802), the situation has further deteriorated, as confirmed by the visit to Bangui and Bria last week by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), concerning the Central African Republic. The ceasefire could be the first step towards bringing an end to the violence. Yet it must go hand in hand with ending the obstruction of the mandate implementation of the United Nations

Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and ensuring an inclusive political dialogue.

The Secretary-General's most recent report (S/2021/867) also confirms the worsening security situation, as well as ongoing violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law. All parties are to blame — the CPC first and foremost. But, as the joint MINUSCA/Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights report published in August shows, the Forces armées centrafricaines (FACA) and their Russian allies from the Wagner Group were responsible for almost half of the verified incidents, which involved nearly 500 victims. Persistent reports about the targeting of minorities are also worrisome. The number of conflict-related sexual violence incidents has increased sharply by 136 per cent. The civilian population must be protected. All parties must stop the violence and respect human rights and international humanitarian law.

Norway commends the region for its efforts to push the political process forward. The ceasefire is a direct result of the third mini-summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) on the Central African Republic and the joint road map. We are very grateful for the efforts of Angola and Congo, in their capacities as Chairpersons of the ICGLR and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The ceasefire must now pave the way for a political solution. After months of preparations for a dialogue, it is time to start the real work. The “republican dialogue” should be genuinely inclusive. The political opposition, women, civil society and armed groups that renounce violence must be involved. We encourage the United Nations, the African Union, the ICGLR, ECCAS and all other stakeholders, including the members of the Council, to intensify their efforts to bring about a political solution to the conflict.

The Government authorities must also use the momentum created by the ceasefire to start improving relations with MINUSCA. Over the past few months, the Mission continued to be deliberately obstructed and intimidated by FACA and Russian mercenaries. That is totally unacceptable, and we urge the Central African Republic authorities and anyone with influence over armed actors in the country to help stop violations of the status-of-forces agreement and to ensure safe, unhindered and timely humanitarian access.

In conclusion, let me express our support for the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), concerning the Central African Republic, and the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic. It is important that this work, which is mandated by the Security Council, be able to continue. We are concerned by the delays in the appointment of new experts and encourage a swift resolution of the issue.

**Mr. Ragutthalli** (India): At the outset, let me join others in acknowledging the presence of His Excellency Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera, President of the Central African Republic, and thank him for his briefing. I also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mankeur Ndiaye for his briefing regarding progress on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the update on the recent political developments in the Central African Republic. I extend our appreciation to Ambassador Bankole Adeoye and Ambassador Olof Skoog for their respective briefings. I also thank the civil society briefer, Ms. Pamela Derom, for her insights.

Since our meeting in June this year (see S/PV.8802), important political developments have taken place in the Central African Republic. The successful conclusion of the electoral cycle; the formation of the new Government, with increased representation of women; the holding of the second ordinary session of the National Assembly; and the progressive extension of State authority and rule of law institutions are indeed positive signs and reflect serious efforts being made on the ground. We appreciate the role played by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) in supporting the electoral process and the ongoing assistance for the preparations for the local elections scheduled for next year.

There is also forward movement on the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic and related issues. President Touadera announced a unilateral nationwide ceasefire a few days ago. That is an important step and the fulfilment of a commitment made at the third mini-summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), held last month in Luanda. The announcement provides an opening for all stakeholders, including the signatory armed groups, and could positively impact the “republican dialogue”. We hope that the armed

groups will respond by giving up arms and engaging in dialogue. We commend and support the role consistently played by the leadership of the ICGLR and the Economic Community of Central African States in ensuring the commitment of the countries of the region to finding a lasting solution in the Central African Republic and the region. We continue to underscore that the peace agreement is the only way forward to achieve national reconciliation and bring political stability to the country.

The appointments of several women leaders, including as the President of the Commission on Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation, is another positive development.

While those developments deserve our collective appreciation, we cannot ignore the fact that the security situation remains fragile and volatile. A state of perpetual insecurity exists in the areas of offensive operations and violence-prone areas. The lives of ordinary civilians, particularly women and children, have worsened with increased displacement and abuses. The halt in offensive operations and the “republican dialogue” should provide respite to affected populations and an opportunity for the international community and the United Nations to scale up the humanitarian assistance. There is also a need to expedite the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation and security sector reform. The support of MINUSCA and the Central African Republic’s international partners will be important even as the peace process gains traction.

We also note with concern incidents violating the status-of-forces of agreement and call on the Central African Republic authorities to proactively address that issue. At this critical juncture, it is important that both MINUSCA and the Central African Republic authorities cooperate purposefully and work in harmony. Resolution 2589 (2021), adopted by the Council in August 2021, requested the Secretary-General to report on certain key tasks reflected in the same resolution concerning crimes against peacekeepers. We look forward to inclusion of those issues in the upcoming MINUSCA reports. We also reiterate that the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System should be applied uniformly to all components of the Mission.

In conclusion, peace in the Central African Republic has been elusive so far, but the recent developments on the ground give reason to be hopeful. We need to

acknowledge the efforts made by the Government and support all genuine efforts towards peace and the extension of State authority.

**Mr. Dang** (Viet Nam): I welcome the participation of the President of the Central African Republic in today’s meeting. I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ndiaye, Ambassador Adeoye, Ambassador Skoog and Ms. Derom for their briefings.

Hostility, poverty, displacement, sexual exploitation and abuse, the new threat of explosive ordnance, among others, have continued to claim lives and exacerbate the predicaments of the people of the Central African Republic, especially women and children.

Viet Nam shares the serious concern over the sufferings of the Central African Republic people. It is estimated that 3.1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance; 2.2 million of them are in dire need. We also take this opportunity to reiterate our strong condemnation of attacks against civilians and humanitarian actors, as that concerning trend has been on the rise since the beginning of the year.

On the political front, my delegation notes with encouragement commitments made by the Central African Republic authorities and the aspirations for peace and development of its people. Those are manifested by the establishment of the new Government, with the increased participation of women and the successful conclusion of legislative elections. Particularly, we welcome the nationwide ceasefire announced by President Touadera on 15 October with a view to giving priority to the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, the preparation for the “republican dialogue” and the protection of civilians. In that regard, my delegation urges all actors to follow suit. In order to achieve sustainable peace and development for the Central African Republic people, there is undoubtedly no other way than rebuilding trust and promoting dialogue among the parties concerned.

We also encourage stronger efforts with respect to the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform programmes, which are key components of the success of the peace process in the country.

My delegation greatly values the role of regional cooperation in conflict prevention and resolution. Owing to their knowledge of the region, regional and

subregional organizations — such as African Union, the Economic Community of the Central African States and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) — are well positioned in promoting confidence, trust and dialogue among concerned parties, thereby finding the way to settle the root causes of conflict.

Accordingly, we commend the high-level engagement between ICGLR countries and the adoption of the Luanda joint road map for peace in September 2021 to help revitalize the peace process in the Central African Republic. We believe that steps are being taken to realize the road map and look forward to further coordination among regional countries in that regard.

On the question of sanctions, we believe that those measures are implemented as a temporary tool for promoting conditions conducive to the maintenance of international peace and security and should be lifted when conditions allow. Regular reviews are needed to ensure their effectiveness and impact on the long-term objective of peace and security. The recent visit of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic showed the Council's effort towards that end.

The support of the international community is indispensable to alleviating the difficulties of the people of the Central African Republic and to bringing hope to future generations. We recognize the important role played by MINUSCA and the vital support of other international partners with a view to helping bolster the capacity of the Government of the Central African Republic to extend State authority, ensure the rule of law and the protection of civilians. Most favourable conditions should be created to assist the mission in discharging its mandate and to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers on the ground.

In conclusion, my delegation joins others in stressing the need for sustained and coordinated international assistance to the people of the Central African Republic in their search for stability and development.

**Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield** (United States of America): Let me start by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ndiaye. It is great to see him again and I thank him for his briefing, which clearly conveys the enormity of the challenges confronting the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) ahead of next month's mandate renewal.

I would also like to welcome Central African Republic President Touadera and thank him for his leadership in declaring last week's ceasefire. I hope that represents a real turning point in the conflict in the Central African Republic; in fact — for the sake of the people of the Central African Republic — it has to. I also thank Commissioner Adeoye and Ambassador Skoog for their respective efforts and Pamela Derom for her tireless efforts since the Bangui Forum and for speaking to us today. I would also like to give a special thank you — and we all should pause for a moment — to the women and men of MINUSCA for the Mission's leadership and to the troop- and police-contributing countries for their commitment to peace, security and stability in the Central African Republic. We honour and remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Today I would like to briefly discuss four points: the ceasefire announced last week, our concerns about recent human rights violations and abuses and allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, the work of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic, and the future of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic.

First, the United States welcomes the important ceasefire announcement. We call on all armed actors to lay down weapons immediately and recommit to the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation. In building on this positive step, we reiterate our commitment to working alongside with the Central African authorities, the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and other partners to support a peace process. We hope that this will include an inclusive and credible dialogue necessary for Central Africans to resolve questions of identity, end the violence and build a better future for their children.

Secondly, the United States remains deeply concerned about reports of human rights violations and abuses against civilians, including those apparently directed at Muslim communities. MINUSCA investigations reveal that most civilian deaths in the past four months have been the result of indiscriminate, disproportionate and excessive use of force by the Forces armées centrafricaines (FACA) and what the Secretary-General refers to throughout his report as “bilaterally deployed and other security forces” (*S/2021/867, para. 9*).



We all know what this term refers to — Russian-supported mercenaries invited by the Government of the Central African Republic. Reports indicate that FACA and individuals notified by the Russian Federation to the Central African Republic sanctions committee as “instructors” have committed numerous violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of human rights in the name of supporting the Government of the Central African Republic. We hope that the announcement of last week’s ceasefire will bring those activities to a permanent halt.

The Government of the Central African Republic has taken an important step in investigating those deeply disturbing allegations and recognizing that perpetrators include so-called Russian support forces. Now, it must provide more detail on crimes identified and hold perpetrators accountable. In addition, Russia must hold its citizens accountable for crimes committed in the Central African Republic — something the country’s Government officials have said they expect Russia to do.

In a similar vein, we must press for justice for those harmed by United Nations peacekeepers. I commend the Secretary-General for following the procedures and due process outlined in resolution 2272 (2016). We strongly encourage the Office of Internal Oversight Services to continue interviewing victims and to help ensure that they receive the support they require. We also encourage all troop- and police-contributing countries with pending cases to take immediate action and ensure accountability for such offenses.

Thirdly, we are concerned that the work of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic has been blocked. The Council approved the Panel to ensure independent reporting on the situation in the Central African Republic, and we urge the swift resolution of any concerns that some Council members may have so that the Council can resume that important work.

Lastly, I want to underscore that the only durable solution to the crisis in the Central African Republic is through the full implementation of the 2019 peace agreement and inclusive political dialogue. We welcome progress towards the organization of a political dialogue and contributions by regional leaders. We urge all partners to align their efforts to support the peace agreement, which would permit humanitarian assistance to reach civilians in dire need. The civilians of the Central African Republic deserve a political

solution that will provide peace and prosperity to all and that will save lives. They have suffered far too long. Let us hope that last Friday’s ceasefire announcement is the first step towards that bright future.

**Mr. Ochoa Martínez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the briefings by Mr. Ndiaye, Special Representative of the Secretary-General; Mr. Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union; Mr. Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and civil society representative Ms. Derom.

Mexico welcomed the announcement of a unilateral ceasefire by President Touadera last Friday, to whom we are grateful for his briefing and whom we welcome at this meeting. The ceasefire is a gesture that gives reason for hope and that together, with preparations for the “republican dialogue”, reopens the way towards reconciliation following the continued deterioration of the security situation resulting from the actions of the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement.

The armed groups of the Central African Republic must now respond positively to the Government’s call to re-establish adherence to the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. Mexico calls on regional and subregional organizations to pursue their efforts towards an inclusive dialogue in which Central African women will enjoy full, equal and meaningful participation. We also call on neighbouring countries to contribute to that process and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Central African Republic to end the conflict, in which the main victim has been the civilian population.

My country believes that in order for the ceasefire to contribute to breaking the cycle of violence, all actors in the Central African Republic must work on three central issues.

First, it is imperative to improve coordination between the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the Government. We note with concern how violations of the status-of-forces agreement and campaigns seeking to discredit MINUSCA’s work have persisted in recent months. It is also discouraging to note that some aspects of the Mission’s mandate have not made significant progress, owing, inter alia, to a lack of dialogue with the authorities.

Mexico believes that MINUSCA and the Government of the Central African Republic must review the priorities of the Mission in order to prioritize the most important ones related to the current circumstances. In that regard, the Government elected by the Central African people must lead the way in upholding its international obligations and its commitments linked to the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation.

My country is convinced that the Central African authorities will know how to take advantage of the resources made available by the international community through MINUSCA to support the operationalization of the State and prevent the institutional vacuum from being filled by those who have made violence their way of life. In that regard, Mexico supports the extension of MINUSCA's mandate, as proposed by the Secretary-General in his most recent report (S/2021/867).

Secondly, we believe that it is particularly important to resolve the problems that are delaying the implementation of the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programme and the special mixed security units. The success of those programmes is the best incentive to encourage members of armed groups to renounce violence and contribute to strengthening the security sector. Mexico therefore calls on all actors concerned to marshal the necessary human and financial resources for making progress in that area.

Thirdly, we call on the authorities of the Central African Republic to cooperate closely with MINUSCA to improve the arms and ammunition control system in the country, in accordance with international standards. The creation of a coherent information system on stockpiles and ammunition, as well as the development of the needed infrastructure and technical equipment to exercise effective control over weapons in the hands of the security forces, are simply imperative.

Those actions are aimed at preventing weapons from being diverted to the enemies of the State and building its military superiority over armed groups. In parallel, work must be done with neighbouring countries to improve border controls and prevent weapons from continuing to flow illegally to armed groups. That entails tackling in a coordinated manner the financing model used by those groups to equip themselves, which is based on the illegal exploitation of natural resources. We call on all actors to respect the arms embargo imposed by the Council.

In conclusion, Mexico condemns the alarming increase in incidents involving explosive devices, given their appalling humanitarian consequences. We condemn in the strongest terms the attacks carried out against humanitarian personnel and human rights violations, particularly acts of conflict-related sexual violence. We urge the authorities of the Central African Republic to investigate and punish all those responsible for the incidents documented by MINUSCA. Reconciliation will be possible only if built on justice for the victims of the conflict in the Central African Republic.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I would like to thank all our briefers — Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ndiaye, Ambassador Adeoye, Ambassador Skoog and Ms. Derom — for their presentations. We also welcome the participation of President Touadera and support the findings set out in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/867).

I should like to make four points.

First, the United Kingdom welcomes President Touadera's announcement on Friday of a unilateral ceasefire. We now urge the President to press for real progress on the peace process. It is imperative that all political actors, including the Government, armed groups and the opposition, move ahead with a constructive and inclusive national dialogue. A fully inclusive and sustained peace process is critical if the Central African Republic is to attain lasting peace and security. The United Kingdom welcomes regional engagement and also welcomes the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region joint road map announced in September.

Secondly, like France, the United States and others here, the United Kingdom remains concerned by credible reports of human rights abuses committed by the Russian mercenary group Wagner in the Central African Republic. Those abuses are not only wrong; they are a driver of conflict and undermine the vital work of international peacekeepers and the authorities of the Central African Republic. Wagner does not offer long-term security answers in Africa. The United Kingdom joins other Council members in calling for a full investigation of their human rights abuses and in stressing that their activities must comply fully with the United Nations arms embargo.

Thirdly, the increase in violence perpetrated by armed groups that are signatories to the Political

Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic is unacceptable. The United Kingdom is ready to agree appropriate measures, including United Nations sanctions, in response. Higher levels of violence contribute to the increase in the number of internally displaced people and food insecurity and cause further harm to the civilian population.

Finally, we are concerned by continued reports of status-of-forces-agreement violations, which hinder the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) in the execution of its mandate. The sustained and coordinated disinformation campaigns against the United Nations and the Mission are unacceptable. We call on the Government of the Central African Republic to work with MINUSCA to ensure that the agreements are fully implemented and respected.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that this moment, following the ceasefire announcement, is an opportunity to advance peace and security for the people of the Central African Republic. In that context, MINUSCA's role in the country remains critical, and I welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend MINUSCA's mandate.

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland) (*spoke in French*): I, too, wish to thank the briefers for their important contributions this morning. I wish to extend particular recognition to Ms. Derom, whose presence here today demonstrates the continued desire of the people of the Central African Republic to see the advent of peace and security in the country. I also wish to thank President Touadera for his presence here this morning.

We are meeting here today at a time of hope that represents a unique opportunity for the people of the Central African Republic. We welcome the adoption of the joint road map for peace during the recent mini-summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. The announcement made by President Touadera of an immediate ceasefire on 15 October has created a space for dialogue. I echo the Secretary-General in calling upon all stakeholders to immediately respect that ceasefire. Such a letting up in the conflict could provide the people of the Central African Republic with the opportunity to have a society that lives in security, which is the society that they deserve. That would also enable armed groups and the Government to take additional measures to move towards a future

of peace. We cannot let this opportunity slip through our fingers.

The 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic remains vital to achieving a just and lasting peace in the Central African Republic. All stakeholders in the country must commit to the implementation of the agreement in an inclusive fashion and in such a way that guarantees the full participation of women, ethnic and religious minorities and young people. The work done at the regional level, which has made a significant contribution to the ceasefire, has been and will continue to be vital in that process. The Council must continue to support such work.

We also welcome the adoption of a timetable for local elections. The people of the Central African Republic have time and again expressed their desire to exercise their democratic right to vote. All citizens must exercise their right to vote in a climate of absolute security, and I call upon all stakeholders in the Central African Republic to respect that right.

At this critical juncture, I encourage the authorities to recognize the invaluable contribution made by women — a contribution that, I would say, women have always made — to society in the Central African Republic. I underscore the importance of doing everything possible to seize this opportunity to encourage and support the full and significant participation of women as voters, candidates and elected officials.

(*spoke in English*)

I want to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ndiaye and the staff of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) for their work in the country in a significantly challenged environment. I also call for an immediate and definitive end to violations of the status-of-forces agreement.

The civilian population has borne the burden of insecurity and violence in the Central African Republic. Humanitarian needs in the country remain significant. With nearly two thirds of the population depending on humanitarian assistance, it is imperative that during this cessation of hostilities the Government and all armed actors in the country ensure unimpeded humanitarian access.

There is no doubt that grave violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, including conflict-related sexual violence, have been committed during this most recent period of insecurity. We are deeply concerned by continuing allegations of violations and abuses perpetrated by national and bilaterally deployed and other security personnel. We welcome the action that the authorities of the Central African Republic have taken in establishing the commission of inquiry and the release of the resulting summary report.

We urge the Government to ensure that the perpetrators of all such abuses and violations are held fully accountable, regardless of their nationality or affiliation. If insecurity is to be seriously tackled, there simply can be no place for impunity.

Ireland is deeply troubled by reports and allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in the Central African Republic.

We welcome the action taken by the United Nations in response to serious allegations last month. We encourage further examination and strengthening of prevention and accountability measures at the Mission. The United Nations must ensure that all victims and survivors are given the assistance, protection and justice that are their right.

Sanctions are an important tool utilized by the Security Council to support the restoration of peace and security in the Central African Republic. I reiterate Ireland's support for the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), which visited the Central African Republic last week. We offer our appreciation for the essential work of the Panel of Experts, and we look forward to the appointment of experts to this important panel with the hope that delays to this process will end swiftly.

As we seek to end conflict, hope and opportunity are precious commodities. This ceasefire offers both, but hope and opportunity are not inexhaustible resources. Now more than ever, peace must be pursued with determination by all parties to create the future deserved and sought out by the citizens of the Central African Republic.

**Mr. Jürgenson** (Estonia): I thank Special Representative Ndiaye for briefing us today on the latest developments in the Central African Republic. I also thank the other briefers for their invaluable insights and

welcome His Excellency President Touadera for joining us today.

I would like to begin by welcoming the declaration of the ceasefire by President Touadera last Friday. This positive momentum gives impetus to prospects for peace and stability in the country. In appreciating this moment, however, we remain concerned at the number of human rights violations and abuses committed in the Central African Republic. The reported cases on the excessive use of force, indiscriminate killings of civilians and conflict-related sexual violence against women and children describe well the severity of the situation on the ground. We strongly condemn these violations, which have been committed by all perpetrators, including armed groups, the national armed forces and their Russian partners. In this regard, we hope that the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic will soon be fully operational to continue their valuable work in assisting the Security Council on the implementation of the sanctions measures.

Furthermore, we take this opportunity to commend the good offices of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) in ensuring protection of the civilians and in supporting the peace process. It is regrettable that, in carrying out their mandate, MINUSCA peacekeepers and the United Nations personnel are subjected to hate speech, restrictions to their freedom of movement and other unacceptable incidents, by national forces and their partners, in violation of the status-of-forces agreement. However, this significantly impairs the capacity to protect civilians or respond to their humanitarian needs. Accordingly, we encourage the Government of the Central African Republic, acting in the best interests of the population, to facilitate cooperation with MINUSCA and address the disinformation campaigns targeting United Nations personnel.

Finally, we find it important to underline the central role the Government of the Central African Republic plays in ensuring accountability and bringing perpetrators to justice. We encourage the Government to advance essential reforms, most importantly in the security sector and in the areas of good governance and the rule of law, with full, equal and meaningful participation of women in political processes.



In conclusion, I thank the Special Representative for his tireless efforts and support in contributing to the peace process in the Central African Republic.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mankeur Ndiaye, Bankole Adeoye and Olof Skoog for their briefings. We also listened attentively to Pamela Derom. We also welcome the participation of the President of the Central African Republic, His Excellency Mr. Faustin Archange Touadera, in today's meeting. His thoughts are particularly important for the Security Council's consideration of the situation in his country.

We are carefully following the developments in Central African Republic. We are convinced that the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic of 6 February 2019 is a basis for achieving security and a stable peace in the country. We note the efforts of the authorities, in particular the new Government, which includes members of the armed groups signatories to the Political Agreement, aimed at implementing the "republican dialogue" initiated by President Touadera. What is important is that the authorities are intent on ensuring the principle of inclusiveness and that the road map for dialogue envisions the possibility of engaging the illegal armed groups that exited the Khartoum agreement in this process. We welcome the ceasefire announced by President Touadera on 15 October in this regard.

We are seeing that the number of civil servants is being increased in the regions. The number of judiciary bodies and of police officers deployed around the country has increased. Work has begun on preparing municipal elections that are planned for September 2022. We support all these efforts that are aimed at normalizing the situation in the country. This has been made possible by the fact that the Forces armées centrafricaines were able to push back the insurgent forces, limit the possibility of their mounting offensive operations and continuing armed struggle, and in general stabilize the situation.

At the same time, the alliance of illegal armed groups called the Coalition des patriotes pour le changement has not desisted from its plans to seize power by force. Bearing that in mind, we think that it is important to contribute in every way to strengthening the legitimately elected authorities of the Central African Republic. It is clear that the international community's comprehensive and coordinated support

for the authorities of the Central African Republic must be continued. We welcome the active participation of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Economic Community of Central African States in the efforts of the United Nations and other foreign partners of Bangui aimed at stabilizing the situation in the country.

In that regard, we commend the outcome of the third mini-summit of States members of the ICGLR, which took place on 16 September in Luanda. During that meeting, next steps on implementing the road map proposed by the Angolan side to ensure peace in the Central African Republic were charted. It is important that any mediation initiatives by subregional organizations be implemented with the consent and participation of the Government of the Central African Republic.

We believe that, without providing effective support to the Government of the country in enhancing the combat effectiveness of its national armed forces, it will take a long time to overcome the internal crisis. We are convinced that a strong army and robust law-enforcement bodies are essential to ensuring a long-term improvement of the situation in the Central African Republic.

We believe that the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) must be an important element in ensuring security in the country, bearing in mind the functions that have been entrusted to the peacekeepers, including to counter illegal armed groups as part of their task of protecting the civilian population. We are in favour of a closer coordination between MINUSCA, Bangui and bilateral partners on the ground. We are convinced that the full implementation of the mandate of a peacekeeping mission is possible only by maintaining mutual trust with the authorities of the host country.

We also firmly believe that, in selecting additional troops to be sent to MINUSCA in accordance with resolution 2566 (2021), the Secretariat must coordinate closely with Bangui and give due consideration to the views of the Central African people, including with respect to the national composition of the military and police personnel to be sent.

However, it must be understood that a peacekeeping mission cannot, and should not, replace the efforts of the national authorities. It is they that bear the main responsibility for the fate of their country and the

protection of their population. In that regard, capacity-building for the Central African people must continue. Implementing that task is frankly being hampered by the arms embargo regime. We once again draw the attention of our colleagues on the Security Council to the need to heed the calls of the Central African Republic and regional partners to lift restrictions on Bangui.

At the request of the Central African Republic's authorities and with the knowledge of the relevant Security Council sanctions committee, Russian instructors are working in the Central African Republic. They have successfully upgraded the level of professional training of Central African law enforcement personnel, which has helped to stabilize the military situation in the country.

We once again reiterate that Russian instructors are not taking part in hostilities. Any possible cases of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights should be investigated by the national authorities. We have a close and mutually respectful dialogue with them. If any information is passed on to us by the law enforcement authorities of the Central African Republic regarding specific incidents, it will be carefully studied.

As for the accusations made by our colleagues on the Security Council, we once again remind them to pay attention to the egregious cases of human rights violations and international humanitarian law by their own military and private companies. They should also analyse the results of their long-standing military involvement in military campaigns in Africa, Afghanistan, Iraq and other parts of the world.

I would like to reiterate that the Central African Republic is not a platform for confrontation but a unique opportunity to jointly help a country in extremely difficult circumstances. Russia will continue to be open to cooperation with all constructive forces. We are certain that we have every opportunity to establish such cooperation without any dividing lines and with a balance of interests. Fighting against extremists and stabilizing the situation in the Central African Republic and other countries is our common task. It is our firm conviction that in today's world there is no place for neocolonial practices, economic blackmail, pitting neighbours against each other or attempts to dictate to sovereign States with whom cooperation can or cannot

be established, including military cooperation. That mentoring attitude is convincing fewer and fewer States.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I welcome President Touadera to today's meeting, and I thank him for his statement. I also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ndiaye; Mr. Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union; and Ambassador Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, for their briefings. I also listened to the statement by the Central African Republic civil-society representative.

At present, the overall political and security situation in the Central African Republic is moving in a positive direction. The Government of the Central African Republic has taken a series of important initiatives aimed at post-conflict reconstruction. The international community should step up its support to help the Central African Republic embark on the path to development and nation-building.

In connection with the report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/867), I wish to make the following points.

First, the political process must continue to be strengthened. Currently, the functioning of State institutions in the Central African Republic is gradually returning to normal, with the local administrations and security sector continuing to gain strength. Next year will see the first local elections in more than 30 years. China welcomes the steady progress made in restoring State authority and promoting national political life.

On 15 October, President Touadera declared a ceasefire. That is an important decision made by the Government of the Central African Republic in the greater interest of national peace and development. China welcomes that initiative and hopes that a general ceasefire can be attained. We encourage the parties concerned to take an active part in the "republican dialogue" and step up the implementation of the peace agreement through concrete actions. Peace and development in the Central African Republic are closely linked to the prosperity and stability of the region.

China has taken note that the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region convened several mini-summits and drew up a road map for the Central African Republic. We support the good offices of regional organizations carried out on the

basis of the actual conditions and needs of the Central African Republic in order to move the political process forward along the right path. In turn, the international community should provide targeted assistance based on respect for the leadership of the Government of the Central African Republic.

Secondly, there must be strong support for the Government of the Central African Republic in strengthening its capacity-building. The Government of the Central African Republic has responded positively to international concerns over areas such as security sector reform, the protection of the civilians and fighting impunity, among others, and has taken a series of important measures to that end. However, maintaining national security and protecting civilians must ultimately depend on the strength of the country itself. As the security threat from armed groups wanes, the international community, in particular the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), should shift the focus towards helping the Government of the Central African Republic to restore State authority, promote the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and facilitate judicial institution-building. It is particularly important to help the Central African Republic enhance its own strength in maintaining stability so as to lay a solid foundation for post-conflict reconstruction.

Thirdly, it is important to help the Central African Republic to stabilize its economy. At present, the country faces multiple challenges, including economic difficulties, the worsening fiscal situation, a shortage of food and the coronavirus disease pandemic. More than 3 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. It is important that the international community, in particular major countries, help the Central African Republic to recover its economy, develop its energy resources, enhance public services and improve people's livelihoods. International financial institutions, including the World Bank, must honour their commitments by stepping up assistance with increased inputs. The relevant countries must restore without delay their material assistance so as to help the country to tackle the current challenges.

China's President, Mr. Xi Jinping, recently proposed the global development initiative during the general

debate of the General Assembly (see A/76/PV.3). This is a good opportunity for the international community to collaborate and help developing countries, including the Central African Republic, to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eliminate the root causes of conflicts.

China supports the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and MINUSCA in successfully discharging the Security Council's mandate. We support maintaining the status-of-forces agreement with a view to ensuring the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel. At the same time, when defining the future mandate and the priorities and allocations of the relevant capacities and resources, MINUSCA should fully heed the views of the country concerned and strengthen coordination and consultation with it so as to ensure that the Mission's activities align with the country's needs and priorities. That will also be a positive step in restoring trust between MINUSCA, on the one hand, and the central Government and the various sectors of society, on the other.

Finally, I wish to once again stress that lifting the arms embargo touches on the sovereignty and security of the Central African Republic. That is desired by the popular sentiment of the people of the Central African Republic and is echoed by countries of the region.

The Permanent Representative of the Niger, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), concerning the Central African Republic, led a visit to the Central African Republic last week. It was a good opportunity for the Council to better understand the wishes of the Government and the situation on the ground, which should in turn promote a swift decision on the complete lifting of the arms embargo on the country.

Lastly, together with the rest of the international community, China will continue to work for peace and development in the country.

**The President:** There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I shall now adjourn the meeting so that the Council can continue its discussion on the subject in closed consultations.

*The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.*