

**Joint Statement on Behalf of A3 (Niger, South Africa and Tunisia) and Saint
Vincent and the Grenadines**

Delivered by

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Open VTC on the Situation in the Central African Republic

United Nations Security Council

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Mr. President,

I thank you for convening this meeting to discuss the situation in the Central African Republic. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the A3+1 (South Africa, Niger, Tunisia) and St Vincent and the Grenadines.

We would like to thank Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Mr Ismail Chergui, AU Commissioner for peace and Security as well as Mr. Koen Vervaeke Managing Director for Africa at the European External Action Service, for their briefings and insights on the situation in the CAR.

Mr. President,

We welcome the progress made thus far in implementing the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Central African Republic. Our delegations are encouraged by the continued commitment by the Government and other signatories in utilizing the Agreement's mechanism in spite of the COVID19 outbreak. We welcome the Government's efforts to improve its relations with neighbouring countries through holding bilateral commissions and tackling illegal exploitation of natural resources.

We commend the role played by the AU and ECCAS in supporting the implementation of the Agreement including the availing of programmatic funding by MINUSCA to strengthen the role of women in advancing the Agreement. We continue to encourage all parties to fully implement the Agreement in order to extricate their country from the cycle of continuous conflict.

We are fully aware of the challenges ahead as the country prepares itself for the forthcoming presidential and legislative elections scheduled for December 2020 while responding to the health emergency posed by COVID19 pandemic. Therefore, we commend the national electoral authority for publishing the revised electoral calendar to facilitate elections within the constitutional timelines while adapting to the challenges of COVID19.

On the security front, our delegations are concerned with the resurgence of violence perpetrated by some armed groups, particularly in Birao, Bria, Ndélé and Obo which is in direct violation of the Agreement. The violence, which in some areas, has not only displaced civilians but has also regrettably resulted in casualties of civilians and peacekeepers. Equally concerning are the

violent attacks on the national armed forces and humanitarian workers which constitute violations of international humanitarian law.

The A3+1 also remains concerned by the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic amid the outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic. We deeply regret that violent confrontations among armed groups are still taking place, deepening the divide between signatory armed groups along ethnic lines and fomenting intercommunal tensions. Armed groups should utilise dispute resolution mechanisms provided for by the Peace Agreement to resolve their differences.

It is possible that COVID 19 could exacerbate the conflict and the A3+1 thus welcomes the Government's quick reaction to contain the pandemic. We welcome also the support extended by the UN and other international and regional partners. We encourage the international community to provide further support to address the root causes of insecurity in the Central African Republic in line with the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (2017-2021), and in accordance with the aims of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mr. President,

It is pleasing that the Central African authorities have undertaken essential political reforms including the adoption of appropriate legislations in line with the terms of the Peace Agreement. The recent adoption of the law establishing the Commission on Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Reconciliation attests to the determination of the Central African authorities to move forward with the Agreement requirements.

This is a significant step towards achieving stability and social cohesion and it is within this context that we welcome the Government's and other signatories' desire to utilize the Agreement's implementation mechanisms for this objective.

It is our hope that further advances in the composition of the special mixed security units, disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation will be made in the coming months in line with the requirements of the Peace Agreement.

We applaud MINUSCA's efforts to strengthen the participation of women in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, mainly through local monitoring and implementation mechanisms. We

continue to encourage the meaningful and sustained participation of women in the peace process as well as in the forthcoming elections.

Mr. President,

We welcome MINUSCA's engagement in protecting civilians from armed group violence, as well as the valuable support it extends to the Central African authorities to hold the perpetrators of these serious crimes and other human rights abuses including the use of sexual violence, accountable.

Finally, we commend MINUSCA and other regional and international partners in facilitating the implementation of the Political Agreement and in assisting the Central African authorities organize free and fair national elections. To this end, we welcome the generous support already provided by all partners, including through the Peace Building Commission. We call on all stakeholders to demonstrate resolve and work together for the successful holding of the forthcoming elections, which in our view, are crucial for the stability of the country.

Thank you