

**Joint Statement on Behalf of A3+1 (Niger, South Africa and Tunisia and Saint
Vincent and the Grenadines)**

Delivered by

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VTC Briefing on the Situation in the Central African Republic

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I have the honour of making this statement on behalf of the A3+1, namely Kenya, Tunisia, Niger and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

We thank Assistant Secretary-General Jean Pierre Lacroix, AU Peace and Security Commissioner, Smaïl Chergui, Ms. Rita Laranjinha EEAS Managing Director Africa and Ms. Kessi Martine Ekomo-Soignet, Director of youth-led peacebuilding organisation URUfor their briefing.

We would like to first commend MINUSCA for the actions undertaken to help contain the situation following the escalation of elections-related violence perpetrated by armed groups in the Central African Republic.

We reiterate our condolences to the families of the 12 United Nations personnel who died during the reporting period, including seven military personnel who were victims of attacks by armed groups. We also condemn the use of any form of violence to advance political agenda.

We support the Secretary-General's call to the Central African Republic authorities to take necessary measures to track down the perpetrators of these attacks which may constitute crimes against humanity and prosecute them before national and international courts.

Madam President,

Attempts to obstruct the political process during last December's legislative and presidential elections, the resurgence of violence and the resultant lack of trust among political actors, have further strained the peace process in the Central African Republic.

As we mentioned during the briefing on the Central African Republic held on 20th January 2021, we reiterate our firm conviction that elections remain the only legitimate voice for ascension to power, and once again commend the people of the Central African Republic for their determination to exercise their legitimate right to elect their leaders despite the difficult context they face.

Their resilience leaves us more than ever convinced, that dialogue among, and led by Central African Republic people with the support of regional states, AU, UN and the international community, is the key to ending the crisis.

In this regard, while calling on all actors to accept the election results as validated by the Constitutional Court, we urge President Touadéra to make every effort to initiate and promote a broad and inclusive dialogue with the opposition, armed groups signatories of the Peace agreement, civil society, and all stakeholders, to ease tensions and resume the peace agreement implementation process.

To this effect, we welcome the notable initiatives aiming to promote peace and reconciliation at the national and local levels.

We also welcome the progress made in the peace process with the recent appointment of Commissioners for the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission, which will facilitate the continuation of the peace process and the much-needed transitional justice that the country is direly aspiring for.

We stress, however, that dialogue must not hinder the fight against impunity, and therefore call on the Central African Government to strengthen the implementation of institutional reforms, in particular security sector reform, which is a major challenge in view of the shortcomings made apparent in recent weeks.

We equally call for coordinated actions by the international community, starting with the United Nations, to contribute more effectively in alleviating the suffering of the population, especially in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, and in facilitating access to humanitarian assistance and the promotion and protection of human rights. We also encourage the international community to help bolster the National Reconciliation and Recovery Plan by providing sustained investments and development support in accordance with the needs of the population and the priorities of the Central African Republic government.

We express particular concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation, with an estimated 2.8 million people in need of humanitarian assistance among whom 1.9 million are in emergency situations. We also note that nearly 2.3 million people are suffering from food insecurity, and more than one-third of whom are in emergency situations. Additionally, an estimated 1.3 million are internally displaced or living as refugees in neighbouring countries. In this regard, we call for the collective efforts of the international community including the UNHCR to work within regional frameworks to facilitate the repatriation of Central Africans back home while adhering to applicable international humanitarian law.

Madam President,

Harmonising our efforts and actions would allow for a better impact on the ground and would facilitate the full and effective implementation of the peace agreement.

This should allow our reflections to centre around finding solutions to the root causes of instability in the Central African Republic and to support the national authorities in carrying out their primary responsibility to protect populations.

We understand the concerns of the Central African authorities and other regional and subregional organizations on the key issue of the arms embargo.

In this regard, we appreciate the collaboration of Council members, who have consistently supported the requests for exemptions from the Central African Republic authorities on the arms embargo, which were submitted to the Central African Republic Sanctions Committee.

We stand ready to work with members of the Council on concrete measures that would take into account all possible considerations to achieve a lasting solution that accounts for the demands of the Government of the Central African Republic and all the variants on this matter.

We support the Secretary-General's recommendation to strengthen MINUSCA's capacity by adjusting its troops and police forces to guarantee the security of civilians, peacekeepers and the maintenance of law and order, in line with resolution 2552 (2020) which renewed the mandate of MINUSCA.

To conclude, the A3+1 commend once again the efforts of the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States, in their capacity as guarantors of the peace agreement, for the search of a solution to the Central African Republic crisis.

We also reaffirm our support for the leading role played by MINUSCA in promoting peace and security, primarily through the implementation of the peace agreement, and commend the unwavering commitment and tireless efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Head of MINUSCA, for the good offices and support for the reconciliation process.

I thank you.