New York, December 15, 2021

Statement by Ambassador Abdou ABARRY, Permanent Representative of Niger to the United Nations On behalf of A3+1

Briefing on the United Nations Office for Central Africa (UNOCA)
I have the honor to make this statement on behalf of the A3+1, namely Kenya, Tunisia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Niger.

We thank Mr. François Lounceny Fall, Special Envoy of the Secretary General for Central Africa for his comprehensive and informative presentation and commend his work in promoting peace in the region through mediation and preventive diplomacy, support for electoral processes, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and economic recovery.

Dear colleagues

The political situation in the central African region has witnessed significant positive progress, for which we commend the efforts of UNOCA, along with the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), International Conference for the Great Lakes (ICGLR) and international partners who continue to foster unified action to promote peace and stability in the region.

We encourage the effective implementation of the decisions adopted at the 19th Virtual Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECCAS, to advance regional integration and security, and those resulting from the mini-summit of the ICGLR held on September 16, 2021. The meetings resulted in the declaration of a unilateral cease-fire by President Faustin Touadéra in the Central African Republic in October 2021.

We reiterate that a truly inclusive national dialogue is critical to revitalizing the 2019 peace agreement in the Central African Republic. We therefore call for a coordinated and coherent regional approach, in order to make concrete progress in the peace and reconciliation process in the country. In addition, we recognize and the good offices and political support of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic and its continued cooperation with UNOCA.

This collaborative approach is essential in comprehensively addressing the issues affecting neighboring states and the region, most of which are cross cutting. A case in point is the issue of foreign fighters in Southern Libya and their potentially destabilizing effect in neighboring states and regions. In this regard we encourage UNOCA to continue cooperating with other regional UN offices including the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region.

We welcome the progress made in the transition process in Chad and encourage the Chadian authorities continue in their efforts to ensure that the national dialogue
process, and the ongoing process for the adoption of a new constitution are inclusive. We encourage the authorities' push to open the democratic space to the political opposition and political-military groups, and to promote the role of women in the process of restoring peace and security.

The A3+1 also welcomes the appointment of the African Union Representative in Chad on July 28 and supports the International Supporting Partners Group made up of Chad's main regional and international partners, in order to accompany the ongoing process.

In Cameroon, we encourage the continuation of efforts undertaken by the authorities to advance the decentralization process, in accordance with the recommendations of the "Grand National Dialogue" of 2019. We regret that the process has been slowed down by the persistence of violence on the ground. We encourage the authorities to consolidate the role of women in the political space in the search for peace in line with the first national convention of women of Cameroon held from 29 to 31 July last.

Dear colleagues

We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating security climate in the region, marked by the activities of terrorists and extremist armed groups in the Lake Chad Basin. The same is true of suspected collusion between separatist armed groups in Cameroon and armed groups active in some neighboring countries. We are concerned about this apparent separatist agenda taking shape in the region.

In this regard, we reiterate our call for coordinated actions by countries in the region against the persistent attacks by the ISWAP and Boko Harm. We equally encourage continued joint actions by UNOCA, UNOWAS and UN entities, supported by joint analysis, advocacy, and programs for the recovery from the impact of Boko Haram in the region.

We echo the Secretary General's call to accelerate the implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram Affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin to alleviate the suffering of the affected populations, especially the most vulnerable, including women and youth.

We also support the Secretary General's recommendation calling for urgent collaboration in bilateral and multilateral fora to address the problem of maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, which remains an additional source of global maritime insecurity.
Dear colleagues

The humanitarian situation in the region continues to be of concern due to ongoing conflicts and natural disasters. UN statistics have remained virtually unchanged since last June's report, with a low funding rate of the humanitarian response plan for the current year.

In this regard, we call on international partners to support the efforts of the countries of the region and UNOCA to address the humanitarian situation, as well as the work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in supporting regional efforts in economic cooperation, development and peacebuilding in the region.

Violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including the use of improvised explosive devices, attacks on schools and teachers, and sexual and gender-based violence by armed groups remain alarming, displacing several hundred people.

In conclusion, the A3+1 is encouraged by the development of regional cooperation and diplomatic initiatives led by the leaders of the region, commend the efforts of the African Union and UNOCA to support regional cooperation, call for support to the ECCAS Commission in its coordination efforts with the ICGLR, and commends and encourages the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for his continued and active engagement in the promotion of peace and security in the region. We also call for a resumption to negotiations and speedy conclusion of the Presidential Statement on UNOCA mandate to give more clarity to its work.

I thank you.