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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2149 (2014), by which the Council established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and requested me to report to the Council every four months starting on 1 August 2014. The report provides an update on the situation in the Central African Republic since my report of 1 August (S/2014/562). It also provides an update on the transfer of authority from the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) to MINUSCA on 15 September and on the implementation of the MINUSCA mandate.

II. Major developments

A. Security, human rights and humanitarian developments

2. The security situation in the Central African Republic remains highly volatile. Frequent clashes among armed groups or criminal elements and attacks against civilians continue. Fragmentation, internal leadership struggles and the lack of command-and-control authority within the anti-balaka and among ex-Séléka factions were accompanied by continued clashes between and among those armed groups in Bangui and other parts of the country. The human rights situation remains serious, with numerous cases of human rights violations and abuses, including killings, lootings, the destruction of property, violations of physical integrity and restrictions on freedom of movement. Throughout the country, widespread insecurity, threats of violence and gross human rights violations committed by armed elements continue to adversely affect the dire humanitarian situation facing the civilian population.

3. Following a relative improvement in the security situation, particularly in the capital, the reporting period saw a resurgence of violence largely driven by anti-balaka elements in Bangui from 7 to 16 October. The violence was sparked by the killing of a man believed to have been a member of the ex-Séléka who had thrown a hand grenade into a crowded market area. The incident rapidly escalated into a series of reprisal attacks in which 11 civilians died and 229 civilians were



injured from both Christian and Muslim communities. MINUSCA, the European Union Force in the Central African Republic and the French Operation Sangaris forces were also targeted.

4. An additional 7,500 people were displaced during the fighting, with 1,600 refugees crossing into the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Most of the reported cases of human rights violations are believed to have been perpetrated by anti-balaka elements. On 11 October, a MINUSCA intervention pre-empted an attack by some 100 armed anti-balaka elements on the residence of the Head of State of the Transition, Catherine Samba-Panza.

5. In a separate incident in Bangui, on 11 November ex-Séléka elements that had regrouped in Camp Béal and Camp BSS launched protests claiming, inaccurately, that the transitional authorities had planned to close the camps at the end of November in accordance with agreements reached earlier in the year on the relocation of ex-Séléka elements from three sites in Bangui. The following day, the situation escalated when armed ex-Séléka elements took positions in front of Camp Béal and threatened to explode a significant ammunition stock in the camps. Discussions between the ex-Séléka and the transitional authorities facilitated by MINUSCA resulted in the return of the elements to the camp pending an agreement on future arrangements.

6. Outside of Bangui, a continuous cycle of provocations and reprisals by armed groups, either politically or criminally motivated, continued to adversely affect the safety and security of civilians. Daily security-related incidents involving armed groups reflect the deepening conflict between groups affiliated with the anti-balaka and the ex-Séléka, as well as competition within the factions of those groups. Other reported incidents resulted from attacks against civilians by unidentified armed groups or opportunistic criminal elements.

7. In Ouaka Province, the situation continued to be marked by anti-balaka and ex-Séléka attacks. On 22 September, in Bambari, the Deputy Mayor of Kochiotoulou-Ngakobo, Ngaza Fidèle, was reportedly killed by four ex-Séléka elements. On 9 October, anti-balaka elements reportedly ambushed a vehicle transporting ex-Séléka elements on the Bambari-Gassimé axis, killing six occupants. On 15 October, ex-Séléka elements reportedly killed one woman and two children in Bambari, as well as two young men in Kouango and two others in Bangao on 18 October, suspecting them of being anti-balaka elements or supporters. These incidents pushed the local population to flee the area, some crossing the border into the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

8. The situation in Ouham and Nana-Grébizi provinces, especially in Batangafo and Kaga Bandoro, remained tense and fragile owing to the activities of elements of the anti-balaka, the ex-Séléka and other armed groups. On 24 September, following the arrest of one anti-balaka element by villagers, a group of anti-balaka elements attacked the village of Mbata, in Nana-Grébizi, reportedly killing 10 civilians, burning 11 houses and taking four hostages. On 2 October, a group of around 20 suspected ex-Séléka elements attacked the locality of Boguila on the Batangafo-Boguila axis, reportedly killing five people and burning and looting several houses, including a medical centre. On 19 October, in the Morobanda area of Kaga Bandoro, 16 km from Mbrès, a confrontation between ex-Séléka and anti-balaka elements left two persons dead, while another confrontation between the two groups on 27 October resulted in at least one death. Moreover, the two provinces witnessed

violence committed by other armed groups, perceived to be of Fulani origin. The most violent case involved the attack by a group of armed Fulani on the village of Morobadja, 18 km from Mbrès, on 24 October; the attack reportedly resulted in four dead civilians and five burned-down houses. On 29 September, armed Fulani herdsmen reportedly killed a woman and destroyed farms in the village of Bougourou, 10 km from Batangafo, Ouham Province.

9. The border area between the Central African Republic and Cameroon saw a resurgence of attacks on villages by the Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain (FDPC). On 14 September, FDPC elements reportedly abducted 10 persons in Nana-Mambéré Province, demanding the release of their leader, Abdoulaye Miskine, who was imprisoned in Cameroon. On 20 September, the same group kidnapped an additional 12 persons in a village in Cameroon, near the border. On 13 October, FDPC reportedly kidnapped two Polish priests in Baboua parish, in Nana-Mambéré Province, one of whom later escaped. Efforts by the Government of the Central African Republic to negotiate the release of the hostages, including through contact with the Government of Cameroon to gain access to Miskine, have so far been unsuccessful.

10. The presence of foreign and transborder armed groups in the region continued to pose a threat to civilians and to be a cause of insecurity; incidents of abductions and killings were reported. In the locality of Lima, Haute-Kotto Province, elements of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) reportedly kidnapped women and children, including among ex-Séléka factions and the anti-balaka. In September and October, there were seven LRA attacks resulting in 1 person killed and 22 kidnapped.

11. Separately, on 7 November, following a request by the Central African authorities and on the basis of Security Council resolution 2181 (2014), the European Council of Ministers extended the mandate of the European Union Force in the Central African Republic until 15 March 2015.

12. The humanitarian situation remained critical throughout the country. In Bangui, more than 6,000 Muslims continued to live under very difficult conditions, with limited access to commerce or basic public services, including medical care, especially in the PK-5 neighbourhood. The humanitarian situation worsened in the wake of the violence that took place in almost all districts of the city from 7 to 16 October. The risk of attacks against civilians and those requiring humanitarian assistance, as well as the direct targeting of humanitarian workers continued to limit and, in some cases, prevent such workers from responding to the crisis, thereby negatively affecting the delivery of life-saving assistance and civilian protection efforts. By mid-November, there were approximately 410,000 internally displaced people in the country, of whom 62,500 were in Bangui and 347,500 in the provinces. More than 420,000 Central Africans have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. An emergency food security assessment carried out by the World Food Programme found that 28 per cent of the Central African population is experiencing food insecurity. Some 1.2 million Central Africans require humanitarian assistance.

B. Political developments

13. Heightened tension among key national actors, the tenuous security situation and the transitional authorities' continued lack of capacity to provide basic services to the population posed serious challenges to the transition. The violence in Bangui

in October further weakened the transitional authorities' ability to govern effectively and lead the country to a successful completion of the transition.

14. After Prime Minister André Nzapayéké resigned on 5 August, the Head of State of the Transition appointed as his replacement Mahamat Kamoun, a Muslim who had served as Chief of Staff under the former Head of State of the Transition Michel Djotodia and as Director General of the Treasury in the administration of former President François Bozizé. The ex-Séléka, as well as several main political parties and civil society leaders, criticized the appointment, citing a lack of consultation and inclusiveness in the selection process led by the Head of State of the Transition.

15. On 18 August, the President of the National Transitional Council, Alexandre Nguendet, led a delegation comprising representatives of political parties and civil society to Brazzaville for a meeting with the international mediator for the Central African Republic and President of the Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, in an effort to resolve the concerns regarding Prime Minister Kamoun's appointment. Upon his return, Mr. Nguendet called for the formation of a new transitional Government to be postponed in order to allow for wider consultations.

16. On 22 August, the Office of the Head of State of the Transition announced the formation of Prime Minister Kamoun's Government, in which the overall number of ministers increased from 20 to 31, including representatives of armed groups, civil society and the country's 16 provinces. Ex-Séléka members were appointed to three ministerial posts while two ministers were appointed from the anti-balaka. Ex-Séléka leaders dissociated themselves from the appointments, however, while some anti-balaka elements continued to consider that they were not fairly represented.

17. On 26 September, I convened a high-level meeting on the Central African Republic in New York, on the margins of the General Assembly debate. The meeting was attended by the Head of State of the Transition and key national, regional and international stakeholders at the highest levels. Participants expressed their commitment to supporting the Central African authorities in their efforts to undertake an inclusive political process, restore State authority, address the humanitarian situation, strengthen the judiciary, fight impunity and restore security. They also commended the work of MISCA, the successful transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA and the exemplary cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

18. In early October, anti-balaka and ex-Séléka leaders began calling for the resignation of the Head of State of the Transition. The backdrop for these calls was a growing controversy over the transitional authorities' accounting for \$10 million that had been donated in March 2014 to the Central African Republic by the Government of Angola.

19. On 18 October, following nine days of violence in Bangui, the international mediator for the Central African Republic, Mr. Sassou Nguesso, dispatched his Special Envoy and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Congo, Basile Ikouébé, to Bangui, where he was accompanied by my Special Representative for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and by the African Union Special Envoy Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga. The international mediation team held intensive talks in Bangui with the Head of State of the

Transition, the Prime Minister and the President of the National Transitional Council. They also took part in a town hall meeting with approximately 200 national stakeholders, many of whom had participated in the forum on national reconciliation in the Central African Republic held in Brazzaville from 21 to 23 July. Broad agreement was reached to work in a more peaceful and consensual manner and to accelerate preparations for the conduct of elections by mid-August 2015. Agreement was also reached on proceeding directly, without prior consultations, to the forum on national reconciliation to be held in Bangui in mid-January 2015, the aim of which is to forge a national-level consensus on key issues such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform, including the reconstitution of the Central African armed forces, the rule of law, and political and economic governance. On 22 October, in an address to the National Transitional Council, the Head of State of the Transition stressed the importance of the upcoming Bangui forum and announced that an organizing committee would be formed to begin preparations in coordination with MINUSCA and the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

20. On 11 November, the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic held its sixth meeting in Bangui under the co-chairmanship of the African Union and the Congo. The opening session took place in the presence of the Head of State of the Transition, who reiterated her call for the establishment of a rapid-intervention brigade to work alongside international forces, including to provide security for the upcoming elections, and emphasized the need for the prompt organization of the Bangui forum. The meeting was attended by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Congo (on behalf of the international mediator) and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chad (on behalf of the Chair of the Economic Commission for Central African States (ECCAS)), the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, the President of the National Transitional Council and authorities of the Central African Republic, as well as some 40 other representatives of governments and international organizations. In the communiqué issued at the conclusion of the meeting, participants called upon the transitional authorities to hold the Bangui forum in January 2015 and the international mediator and President of the Congo to extend the period of the transition by six months. They also requested the transitional authorities, as well as the National Electoral Authority, to urgently take the political, legal, financial and logistical steps required to speed up the electoral process and facilitate the organization, by August 2015, of legislative and presidential elections.

21. Political uncertainty, heightened by the violence that took place in October in Bangui, contributed to shifting political dynamics within the ex-Séléka. New factions, largely drawn along ethnic lines, emerged. While reinforcing their military structures, leaders of these factions committed their groups to participating in the political process, including in the Bangui forum and the elections, and expressed willingness to comply with article 4 of the cessation-of-hostilities agreement signed in Brazzaville on 23 July, which calls for the voluntary regroupment of armed elements. On 25 October, in Bambari, ex-Séléka leaders General Ali Darrassa Mahamat and General Mahamat Alkhatim announced the creation of a political movement called the Union pour la paix en Centrafrique. On 2 November, a political wing of the ex-Séléka led by Nourredine Adam, the Front populaire pour la renaissance de Centrafrique (FPRC), convened a general assembly meeting in Kaga Bandoro. The meeting was attended by some 900 combatants, including a number of

ex-Séléka field commanders from Bria, Ndélé, Dékoa, Bambari and other areas of Bamingui-Bongoran and Vakaga provinces. The meeting resulted in a new structure for FPRC in which, inter alia, Joseph Zoundeko was replaced as Chief of Military Staff by Arda Hakouma. On 12 November, Zoundeko issued a press release in Bambari, Ouaka Province, stating that the ordinary general assembly meeting of his group, the Forces républicaines, would take place on 16 and 17 November in Bria, Haute-Kotto Province.

Peace process

22. Frustration over the appointment of Prime Minister Kamoun and subsequent developments in the political process slowed the implementation of the Brazzaville agreement of 23 July. Not only were there numerous violations of the agreement, it also proved difficult to implement its provisions, including the one on the voluntary regroupment of armed groups. In order to support the agreement's implementation, a follow-up commission was established in August. The commission was composed of two representatives of the presidency, two representatives of the transitional Government, two representatives of the National Transitional Council, one representative of each of the seven armed groups that had signed the agreement and representatives of the international community. The commission began meeting in September under the joint chairmanship of the transitional authorities and the African Union, with secretariat support provided by MINUSCA, the African Union, ECCAS and the international mediator. MINUSCA also provided support to the commission's technical committee by establishing subcommissions to ensure understanding of the agreement at the local level and respond to violations of its terms. The commission has been slow to make decisions and take action on the implementation of its mandate. Moreover, during the period of violence in Bangui in October, signatory armed groups temporarily suspended their participation in the Brazzaville process, including as members of the commission.

Elections

23. Preparations for elections moved forward at a slow pace until the end of October. On 1 August, strategic and technical-level coordination mechanisms for political, technical and financial assistance were established, with the participation of the National Electoral Authority (NEA), MINUSCA and other partners. On 21 August, NEA adopted its rules of procedure, a key milestone towards the establishment of a fully functional election management body.

24. After agreements were reached between the international mediator and the transitional authorities at the end of October, the United Nations, together with the European Union, the African Union and bilateral partners, worked closely with NEA to explore ways of accelerating the implementation of preparatory tasks, including the development of an electoral calendar.

25. From 23 to 27 October, NEA held consultations with national stakeholders. A consensus was reached on proposed adjustments to a number of legal provisions, including on simplifying voter registration, from a legally mandated biometric system to a computerized system, and on combining presidential and legislative elections.

26. On 31 October, NEA announced a revised electoral timeline involving a constitutional referendum in May 2015, the first round of presidential and legislative elections in July 2015 and the second round of polls in August 2015.

NEA developed a needs assessment plan for the registration of refugees in neighbouring States that would start with a mission in November to refugee camps in Cameroon, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During the reporting period, NEA also established 14 field offices in Bangui and in Ombella-Mpoko Province.

27. On 7 November, my Deputy Special Representative in the Central African Republic and United Nations Resident Coordinator chaired the first “One United Nations” elections task force, which comprises all relevant components of MINUSCA and the United Nations country team.

C. Socioeconomic developments

28. The economy of the Central African Republic remains sluggish, as forecast in July by the International Monetary Fund, which estimated a growth rate of 1 per cent in 2014. The transitional authorities’ weak fiscal capacity is evident in their inability to generate revenues, collect taxes and manage finances.

29. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued to support several cash-for-work initiatives aimed at providing immediate income-generating opportunities to youth at risk, displaced persons and women. UNDP, in partnership with the Peacebuilding Fund, also supported the payment of salaries of the police and the gendarmerie from May to August 2014. In parallel, the World Bank supported the payment of salaries of the rest of the civil service for the same period, while the transitional authorities continued to be responsible for the payment of salaries of the armed forces. In September, the European Union began providing general budget support until the end of 2014 with the aim of providing funding to the transitional authorities to cover the most important and urgent expenditures, including civil servants’ salaries.

30. On 14 May, the International Monetary Fund approved financial assistance under the Rapid Credit Facility in the amount of nearly \$13 million in support of emergency recovery programmes. In September, the African Development Bank provided the Central African Republic with \$22 million in budgetary support.

D. Safety and security of United Nations staff

31. United Nations personnel, including humanitarian workers, faced increasing security threats related to armed conflict and criminality throughout the country. The attacks against United Nations personnel during the violence that took place in October in Bangui, in which two United Nations peacekeepers died, were unprecedented. Violent incidents targeting MINUSCA included gunfire and hand grenades thrown at United Nations vehicles, as well as armed demonstrations in front of the main MINUSCA compound and threats to individuals. In response, MINUSCA took security risk mitigation measures, including alternative work modalities, to limit the number of non-essential personnel on United Nations premises. The threat against United Nations personnel also remained high in the area near the border with Cameroon. On 2 October, reported shooting between armed elements in the border area 150 km west of Bouarin, Nana-Mambéré Province, caused a joint United Nations team and around 100 people from the Central African Republic to seek safety across the border in Cameroon. The affected

United Nations personnel returned safely following an intervention by the MINUSCA leadership and United Nations security personnel in the Central African Republic and Cameroon.

III. Implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

A. Transfer of authority from the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

32. The transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA took place on 15 September. Among the national and foreign dignitaries who attended the transfer-of-authority ceremony in Bangui were the Head of State of the Transition, the Prime Minister, the President of the National Transitional Council, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, my Special Representative in the Central African Republic, my Special Representative for Central Africa and representatives of the international mediator, the diplomatic community and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. The transfer of authority marked the completion of the MISCA mandate and the establishment of an African Union mission for the Central African Republic and Central Africa.

B. Support to the political process

33. MINUSCA continued to advise Central African authorities on the way forward on the political process, including with regard to the implementation of the Brazzaville cessation-of-hostilities agreement. Through the good offices of my Special Representative in the Central African Republic and my Special Representative for Central Africa, the United Nations, in coordination with other key international partners, worked closely with all signatories to encourage their continued commitment to the process, including the cessation-of-hostilities agreement and the follow-on political process. They also worked closely with the transitional authorities to ensure cohesion among the transitional institutions in support of the implementation of the transitional road map. In addition, both of my Special Representatives travelled extensively in the region to meet with key stakeholders and encourage their sustained and positive engagement for a resolution to the crisis in the Central African Republic.

34. In addition to extending its good offices, MINUSCA provided coordinated strategic advice to the transitional authorities on the political process with regard to an inclusive national dialogue and social cohesion between communities in conflict. On 6 and 7 November in Bangui, MINUSCA held a workshop on the preparation and organization of the Bangui forum that was attended by national stakeholders and national and international partners. The meeting participants defined options and methodological guidelines for the committee organizing the forum, including a

reformulation of the place of the committee in the peace process as a starting point for longer-term initiatives to address the root causes of the conflict in the Central African Republic. In partnership with the United Nations country team, MINUSCA is working closely with the transitional authorities to plan activities in preparation of the forum. This included serving in an advisory capacity to the organizing committee, preparing option papers on key issues to be addressed during the forum and preparing the conduct of workshops for transitional authorities who will visit the country's 16 provinces in early December to hold discussions on the forum and its objectives at the local level. MINUSCA is coordinating support for the forum in close collaboration with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and other organizations active in reconciliation and dialogue support initiatives in the Central African Republic.

35. MINUSCA supported the development of projects to support local initiatives and agreements that address the underlying causes of conflict and provide people with peace dividends. With support from the Peacebuilding Fund, and in close coordination with MINUSCA, UNDP will implement an 18-month project to support reconciliation initiatives and longer-term social cohesion, beginning with financial and technical support for the Bangui forum and its follow-up mechanisms, which include a network of mediators to promote inter- and intra-community dialogue on peace and reconciliation. The project will support the implementation of the urgent action plan that is the cornerstone of the national reconciliation strategy of the Central African Republic and that was developed earlier in 2014 by the Ministry of Communication and National Reconciliation, with technical support and expertise provided by MINUSCA and UNDP.

C. Extension of State authority

36. In order to operate a professional and accountable administration that can deliver basic administrative and social services, the transitional authorities require financial and technical resources to allow the progressive redeployment of civil servants and local administrators in the country's 16 provinces, together with a sufficient number of police and gendarmerie to ensure their security.

37. MINUSCA signed a memorandum of understanding for quick-impact projects in October and November for the light rehabilitation of key infrastructure, including the rehabilitation of the *préfecture* building in Bria and of the building of the office for the administration of social affairs of Haute-Kotto, also in Bria, and for the construction of a sports and cultural centre for the youth of the fourth district of Bangui.

38. MINUSCA, together with the United Nations country team and international partners, initiated a dialogue and confidence-building measures among communities and within ethnic and religious groups. Following the violence that took place in October in Bangui, MINUSCA contacted local authority community representatives in the fourth district and the PK-5 neighbourhood of Bangui to explore the possibility of deploying MINUSCA community liaison assistants to develop protection measures on access to health, education and other social services. MINUSCA and United Nations country team partners began to plan efforts to support local governance structures to build the capacity of local territorial and civil service administrators.

D. Protection of civilians

39. In August, MINUSCA developed a United Nations system-wide protection-of-civilians strategy that was finalized in September and that has been distributed to all MINUSCA staff. MINUSCA efforts to protect civilians focused on the development of measures to prevent threats to civilians and on the allocation of resources to implement them. One of the tools used was a protection-of-civilians matrix that uses joint analyses to identify communities at risk of physical violence and that is developed and maintained in consultation with the inter-agency Global Protection Cluster. MINUSCA responded to security incidents that endangered the general population or vulnerable communities on the basis, inter alia, of analysis that is consolidated and regularly updated in the protection-of-civilians matrix.

E. Promotion and protection of human rights

40. The human rights situation remains serious. Ex-Séléka and anti-balaka elements continue to operate in total impunity in a cycle of retaliatory attacks of which civilians are the main victims. The number of civilians reported to have been killed and injured as a result of the armed conflict continues to increase. Incidents of looting and the destruction of property remain causes of grave concern. The absence of judicial institutions in many parts of the country, in particular in areas controlled by armed groups, makes it harder to protect human rights.

41. MINUSCA continued to reinforce its capacities to monitor, investigate and report on human rights violations throughout the country. MINUSCA conducted several field missions to vulnerable communities in Bangui, Bossangoa, Bozoum, Bouar, Bocaranga, Baoro, Boali, Damara and Kaga Bandoro, the outcomes of which helped prepare the protection-of-civilians matrix. During the reporting period, MINUSCA investigated 85 new incidents of human rights violations that affected 142 persons; 39 of those incidents were verified and confirmed. Most of the perpetrators were members of the anti-balaka and the ex-Séléka.

42. To increase awareness and mainstream the promotion and protection of human rights, MINUSCA conducted induction training sessions for mission personnel and trained representatives of 25 Central African human rights organizations on human rights monitoring, investigation and reporting. MINUSCA continued to make efforts to establish and strengthen collaboration with authorities of the Central African Republic, including the national police, the gendarmerie and the prosecutor's office, on human rights-related issues.

F. Child protection

43. Children were observed to have taken an active part in the violence in Bangui in October, including by participating in violent demonstrations and establishing roadblocks together with anti-balaka elements. The Central African Republic task force on the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism continues to engage in dialogue with the leadership of the anti-balaka to advocate for an end to the association of children with its activities. A total of 103 boys aged between 12 and 17 years were separated from the anti-balaka and the ex-Séléka in Bambari, Grimari and Ippy, Ouaka Province. The children are under the temporary care of the United Nations

Children's Fund (UNICEF), which provides psychosocial assistance and vocational training, among other services, pending family tracing and reunification. Dialogue and engagement with anti-balaka local commanders in Ombella-Mpoko and Lobaye Provinces led to 1,069 children, of whom 178 were girls aged between 9 to 17 years, leaving that group since July 2014. The children are currently benefiting from community-based reintegration activities in those localities.

44. To enhance the monitoring of grave violations of children's rights, the task force provided training on the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism to 74 child protection actors. Within MINUSCA, 80 police officers, 46 military personnel (staff officers and military observers) and 21 civilian personnel received training on children's rights and the protection of children. Further, MINUSCA and UNICEF conducted awareness-raising training programmes on children's rights and the protection of children for 438 combatants and officers of the ex-Séléka and 25 local commanders and members of the anti-balaka. As a result, General Darrassa of the Union pour la paix en Centrafrique (former ex-Séléka) signed an instruction prohibiting the recruitment and use of children.

G. Conflict-related sexual violence

45. MINUSCA, in partnership with civil society, including women's associations, supported efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Central African Republic to monitor and investigate allegations of sexual and gender-based violence, including through awareness-raising campaigns against such violence. On victims' assistance, MINUSCA, in cooperation with relevant United Nations partners and local authorities, launched an initiative to strengthen the joint evaluation of centres for victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, which support victims' reintegration into the community. MINUSCA continues to support the national police and the gendarmerie with the establishment of specialized units to address sexual and gender-based violence committed against women and children.

H. Gender issues

46. MINUSCA continued to promote women's participation in the peace process by raising awareness, training women leaders and providing advice and technical guidance on intercommunal reconciliation to local actors, including women of the Muslim community in Bangui's PK-5 neighbourhood and women associated with the anti-balaka in the Christian community. MINUSCA also organized meetings and sessions with women's organizations and leaders in Bria and Ndélé to promote women's increased participation at the grass-roots and leadership levels.

I. Support for national and international justice and the rule of law and implementation of urgent temporary measures

47. On the basis of the memorandum of intent between the Ministry of Justice and MINUSCA on the implementation of the MINUSCA mandate on urgent temporary measures outlined in paragraph 40 of Security Council resolution 2149 (2014), the Ministry of Justice issued instructions on the establishment of a working group, in which MINUSCA is represented, to develop the legislation required for the creation

of a national special criminal court. In accordance with the provisions of the memorandum, it is foreseen that the national special criminal court will be composed of national and internationally recruited magistrates to address such serious crimes as serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including conflict-related sexual violence and grave human rights violations committed against children, which constitute a threat to peace, stability and security in the Central African Republic.

48. On 11 September, the Minister of Justice requested the working group to develop legislation for the establishment of a national special investigative cell to investigate and prosecute serious crimes, with the support of MINUSCA and international donors. Once established, the special criminal court would take over cases processed by the special investigative cell. The mechanisms would facilitate prompt responses to the urgent need to combat impunity for the most serious crimes, improve the institutional capacity of the local judiciary and restore confidence in State institutions.

49. Financial support will be needed to pay the salaries of international magistrates and to cover the costs associated with the establishment and functioning of the special criminal court for an initial period of at least three years. A strategy has been developed to create the national special criminal court in phases, moving from the special investigative cell to a body operating with international prosecutors and investigative judges when funding becomes available and, eventually, to a full court.

50. In addition, in order to carry out its obligations under the urgent temporary measures mandate, MINUSCA has adopted standard operating procedures for United Nations police and military personnel on the arrest, detention and handover of alleged criminals to national judicial authorities. Since 15 September, MINUSCA has carried out 107 arrests, of which 34 were for the illegal possession of weapons. Other offences were for murder, rape, theft and battery, among other crimes. All of the individuals arrested have been handed over to the national police or the gendarmerie. MINUSCA has established a mechanism to follow up on these arrests and is providing security to key local magistrates to enable them to conduct their work. On 20 October, the General Prosecutor of the Court of Appeal in Bangui requested MINUSCA, the European Union Force in the Central African Republic and Operation Sangaris to assist in the arrest of 55 persons in connection with the violence that took place in October in Bangui.

51. In the area of corrections, only 4 of 38 officially recognized prisons, namely those in Ngaragba, Bimbo, Bouar and Beberati, are functional. Efforts are under way to support the rehabilitation of the prison in Ngaragba with financing from the European Union. In addition, MINUSCA is mentoring and training 44 national prison officers on prison management and security at Ngaragba and Bimbo prisons, evaluating existing correctional services, supporting the rehabilitation of eight police stations and three military gendarmerie brigades. The 20 corrections officers authorized by Security Council resolution 2149 (2014) have been deployed and are providing support for the improved functioning of the prison in Ngaragba and the prison for women in Bimbo. There is an urgent need, however, for additional corrections officers to cover the operational and security needs arising from the implementation of the urgent temporary measures and the reopening of prisons outside of Bangui.

J. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

52. Under MINUSCA leadership and with the support of the Peacebuilding Fund, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) continued to implement a relocation project for ex-Séléka combatants regrouped in the three military barracks in Bangui. A coordination committee was established in August comprising representatives of the transitional authorities, MINUSCA, IOM and Operation Sangaris to support project implementation. A total of 457 combatants of an estimated 1,308 from Camp RDOT, one of the three ex-Séléka regroupment sites in Bangui, were relocated to their communities of origin during the reporting period. MINUSCA and IOM were planning to accelerate operations with a view to completing the relocation by December, but project implementation was temporarily frozen on 12 November following the events at Camp Béal.

53. Following the establishment of a high commission for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform within the office of the Prime Minister, MINUSCA held discussions with the authorities to assist in defining the commission's structure and organization. MINUSCA also developed a regroupment strategy for combatants in anticipation of the outcome of the Bangui forum. The document will be presented to the strategic committee on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and will be adapted to reflect the agreements reached at the Bangui forum.

K. Security sector reform

54. In September, MINUSCA initiated a project to assist the Ministry of Defence in regrouping the Central African armed forces. The project has two components: the rehabilitation of major military barracks in Bangui and the creation of a database for armed forces personnel to be used for auditing and vetting. The database will be used for future security sector reform, including for the building of an ethnically and geographically balanced and professional army.

55. Other partners continue to provide support to the national police and the gendarmerie. On 15 September, three police stations were inaugurated in Bangui with the support of UNDP and funding from the Peacebuilding Fund. The rehabilitation of the remaining five police stations and three gendarmerie brigades in Bangui is ongoing. A European Union project aimed at strengthening law and order in Bangui is also in progress; under this project, two national police and gendarmerie units have received training and non-lethal equipment.

L. Coordination of international assistance

56. Coordinated international assistance was provided for three projects through the multi-partner trust fund for the Central African Republic. Funding has been approved for the security sector reform project outlined above, and two other projects. The first, which is in support of the prevention of human rights violations and a revival of justice in the Central African Republic, is being carried out jointly by UNDP, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and MINUSCA with funds from the United States Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. The second, which is in support of the

creation of units aimed at providing holistic support to victims of rape for a period of 12 months, is being implemented jointly by the World Health Organization, UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund.

M. Weapons and ammunition management

57. The MINUSCA weapons and explosive hazards management section, which includes members of the Mine Action Service, started to identify and assess sites for ammunition depot and armouries. MINUSCA assessed the stocks of ammunition at Camp de Roux in Bangui and planned for them to be moved to a safe storage site. Under the coordination of MINUSCA, Operation Sangaris destroyed 7 tons of unsafe ammunition. National gendarmerie personnel trained by the Mine Action Service destroyed numerous weapons as part of their weapons security plan, as agreed with the Ministry of Defence. MINUSCA continued to coordinate a working group comprising all international and local partners with the aim of removing the threat posed by explosive hazards and jointly identifying needs and priorities to effectively implement activities related to weapon and ammunition management. The Mine Action Service continued to make efforts to gain access to a large stock of poorly maintained ammunition and explosives at Camp Béal, which poses a significant danger to camp residents and inhabitants of the surrounding area.

IV. Update on the deployment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

58. On 15 September, six infantry battalions from Burundi, Cameroon, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon and Rwanda were rehatted from MISCA to MINUSCA. Six formed police units from Burundi (two), Cameroon (two), the Congo (one) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (one) were also rehatted to MINUSCA. In addition, approximately 1,800 additional uniformed personnel were deployed to MINUSCA, including one Moroccan guard unit that was upgraded and absorbed as an infantry battalion in MINUSCA, an engineer company from Indonesia, an engineer company advance party from Pakistan, a level II hospital from Bangladesh, a signal company advance party from Bangladesh, one aviation unit from Sri Lanka and one formed police unit from Rwanda.

59. As at mid-November, some 7,451 military personnel, or approximately 74 per cent of the total authorized military strength of 10,000 troops, and 1,083 police personnel, or approximately 60 per cent of the total authorized police strength of 1,800, had been deployed to MINUSCA. In addition, 177 of 440 staff officers and military observers (approximately 40 per cent) and 99 of 400 individual police officers (approximately 25 per cent) had also been deployed. Pledges had yet to be received for the attack helicopter unit and yet to be confirmed for the special forces company and one signal company. MINUSCA air assets include three MI-8 helicopters, one small fixed-wing aircraft and three military utility helicopters.

60. Starting on 15 September, in Bangui, MINUSCA established an innovative joint military and police task force with a unified command structure. The task force operates under the MINUSCA police component to maintain coherence in the

Mission's response to security incidents in Bangui. Following the violent incidents that took place in Bangui in October, it was decided to increase the military presence in Bangui temporarily by up to three infantry battalions to support the efforts of the task force in Bangui.

61. MINUSCA continued to make efforts to provide logistical support for the deployment of troops and police in various parts of its area of operations. In addition, regional offices in Bouar and Bossangoa (Sector West), in Kaga Bandoro and Bambari (Sector Centre) and Bria (Sector East) are operational and have heads of office in place. As at mid-November, the overall civilian vacancy rate had been reduced to 25 per cent, taking into account ongoing recruitment and onboarding efforts. The incumbency rate was 44 per cent. Of the total number of senior staff, 82 per cent had assumed their posts.

V. Financial aspects

62. The General Assembly, by its resolution 68/299, authorized me to enter into commitments for MINUSCA in an amount not exceeding \$312,976,400 for the period from 10 April to 31 December 2014, inclusive of the amount of \$59,552,000 previously authorized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for the period from 10 April to 30 June 2014.

63. As at 31 October 2014, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for MINUSCA amounted to \$53,341,900. The total amount of outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at the same date was \$2,308 million.

64. As at 31 August 2014, all Member States that contribute troops to MINUSCA had been fully reimbursed. The amount of \$3.4 million for troop costs was reimbursed for the period ending on 31 August 2014, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

VI. Observations

65. The violence that took place in October in Bangui, just one month after the successful transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA, was a stark reminder that the situation in the Central African Republic remains highly volatile. I am deeply concerned by the continued widespread insecurity throughout the country caused by ongoing cycles of violence between and among armed elements of the increasingly fragmented ex-Séléka and the anti-balaka in particular. I am also concerned that gross human rights violations against civilians continue to be committed by armed elements with impunity. MINUSCA, the European Union Force in the Central African Republic and Operation Sangaris, as well as the humanitarian community, have also been targeted directly.

66. The dire humanitarian consequences of the conflict continue to adversely affect hundreds of thousands of lives. Almost 1 million Central Africans remain displaced. More than 2 million people are still in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. Women and children are exposed to extreme violence and abuse, and thousands of children are still associated with armed groups. The increasingly blurred line between criminal and politically instigated acts of violence in an environment where the presence of the State remains weak or where the State is

absent, poses a constant threat to Central Africans and undermines efforts to keep the transition on track.

67. National ownership and genuine political commitment remain essential for bringing about durable peace and improving the lives of Central Africans. I strongly urge all signatories, including the transitional authorities, to recommit to the cessation-of-hostilities agreement signed in Brazzaville on 23 July and to take concrete steps, with the international community's support, to ensure the protection of civilians and create the conditions for displaced populations to return, safely and voluntarily, to their homes.

68. There is an urgent need for a follow-on political process with inclusive consultations at the national and local levels and for the successful and timely completion of the transition. I urge all parties to renew their commitment to the political process within the agreed time frames and to engage actively in the Bangui forum planned for January 2015. That forum should provide an opportunity to reach a political agreement among a broad cross section of national stakeholders on the reconstitution of the national armed forces and security sector reform, on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups and on other key political issues, including the rule of law, criminal and transitional justice, governance, decentralization and the economic future of the country. It should also contribute to and shape the long-term reconciliation process that is so badly needed in the country. An inclusive preparatory process and a successful meeting will send a strong signal that the people of the Central African Republic are ready for peace and stability. My Special Representative in the Central African Republic and my Special Representative for Central Africa stand ready to continue supporting the work of the international mediator and other regional and international efforts in support of the political process. Significant financial resources will also be needed to support the implementation of the agreements reached at the Bangui forum, in particular with regard to the process on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, but also to underpin the restoration of State authority and the preparation of the elections.

69. The timely holding of elections in order to complete the transition by August 2015 will be an important milestone for the country. The completion of the electoral process will be extremely challenging and will require the significantly strengthened commitment of the authorities of the Central African Republic, as well as the political, operational and financial support of the international community. Achieving a security and political environment that is conducive to the holding of fair and credible elections in such a short time frame will require the strong determination of all actors. I urge the transitional authorities and NEA to accelerate, in a consensual manner, preparations for the planned constitutional referendum, as well as for the legislative and presidential elections, with a view to ensuring a transparent, inclusive and credible process. It will also be vital for the national authorities to facilitate a transparent voter registration process that enables the full participation of returning populations, as well as of those who remain displaced in the country and the wider subregion. I call on international partners to provide timely support to the process. In the meantime, I urge all the parties concerned to prioritize the interests of the country and ensure that the transition of the Central African Republic is managed in an inclusive and consensual manner.

70. Tackling impunity remains imperative to efforts to improve the security situation and support the political process. Their need to strengthen justice institutions remains urgent, including through the rapid establishment of the national special criminal court, the provision of support for the special investigative cell and the establishment of effective policing, judicial and corrections institutions in accordance with national and international standards. I urge the transitional authorities of the Central African Republic, with the support of the international forces, to take all possible steps to ensure the arrest, prosecution and safe, humane and secure detention of perpetrators of crimes committed against civilians, including violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. I also wish to recall that individuals and entities that undermine peace, stability and security are subject to the targeted measures set out in Security Council resolutions 2127 (2013) and 2134 (2014).

71. The restoration of security must go hand in hand with State-building and economic recovery. Addressing the root causes of the conflict in the Central African Republic requires mutual accountability, including the international community's sustained commitment and support to Central African authorities to implement early recovery plans and revitalize the economy. I encourage the transitional authorities to ensure an environment in which the international community can continue to provide budget support in 2015, while strengthening efforts to build national capacities and improve national public financial management and accountability.

72. In beginning to tackle longer-term economic recovery, the urgent humanitarian requirements, which remain daunting, must be addressed. I wish to reiterate the need for timely and sustained support for humanitarian operations given the dire living conditions and extreme vulnerability of the population.

73. As I stressed in my previous report, there will be no solution to the crisis in the Central African Republic without the continued active engagement of the country's neighbours and the region. I welcome the continued engagement of ECCAS, in particular that of the current Chair, the President of Chad, Idriss Déby Itno, and of the international mediator and President of the Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, as well as the engagement of key bilateral partners of the Central African Republic in the region, including Angola, Cameroon, Chad and the Congo. I commend their tireless efforts to assist in finding solutions to the crisis. I am also encouraged by the good cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations following the successful transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA.

74. MINUSCA faces high expectations as it continues to scale-up to its authorized strength of 10,000 military personnel and 1,800 police personnel. I cannot overemphasize the tremendous logistical and operational challenges involved in deploying and sustaining a large, multidimensional peacekeeping operation in a landlocked country with extremely poor infrastructure. I remain optimistic that, with the continued support of contributing countries, MINUSCA will reach its full authorized strength and full operational capability by the end of the period of the current mandate. The violence that took place in Bangui in October has highlighted the pressing need for the full military and police strength of the Mission to be deployed at the earliest opportunity, as well as the need for a temporary increase in the military presence in Bangui. On a separate note, and given developments since my last report, it is already clear that an increase in the currently authorized strength of 20 corrections officers will be essential to allow MINUSCA to fulfil its mandate

in that area, including as it relates to the implementation of urgent temporary measures mandated by Security Council resolution 2149 (2014). Given the extremely tight timeline considered for the end of the transition and the risks inherent to many of the processes underpinning it, I intend to revert to the Council before the current mandate ends on 30 April 2015 with recommendations regarding adjustments that need to be made to the mission concept, including with regard to troop and police personnel levels and deployment, and mandated tasks.

75. I am grateful to my Special Representative in the Central African Republic and Head of MINUSCA, Babacar Gaye, for his tireless efforts. I am deeply appreciative of the work being done by the personnel of MINUSCA, the United Nations country team and the humanitarian country team in a dangerous and unpredictable environment. I would like to express my deepest condolences to the countries and families of the two United Nations peacekeepers who lost their lives in the line of duty in the Central African Republic. I am also grateful to my Special Representative for Central Africa, Abdoulaye Bathily, for his international mediation role in the Central African Republic. I also thank the African Union, MISCA troop-contributing countries, ECCAS, the European Union, donor countries and multilateral and non-governmental organizations for their continued efforts in support of peace in the Central African Republic.
