

POLICY BRIEFING

# Can the Central African Republic escape its violent past?

## Abstract

The security situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) remains volatile two months after the rebel Séléka coalition seized the capital and forced the country's former president into exile. Rampant violations of humanitarian and human rights law exacerbate the suffering of the population. The Séléka takeover ushered in a total collapse of the rule of law and fundamental institutions such as the justice system, law enforcement apparatus, public administration and social services. Under the tutelage of the Economic Community of Central African States, a National Transitional Council was set up in April to serve as a governing body and constituent assembly for the next 18 months. French and regional forces are on the ground, and the UN is monitoring the developments through its Integrated Peace Building Office in the Central African Republic. Yet the deepening crisis is likely to require stronger and more concerted efforts — both domestic and international — to ensure that the country's tragic history of violence does not repeat itself.

This Policy Briefing is an initiative of the Policy Department, DG EXPO

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**PUBLICATION:**

English-language manuscript completed on 04 June 2013.  
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*Printed in Belgium*

This Policy Briefing is available on the intranet site of the Directorate-General for External Policies, in the [Regions and countries](#) or [Policy Areas](#) section.

Translation into FR

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## 1. Timeline of the current crisis

<b>December 2012</b>	Disgruntled Séléka forces begin their advance towards Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic (CAR).
<b>11 January 2013</b>	The Libreville Agreements are signed. These include a cease-fire agreement and set out the terms for transitional power-sharing arrangements.
<b>18 January</b>	Nicolas Tiangaye is appointed Prime Minister.
<b>3 February</b>	A transitional national unity government is formed.
<b>22-25 March</b>	Séléka rebels launch an attack against and march into Bangui. President François Bozizé flees to Cameroon. On 25 March, Michel Djotodia proclaims himself president, suspends the constitution and dissolves the transitional government and the parliament. Chaos engulfs the capital and the interior of the CAR, public administration and services are disrupted, civilians suffer without protection, violations of humanitarian and human rights law are rife, and humanitarian access is severely restricted due to insecurity.
<b>3 and 18 April</b>	<p>Two extraordinary summits of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) are held in N'Djamena, Chad. Participants include African leaders, the UN, the EU and the <i>Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie</i> (OIF). Key outcomes include: calling for the establishment of a National Transitional Council; recognising the Libreville Agreements as the bases for transitional arrangements; defining an 18-month period of transition, after which elections should be held; prohibiting members of government from running in the presidential elections; calling for the creation of an International Contact Group (ICG) to facilitate cooperation.</p> <p>On 18 April, ECCAS decides to increase the Multinational Force of Central Africa (FOMAC/MICOPAX) in the CAR from 500 to 2 000 troops.</p> <p>Responding to criticism that National Transitional Council was not established transparently and is not inclusive, ECCAS requests that the Council's members be increased from 105 to 135. The increase allows for more groups to be represented and bolsters the institution's strength and efficiency.</p>
<b>8 April</b>	Prime Minister Tiangaye visits Paris and officially requests that France militarily support the Central African Multinational Forces (FOMAC) to restore security in Bangui. Tiangaye then travels to Brussels and South Africa to rally support and end the CAR's diplomatic isolation.
<b>13 April</b>	<p>Election — by the National Transitional Council's acclamation — of Michel Djotodia as interim President, a role changed to chief of the National Transitional Council at the second ECCAS summit on April 18.</p> <p>Fighting breaks out between Séléka troops and Bangui residents in a sign of increasing frustration with uncontrolled elements, which have preyed on the population. Random violence and shootings occur.</p>
<b>22 April</b>	Jeffrey Feltman, UN Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs, visits the CAR and expresses grave concern about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation.

	Prime Minister Tiangaye visits Brussels, including the European Parliament.
<b>3 May</b>	The International Contact Group meets for the first time and adopts the 'Appeal of Brazzaville'.
<b>15 May</b>	Margaret Vogt, Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peace Building Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), presents her 'Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the CAR' (S/2013/261) to the UN Security Council in the presence of Prime Minister Tiangaye. She describes a state that is descending into anarchy and advocates the deployment of a neutral security force.
<b>17 May</b>	ECCAS defence ministers meet in Libreville, Gabon, to launch discussions on MICOPAX, including its mandate.
<b>22 May</b>	The funds given to the annual humanitarian appeal (Consolidated Appeal, CAP) for the CAR reach only 30.9 % of the amount requested.

## 2. Yet another coup

The Central African Republic (CAR) has been plagued by chronic instability, rebellions and coups since it gained independence from France in 1960. Episodes of violence have occurred repeatedly: in the mid-1990s, during Ange Félix Patassé's rule; in 2002-2003, when François Bozizé captured power; between 2004 and 2007, when the seeds of the present conflict were sown; and, most recently, since December 2012.

### 2.1. Lingering insecurity

The CAR's weak state, poor security, marginalisation and armed rebel groups have long bred poverty and instability. The civilian population has stood at the front line of abuse.

An ineffective security apparatus is an obstacle to law and order.

Grievances fuel armed rebel violence.

At the heart of the regular upsurges of violence lies a tragic reality. Over the past decades, the CAR — today positioned as 180th of 187 countries in the 2013 Human Development report — has never known anything other than widespread poverty and underdevelopment, great disparities (particularly between the south and the marginalised, neglected north) and a weak state. Citizens have remained utterly unprotected as whole regions have faced lawlessness and fallen prey to banditry and foreign rebel groups, including Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony. Rebels and military forces from neighbouring countries (Sudan and Chad, for example) have on several occasions used the CAR's territory as hiding place or remote base for their own fights. Past CAR leaders also relied on foreign — Chadian, Congolese or other — rebel forces when it suited their interests and have turned a blind eye to the atrocities committed by these foreign fighters.

Contributing to this situation is a state security apparatus that is ineffective and constitutes a major obstacle to stability: troops in the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) are few, ill-trained, undisciplined, demoralised, badly paid, and ill-equipped. They resort to living off civilians through looting and other abuses, acts for which they are not held responsible.

Many end up in the ranks of the numerous rebel groups, as much for reasons of marginalisation as for greed. While rebel forces' grievances can topple a regime, long-term armed rebellion in the CAR also often boils

Civilians are pushed to form vigilante and self-defence groups.

Impunity and lawlessness facilitate armed rebellion.

down to a need for everyday essentials. And when rebels lack provisions, they — like the state forces — regularly seek what they need through armed violence and the harassment of the civilian population.

The rest of the population is left with bleak options. Many flee their villages and hide temporarily in the bush or join the ranks of internally displaced people (IDPs). Others take justice — and the readily available small arms — into their own hands and form vigilante groups, adding one more armed factor to an already complicated security formula.

The country's lingering culture of unfettered and unpunished banditry and human rights violations (on the part of both non-state and state forces) set the stage for the coup of March 24. This backdrop has also contributed to the difficulty of ending the chaos and improving the security and humanitarian situation since the Séléka<sup>1</sup> takeover.

## 2.2. Chronicle of the fall of Bozizé<sup>2</sup>

Disenchantment with President François Bozizé had grown widespread since he seized power in a coup in 2003, as he brought considerable hardship to the population. Although his position was confirmed in elections in 2005 and 2011, both were marred by allegations of irregularities, and the results were contested by the opposition.

Yet the imperatives of wider regional stability and status quo meant that Bozizé's regime was propped up for years by neighbours, despite mounting evidence of his intransigence on reconciliation and political dialogue and his neglect of the country's chronic underdevelopment. Only when armed rebellion engulfed the CAR did Bozizé and his entourage become a liability, necessitating a change of the guard. At that point — and only then — international actors turned to the new leadership in an attempt to avoid yet another spillover of the conflict.

The regime of former President François Bozizé, maintained with considerable foreign support, brought hardship and failed to address marginalisation of northern regions and ethnic groups.

For years, Bozizé was strongly opposed by a number of armed rebel groups around the country, including the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR), led by Michel Djotodia. Since French colonial rule and throughout the regimes since, ethnic — and, consequently, domestic regional — politicians in the CAR have secured power by developing a political and economic support network. Bozizé himself came to power after striking a deal with northern rebels — including Djotodia, who

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<sup>1</sup> Séléka means 'alliance' in Sango, the CAR's national language. The coalition includes: the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR), the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP), the Patriotic Convention for Saving the Country (CPSK), the Democratic Front of the Central African People (FDPC), and the Chadian Popular Front for Recovery (FPR)

<sup>2</sup> This section is based on the Quick Policy Insight entitled Coup in the Central African Republic: Chronicle of a fall foretold (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/fr/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=93033>)

comes from a Muslim pastoralist group — and promising them an end to their long marginalisation. The tensions during Bozizé's rule, the 2004-2007 CAR Bush War and the current crisis are all rooted in Bozizé's failure to honour this bargain.

After years of low-intensity violent conflict, an offensive by rebel forces destabilised the government in 2012.

Bozizé called for international help, but garnered little support.

Hundreds died and thousands were displaced in the escalating violence of the Bush War. Under the peace agreement that finally ended the conflict, parties agreed to amnesty, reconciliation and the integration of fighters into the army. The 2011 elections ushered in a unity government, but rebels grew dissatisfied with the lack of reforms and the government's failure to implement the milestones of the 2007 peace deal — especially the integration of combatants into the national armed forces — and turned to arms once again. In December 2012, following mounting unrest through the autumn, the Séléka coalition launched a northeast-southwest offensive against the capital. The population there took to the streets, calling on the government for help against the militants. But government forces proved incapable of containing the offensive and restoring order. Faced with an imminent takeover, Bozizé called for international assistance. He received some reinforcement to the regional Multinational Force of Central Africa (FOMAC), made up of troops from the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). France – traditionally a 'kingmaker' in its former colony – also increased its military personnel, but they were 'provided only with a mandate to protect French and international citizens. In search of other allies, Bozizé secured the military backing of 400 troops from South Africa — a commitment that would later cause much controversy for President Jacob Zuma.

Under international pressure, a ceasefire was brokered in January 2013, bringing a short-lived unity government to power.

Neighbouring countries, concerned by the potential of instability that might follow a rebel takeover, sought to broker an armistice. The presidents of Chad, the Republic of Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea mediated a ceasefire between the rebels and the CAR government, signed on 11 January 2013 in the Gabonese capital, Libreville. The Libreville Agreements (a declaration of principles, a ceasefire agreement and a political agreement) set out the following terms: the dissolution of the national assembly, a one-year transition unity government, the integration of fighters into the central army, release of political prisoners, economic reforms and a promise that Bozizé would not contest the 2016 elections. The government was restructured to include rebels and members of the civilian opposition, as well as Bozizé's supporters. Nicolas Tiangaye, a member of the civilian opposition, was appointed Prime Minister.

Only two months later, however, Séléka accused Bozizé of again failing to honour his commitments. Fighting broke out on 22 March, and in just two days the rebel coalition captured the capital and seized power. They met

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/25/us-centralafrica-rebels-african-idUSBRE9200DI20130325>

<sup>4</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/car-coup-comes-amid-deepening-humanitarian-crisis>

On March 22, the Séléka coalition launched an offensive, capturing the capital two days later. Michel Djotodia proclaimed himself president, whilst South Africa recalled its troops amidst controversy.

Following the coup, the African Union suspended the Central African Republic's membership and imposed sanctions on rebel leaders.

The EU called for the respect of the Libreville Agreements and international humanitarian and human rights law.

France and the US condemned the violent coup, while remaining silent on the status of the unpopular, ousted president.

Michel Djotodia confirmed Nicolas Tiangaye as the CAR's President.

little resistance as they entered Bangui, although a number of casualties marked their advance: Zuma confirmed that at least 13 South African troops had died and 27 were injured during the clashes. These fatalities caused political controversy in South Africa and led to the recall of the troops. (President Zuma, however, declared only a month later that South Africa was ready to redeploy them.) As Séléka rebels entered Bangui, President François Bozizé fled the country. Djotodia, a coalition leader, declared himself president on 25 March.

International reaction unanimously condemned the coup and called for calm and the respect of January's agreement. In a quick and decisive move, the African Union (AU) 'suspend[ed] with immediate effect the Central African Republic from all the African Union's activities'<sup>3</sup>. The AU also imposed travel bans on rebel leaders and froze their assets. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon denounced the 'unconstitutional seizure' and called 'for the swift restoration of constitutional order'<sup>4</sup>. The UN Security Council convened emergency talks and said it was ready to adopt 'further measures'.

The EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton called on all parties to engage in talks and to work within the framework of the Libreville agreement. Her statement highlighted the need to uphold international humanitarian law, protect the civilian population and avoid human rights abuses. Under the EU's Cotonou Agreement, when essential conditions listed in Article 9 (including human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law) are deemed to have been breached, formal consultations can be called under Article 96, development cooperation can be suspended and 'appropriate measures' adopted. No such procedure has been foreseen for the CAR, as the EU considers the transitional arrangements a strong enough commitment by the new authorities to restoring the rule of law and upholding human rights.

France deplored the coup. The United States expressed its deep concern 'about a serious deterioration in the security situation' and called on parties to establish law and order in Bangui, restore basic services, allow unhindered humanitarian access and respect the Libreville Agreement.

As a result of the international response, Djotodia pledged in one of his first statements to respect the terms of the Libreville agreement and to institute a power-sharing government. He also announced that Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye would remain in office – an important decision as Tiangaye was generally recognised internationally as the head of the only legitimate transitional government.

### **3. Where chaos reigns**

#### **3.1. Sources of instability**

The CAR's political configuration plays a central role in the current difficulties of stabilising the country. Bozizé's legacy was a hollow and

Bozizé left a 'shell' of a state behind.

After the rebel takeover, the public administration, justice system, law enforcement and social services collapsed.

Grievances and greed combine in the demands placed on the transitional government, which will find it difficult to satisfy its complicated audience's material, political and economic desires.

The fragmentation of the Séléka coalition is a major impediment to stability.

The National Transitional Council's success hinges on inclusiveness and its ability to reconcile a wide range of interests.

ineffective state strongly based on patronage. While leaving parts of the country and its population extremely poor and marginalised, his regime maintained itself thanks to a powerful inner circle at home and external support from surrounding countries and France to maintain power. The Séléka takeover aggravated the situation by ushering in a total collapse of the rule of law and of fundamental institutions such as the justice system, law enforcement forces, public administration and social services. The turmoil also created a favourable environment for Kony's LRA, which has managed, experts fear, to regroup yet again.

One of the leading themes of rebellion in the past has been the governments' neglect of grievances and fighters' claims. This is true today as well. Many Séléka rebels signed up because they were promised material and political benefits — compensation and an end to marginalisation. Yet few of these demands have been satisfied.

In the short term, uncontrolled Séléka elements constitute a serious liability and destabilising factor. Many coalition troops, frustrated at not being paid, have benefited from the chaos, undertaking armed robbery and other violent acts. The authorities have lacked the means, and perhaps the will, to stop them. The UN Security Council (UNSC) has 'called on Séléka leaders to ensure that all Séléka armed groups abstain from all violent action and be regrouped without delay into cantonment sites, according to the Libreville agreement'<sup>5</sup>. However, cantonment and disarmament have been very slow and have yet to yield results.

In the longer term, stability will first and foremost depend on how skilfully Djotodia can build a support network and address a wide spectrum of grievances from north and south and from ethnic and religious groups. He will need to appease past and present, domestic and foreign strongmen and satisfy their economic interests.

The Séléka coalition is heterogeneous — a fact that was identified at the time of the coup as likely to undermine the group's political base. It is becoming clear that the alliance's diversity is also a major problem in the politico-security arena. Lacking a unified political and strategic agenda, the coalition has not produced a clear and coherent political programme. Fragmentation and in-fighting within the alliance may deepen and prolong instability in the country.

The task of adopting a transitional charter and passing an electoral code was assigned to the National Transitional Council, set up in April to act as a governing body and constituent assembly in the CAR for the next 18 months. Although the Council is responsible for promoting a smooth transition, critics have argued that it was not established transparently and is not inclusive. International actors have pressured the Council to become a venue of national reconciliation, and its ranks have consequently been

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/sc10993.doc.htm>

expanded to 135 members, including the Séléka, political parties, former Bozizé opponents, civil society members, former politicians and high-ranking officials from the previous regime. The divisions within the body were visible at its extraordinary session on 7 May. The road ahead is likely to be bumpy, even during the negotiations over the Council's internal rules.

### 3.2. Human rights jeopardised

The security situation remains highly volatile, and the civilian population suffers from regular human rights violations.

Women and children are among the worst affected by abuses.

Witnesses in Bangui reported gunfire and widespread looting — both by rebels and residents — during the coup, targeting shops, homes and offices, including those of the diplomatic community. Nearly two months have passed since then, but the security situation remains highly volatile throughout the country. As in the past, civilians bear the brunt of the human rights violations<sup>6</sup>, according to Amnesty International. These violations include extrajudicial executions, torture, the rape of women and girls, armed robbery, looting and indiscriminate shootings, resulting in multiple deaths and injuries. The findings of Human Rights Watch confirm these reports and unequivocally identify the Séléka forces as the perpetrators of violent acts — some of which fall under the jurisdiction of the ICC — throughout the country between December 2012 and April.

Reprisals aimed at soldiers and officials of the Bozizé regime, religiously motivated attacks, threats targeting civil society figures and, especially, violations against women and children have been denounced by several organisations. UNICEF has particularly condemned the continued recruitment and re-recruitment of child soldiers and has called for the immediate release of all children associated with armed groups<sup>7</sup>.

International actors have consistently called for an immediate end to impunity. In response, Djotodia issued a decree creating a National Commission of Inquiry to investigate crimes and human rights abuses committed in the country since 2002, including those that have taken place since December 2012. This is an important act — albeit largely symbolic, as efforts to bring perpetrators to justice have been negligible. Once the situation stabilises, ending impunity should be one of the priorities of the transitional authorities.

### 3.3. The humanitarian situation

The CAR is sinking deeper into humanitarian crisis.

The UN's humanitarian agency OCHA and several other UN agencies have repeatedly pointed to the chaos in Bangui. Yet the situation has not differed much outside the capital. As the CAR's humanitarian crisis deepens, the task of assisting civilians, including refugees and IDPs — already challenging before the coup, according to a number of

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5196173c4.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_69081.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_69081.html)

international organisations — has become next to impossible.

At present, it is estimated that the country's entire population of 4.6 million is, in one way or another, affected by the crisis. Children, who comprise 50 % of the population, are in a particularly precarious situation. Nearly 50 000 refugees left the country, most of them crossing over to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and the number of IDPs is estimated to be just above 200 000. The upsurge of conflict in the Darfur area has also generated reverse flows, with some refugees arriving into northeastern CAR. Altogether about 150 000 people face severe food insecurity, and about one third of malnourished children are also affected by tuberculosis or HIV/AIDS. Food insecurity persists in many areas, not least due to the looting and destruction of crops and seed stocks and livestock theft. The international donors' health cluster is organising an emergency vaccination campaign to counter a measles outbreak in Bangui that affects nearly 150 000 children. Many of these issues already existed last December, and have been exacerbated by the events since March. Health facilities and schools have closed — excluding hundreds of thousands of children from school for months — and the distribution channels have been crippled.

Adding to the formidable challenge of access due to poor and destroyed infrastructure and to the lack of tarred roads in most areas, violence and banditry now further hinder the delivery of essential supplies to the population. In this anarchical setting, humanitarian actors also find it difficult to properly assess immediate needs (although some rapid response mechanism assessments have been carried out successfully<sup>8</sup>), map the humanitarian capacity and presence in the field, and help those who need it most. Planning, especially for the short term, is nearly impossible. Assistance activities were resumed in May 2013 but are still severely restricted.

A consolidated humanitarian appeal for the CAR launched on 14 December 2012 had reached a funding level of only 30.9 % by 22 May 2013. The deterioration of the humanitarian situation is expected to significantly increase the amount needed, as described in the mid-year evaluation.

Nearly all of the CAR's 4.6 million inhabitants are affected by the crisis. Vulnerable populations need food, shelter and basic health services, and the humanitarian needs are expected to grow.

Accessing those in need is difficult, as distribution channels have been disrupted by a lack of infrastructure and safety.

More humanitarian funding is needed: less than one third of the aid requested has been provided.

### **3.4. International efforts for stabilisation**

ECCAS is the leading actor in political negotiations and has the greatest military presence.

The international community has condemned the coup and has called for a return to law and order and an end to violence. Yet international actors were also conspicuously silent after the coup on the future of Bozizé. The conflict, international partners seemed to say, was to be contained and solved within the region: the Security Council supported ECCAS and the African Union's efforts of to solve the crisis. The leaders of ECCAS reacted

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<sup>8</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/central-african-republic-situation-report-no-16-17-may-2013>

quickly, giving their blessing to the regime change and, during two summits held in N'Djamena (Chad), helping devise and approve the National Transitional Council's role. The Republic of Congo — through President Denis Sassou Nguesso, the lead mediator in the Central African crisis — and Chad have put their weight behind the negotiations.

BINUCA, a special UN monitoring mission, plays an important role.

The UN has closely monitored the events through BINUCA, a special UN political mission (SPM) established on 1 January 2010. (BINUCA replaces BONUCA, the United Nations Mission in the CAR. In her 15 May briefing to the UNSC, Margaret Vogt, head of BINUCA, emphasised that a 'neutral security force is urgently needed to help restore the stability and counter the absence of law and order in the Central African Republic (CAR)<sup>9</sup>. The UN Security Council subsequently called for the restoration of peace and security and an end to violence, and expressed its willingness to consider further options to stabilise the CAR, including those that might eventually require the deployment of troops.

French forces and troops from the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in Central Africa (MICOPAX) are on the ground.

At present, besides a 550-strong French force, which only has a mandate to defend French nationals and interests, international forces in the country include those of the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in Central Africa (or MICOPAX, which includes troops from Gabon, Cameroon, Chad, the Republic of Congo and the DRC). As a mission of FOMAC, MICOPAX falls within the security architecture of ECCAS. The Mission receives funding from the EU's African Peace Facility (APF, currently EUR 6.3 million) and intelligence, logistical and planning support from France. Since 1 November 2004, peace support operations in the CAR have received nearly EUR 100 million in funding from the APF<sup>10</sup>.

MICOPAX will expand to 2 000 troops and receive a stronger mandate to increase its effectiveness.

Presently, MICOPAX count only 730 troops and, according to its original mandate, cannot act to prevent human rights violations — a clear functional shortcoming at the moment. However, the ECCAS summit of 18 April called for the number of troops to be increased to 2 000, although the summit was silent on how or when troops would be deployed. The 17 May meeting of ECCAS discussed strengthening the mandate of the force to reorient it towards maintaining order, securing the transition process and the elections, and restructuring FACA. Meanwhile, a Military Assessment Mission, led by the African Union and including representatives of ECCAS, the UN and OIF, has been dispatched to assess MICOPAX needs.

Mainstreaming an approach linking relief, rehabilitation

In the European Commission's 'General Guidelines on Operational Priorities for Humanitarian Aid in 2013', the Commission allocated EUR 8 million for vulnerable populations. For the EU — which remains the CAR's largest donor, having pledged EUR 137 million under the 10th

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44915>

<sup>10</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regional-cooperation/peace/peace-support-operations/micopax\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regional-cooperation/peace/peace-support-operations/micopax_en.htm)

and long-term development (LRRD) is strongly advisable for EU development cooperation with the CAR under the 11th EDF.

The stability of the CAR will also be contingent on wider political and financial interests within the region.

European Development Fund (2008-2013) — the CAR's current circumstances offer a bleak account of the Union's development cooperation. The upcoming 11th EDF (2014-2020) must therefore pursue its efforts to strengthen governance and socio-economic and financial rehabilitation. The protracted crisis and the collapse of state institutions necessitate an integrated approach in the CAR. To deliver assistance efficiently, the synergy between humanitarian aid and development cooperation programmes must be guaranteed, notably by linking relief, rehabilitation and long-term development (LRRD). As in Mali, budget support could focus on institution and local capacity building in order to prevent a relapse into crisis.

The fragility of the situation, the porousness of the country's borders and the potential of a deepening crisis that could destabilise neighbouring countries require decisive action. The African Union and ECCAS have a vested interest in securing peace and stability and, therefore, strengthening — politically and financially — neutral and appropriately mandated international forces, restructuring Central Africa's security forces, and continuing to fight against armed and uncontrolled rebel groups, including the LRA. It remains to be seen, however, whether regional efforts will really aim to strengthen the CAR — by reforming the security sector, building the state and institutions and enhancing development — or whether the actions of the country's regional powers will be dictated by their short-term interest in propping up a regime that can contain problems within the CAR's borders, where only the CAR's population bears the costs.

#### 4. Policy options

Possible policy options that could be considered by the European Parliament:

- Call upon the CAR's authorities to restore law and order, and to ensure the protection of the civil population.
- Urge CAR authorities to adopt measures to restore control and discipline among military personnel, including through a cantonment process. Call for a wider security sector reform (SSR), including the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants (with a special emphasis on child soldiers) and measures to combat the proliferation of small arms. Call on ECCAS, the UN and the EU to support SSR efforts in the CAR.
- Urge the CAR authorities to put an end to impunity. Denounce unlawful and arbitrary violence and abuses against the civilian population, the harassment of civil society, and reprisals against the allies and soldiers of the former regime.
- Declare that those committing acts punishable under international humanitarian and human rights law or falling under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court should be held

responsible, irrespective of their alliance to a given force or group. In this context, support the monitoring efforts of BINUCA.

- Express support for intensified EU efforts to assess and strengthen the role and presence of MICOPAX.
- Monitor closely developments in the CAR and support a transition that establishes a more broad-based and inclusive political and economic model and enhances reconciliation. Call on the CAR's authorities to respect the roadmap of transition established in N'Djamena.
- Call on CAR authorities to facilitate the humanitarian actors' safe access to vulnerable populations across the country.

Express support for — and commit to — an LRRD approach in the CAR in order to guarantee the effectiveness of EU aid and place the country on the track of sustainable development.

### 5. Map of the Central African Republic



Map No. 4048 Rev. 6 UNITED NATIONS  
April 2013

Department of Field Support  
Cartographic Section