



Plenary sitting

B8-0092/2017

17.1.2017

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Central African Republic
(2017/2507(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

B8-0092/2017

**European Parliament resolution on Central African Republic
(2017/2507(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Central African Republic (CAR),
- having regard to the Council conclusions on CAR of 9 February 2015, 20 July 2015, 14 March 2016, 19 April 2016,
- having regard to the statement of 6 January 2017 by the Spokesperson of the EU Delegation to CAR on the recent attacks against MINUSCA peacekeepers;
- having regard to the Donors Conference for the Central African Republic held on 17 November 2016 in Brussels,
- having regards to the press statement by the UN Security Council of 7 January 2017,
- having regard to the statement of 28 November 2016 by the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic,
- having regard to the statement of 26 November 2016 by Adama Dieng, the UN's special adviser on the prevention of genocide,
- having regard to the UN human rights report of 14 December 2016,
- having regard to the statement of 26 October 2016 by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the outbreak of violence in Bangui, CAR,
- having regard to the UN resolution 2301 (2016) renewing MINUSCA's mandate at until 15 November 2017, adopted by the Security Council at its 7747th meeting, on 26 July 2016,
- having regard to the UN resolution 2262 (2016) renewing the Central African Republic (CAR) sanctions regime until 31 January 2017,
- having regard to the ACP-EU JPA resolution on the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) of 19 June 2013, and of 17 June 2015,
- having regard to the revised Cotonou Agreement,
- having regard to the general elections which were held in CAR on 30 December 2015 to elect the President and National Assembly, with a second round of the presidential elections and a re-run of the parliamentary organized on 14 February 2016, and with run-offs on 31 March 2016,
- having regard to the meeting held on 10 June 2016 between UN Secretary-General

Ban Ki-moon and Faustin Archange Touadéra, President of the Central African Republic;

- having regard to the Amnesty International report of November 2016 on the Central African Republic 2015/2016,
 - having regard to the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), ratified by CAR in 2001,
 - having regard to the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been signed by CAR,
 - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- a) whereas since August 2016 an alarming increase in the number of incidents of human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law perpetrated by the different factions of the ex-Séléka, the Anti-Balaka, and their affiliates has been recorded in CAR, which have resulted in at least 100 killings, forced civilian displacement and the destruction of property;
- b) whereas a series of violent events which occurred in October 2016 in CAR threaten to tip the country back into conflict; whereas at least 11 people were killed and another 10 wounded at an internally displaced persons camp, and 30 people died and 57 were wounded after the mainly Muslim militia group Seleka attacked civilians, NGO offices and fought with UN peacekeepers in the central town of Kaga Bandoro;
- c) whereas in November 2016 militia fighters hunted down and massacred members of the Fulani ethnic group carrying out house-to-house searches, looting, abducting residents and killing 85 civilians in Bria, 600 km north-east of Bangui;
- d) whereas at the beginning of January 2017 unknown attackers ambushed against MINUSCA convoys: in Bokayai, in the northwest part of the country, in which one Bangladeshi peacekeeper was killed, and in the south-eastern part of the country in which two Moroccan peacekeepers were killed and two other were wounded; whereas UN Security Council and the EU have strongly condemned those attacks;
- e) whereas CAR continues to suffer from instability, with entire regions beyond the control of the government even after a relative period of calm following February 2016 elections that brought to power President Faustin Touadéra, whose government maintains committed to improving security;
- f) whereas according to Amnesty International the lack of justice in CAR is so acute that some victims are forced to live daily lives alongside their aggressors since hundreds have escaped in large-scale prison breaks, and many accused of the worst crimes have never been arrested; whereas only 8 of 35 prisons function, and few courts operate outside Bangui;

- g) whereas although MINUSCO, whose mission was prolonged till November 2017, has helped authorities arrest 384 people for crimes linked to the conflict between September 2014 and October 2016, but this figure includes only a handful of high-profile individuals suspected of having committed the most serious crimes;
 - h) whereas it is estimated that this year 2.2 million people will be in need of humanitarian assistance, including 1.1 million children; whereas at the end of 2016, an estimated 420,000 people were internally displaced and an additional 453,000 persons had sought refuge in neighbouring countries;
 - i) whereas the situation remains especially dire for children: some 139 children in every 1,000 born die before their fifth birthdays, and 880 women in every 100,000 die from pregnancy-related causes; whereas an estimated 39,000 children under 5 will suffer from severe acute malnutrition;
 - j) whereas respect for human rights is a fundamental value of the European Union and represents an essential element of the Cotonou agreement;
 - k) whereas a government-led operation to close the Mpoko 28301 IDPs site, close to the airport in Bangui, has been ongoing since mid-December 2016 aiming at dismantling huts and sending home around 5435 IDPs; whereas cash assistance is given to returnees to facilitate their re-installation, which however is considered by some as insufficient and leads to increased community tensions;
 - l) whereas at a conference in Brussels held on 17 November 2016, international donors pledged €2.06 billion to support the Central African Republic, with the EU providing €409 million between 2016 and 2020;
 - m) whereas the EU is the largest donor of humanitarian assistance to CAR; whereas EC and EU Member States contributions since 2014 amounted to 262 million Euro;
 - n) whereas the EU has established on 15th July 2014, the first multi-donor EU Trust Fund called Bêkou dedicated to CAR which contributes to the stabilization and reconstruction of the country;
1. Strongly condemns all attacks and provocations against MINUSCA by armed groups, and recalls that attacks targeting peacekeepers may constitute a war crime under international humanitarian law; expresses its sincere condolences to the governments of Morocco and Bangladesh, the families of the victims and MINUSCA; calls on CAR authorities to swiftly investigate the attack and bring the perpetrators to justice;
 2. Considers the peaceful holding of the combined elections on 14 February 2016 in CAR with a significant voter turnout as a real success for the political transition process; commends authorities for their efforts, which have enhanced the credibility and transparency of the votes; welcomes the commitment of MINUSCA and the support provided by Operation Sangaris which have contributed substantially to ensuring that the electoral process passed off peacefully;

3. Stresses however, that many challenges on the path towards national reconciliation and the country's reconstruction remain, such as: disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of armed groups, state-building and the reform of the security sector, the fight against impunity and the establishment of transitional justice, the restoration of the rule of law and social cohesion, the provision of basic social services, the restarting of the economy and the creation of employment opportunities; recalls at the same time that only adhering to principles of good democratic and economic governance, following a constructive approach to dialogue in the spirit of the Bangui Forum guarantees success;
4. Emphasises especially the importance of close coordination with the partners involved, in particular the Central African authorities, the European Union, the World Bank and the UN, to ensure good cooperation and complementarity in the efforts underway to restore stability in the CAR; urges for immediate actions to counter impunity for war and other crimes and to help rebuild the justice system since a lack of justice had contributed to an increase in violent clashes in recent months;
5. Calls on international community to support the political process in CAR at this critical time and enhance common efforts to facilitate political dialogue, build trust and ensure peaceful co-existence between religious communities in the country,
6. Underlines the paramount importance of security; stresses in this respect the necessity of reforms to transform CAR's armed forces into a professional, democratically controlled and ethnically representative army; welcomes the decision of the European Council of 19 April 2016 to establish military training mission in CAR (EUTM RCA) to contribute to the country's defence sector reform; expects that it will help modernise, improve effectiveness, and inclusiveness of Central African Armed Forces (FACA) through strategic advice to the CAR's Ministry of Defence and the general staff, as well as education and training;
7. Remains concerned about the humanitarian situation in CAR, in particular as regards displaced and/or enclaved communities; calls for the international community to continue to respond to the humanitarian emergency and calls on all parties to guarantee humanitarian agencies and their staff safe, timely and unhindered access to all areas, in full compliance with the UN's guiding principles and international humanitarian law, in order to enable them to perform their tasks of protecting civilians and delivering aid;
8. Calls on authorities to put in place conditions for returning refugees and displaced persons to their home communities; calls on the EU to continue supporting CAR authorities to increase the capacity of the public sector to deliver basic social services to the population, to engage in the stabilisation of the country and the reconstruction of the State and to meet its obligations to protect civilians; welcomes the success of the Bêkou Fund for the reconstruction of the CAR;
9. Welcomes the scaling up of the EU and Member States' humanitarian engagement with CAR in light of the evolving needs; calls on all donors to urgently fulfil their pledges; stresses that life-saving assistance should be provided to those in need within CAR as well as to refugees in neighbouring countries;
10. Calls for international donors to focus their assistance on fostering economic recovery in CAR, creating livelihoods and on helping to restore State presence by linking relief,

rehabilitation and development,

11. Instructs President to forward this resolution to the Transitional Government authorities of CAR, Council, the Commission, HR/VP Federica Mogherini, the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary General, the institutions of the African Union, ECCAS, the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly and the EU Member States.