

UNCT

Mohamed Ag Ayoya

**Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General,
Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator**



Mr. Ayoya brings over two decades of professional experience and extensive knowledge of humanitarian affairs, with a particular focus on complex emergencies and child protection issues in field settings. Mr. Ayoya served since early 2022 as the Representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Afghanistan. He has also served as UNICEF Representative in other conflict settings, notably in Somalia and South Sudan between 2019 and 2022, where he worked closely with United Nations peace operations, as well as in Guinea (2013-2016) and Zimbabwe (2016-2019).

Mr. Ayoya holds a medical degree from the University of Bamako in Mali and a PhD in Nutritional Sciences from Cornell University in the United States of America. Mr. Ayoya is fluent in English, French, Tamasheq, Bamanan and Songhai.

Meritxell Relaño Arana

**UNICEF
Représentante**



Meritxell Relaño Arana is a Spanish sociologist who has had a long career defending children's rights on a global scale. Her dedication to this cause began at an early age, and her academic training has provided her with the expertise needed to make a significant impact.

Meritxell Relaño Arana holds a doctorate in political science and sociology, as well as a master's degree in business administration, and began her professional career working with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Spain. This first experience awakened in her a passion for humanitarian work, particularly in the field of education.

In 1999, she joined the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), embarking on a remarkable journey that has taken her to different countries facing complex challenges. Her first roles involved supporting education programmes in Colombia, Timor-Leste and Mozambique. She has subsequently held senior positions, overseeing UNICEF operations in Djibouti, Gambia, Yemen and currently the Central African Republic (CAR). She was also Deputy Director of Programme and Emergency Operations in Geneva. Meritxell is fluent in French, English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Dr Marie Roseline Darnycka Bélizaire

OMS
Représentant



Appointed by the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr Marie Roseline Darnycka BÉLIZAIRE officially took up her post as WHO Representative in the Central African Republic (CAR) on 30 December 2024.

She is making history by becoming the first woman to hold this post in 30 years, and only the second since the creation of the WHO office in CAR in 1961. A medical doctor by training and an expert in public health, Dr BÉLIZAIRE has extensive experience in strengthening health systems and managing emergencies. Her expertise will be an

essential asset in helping the Central African government to achieve universal health coverage by 2030.

Familiar with the health context in CAR, she worked there for over four years. In 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, she was deployed by the WHO to coordinate the national response to this crisis. Prior to her appointment in CAR, she held a number of strategic positions within the WHO, including in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritania and at the organisation's headquarters in Geneva. Her career has enabled her to lead public health initiatives in emergency contexts, to work with national and international partners and to contribute to the transformation of health systems.

Of Haitian origin, Dr BÉLIZAIRE has multidisciplinary expertise covering family and community medicine, primary healthcare, epidemiology, public health, business administration, research and leadership. Her involvement in fragile contexts and her experience in managing health emergencies make her a key figure in the transformation of the health system in CAR. Dr BÉLIZAIRE holds a clinical speciality, five master's degrees and a PhD. She recently completed a fellowship in global health leadership at Harvard University. She is fluent in French, English and Spanish, as well as Portuguese and Haitian Creole.

Abdoulaye Sawadogo

OCHA
Chef de Bureau



Mr Abdoulaye Sawadogo has been OCHA's Head of Office in the Central African Republic (CAR) since November 2024, where he had previously been Deputy Head of Office from May 2009 until April 2014. Prior to this, Mr Sawadogo was Head of the OCHA Office in Haiti from May 2023 until November 2024. He was also Deputy Head of Office in Chad between May 2014 and February 2019.

His experience includes a stint at the OCHA Regional Office for West and Central Africa (ROWCA) in Dakar (Senegal) from February to November 2019, as well as with the OCHA team in the Democratic Republic of

Congo from November 2019 to May 2023. Before joining the United Nations in May 2009, Abdoulaye Sawadogo worked for Oxfam in the Netherlands as Senior Policy Officer for West Africa and the Horn of Africa. He also held the position of Head of Programmes and Finance for development organisations such as Dutch Cooperation, Bornefondon and ActionAid in Burkina Faso between 1991 and 2003.

Originally from Burkina Faso, Abdoulaye Sawadogo holds a Master's degree in Social and Economic Policy from the University of Louvain-La-Neuve (Belgium) and a Master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso).

Jean-Luc Stalon

PNUD

Représentant Résident



Jean-Luc Stalon has been Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Central African Republic (CAR) since October 2022. Prior to his arrival in CAR, he held the position of UNDP Resident Representative in Cameroon for three years. He has extensive experience as a development practitioner, with more than 25 years in the service of the United Nations in Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Jean-Luc Stalon has a proven track record in managing crisis situations, leading post-crisis recovery and reconstruction processes and implementing large-scale structural transformation and development acceleration programmes. Over the course of his career, he has achieved substantial results in terms of partnership and resource mobilisation alongside governments, a very good knowledge of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and solid experience of multilateral cooperation and integrated UN missions.

Mr Stalon holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Yaoundé II and a Diplôme des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales from the Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris. He is the author of several high-profile development articles and a book published in November 2022, entitled 'La croissance élitiste', which explores the political, economic and social mechanisms used by elites to capture wealth in a world currently characterised by multidimensional crisis and rising inequality. He is fluent in English, French and Swahili.

Victor Andrianoro Rakoto

FNUAP

Représentant



A Madagascan national, Victor Rakoto has worked for the United Nations for more than 25 years. Since 16 September 2024, he has been the Resident Representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the Central African Republic.

From July 2022 to September 2024, he was UNFPA's Resident Representative in the Republic of Congo. Prior to this, he was UNFPA Deputy Representative in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from October 2018 to July 2022. From 2013 to 2018, he was UNFPA's Deputy Representative in Ethiopia. Prior to his appointment to this position, he served as UNFPA Assistant Representative in Madagascar since July 2004. During the same period, he supported UNFPA programmes and activities in other countries, including Mongolia, Seychelles and Mauritius. From 2002 to 2004 he was Head of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the National Commission to Combat HIV/AIDS in Madagascar and, from February 1996 to July 1999, Demographic Expert at the International Labour Office (ILO) in Madagascar.

He holds a Master's degree in Demography, awarded in 1995 by the Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques of the University of Yaoundé-II, Cameroon, and a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics, awarded in 1991 by the University of Fianarantsoa, Madagascar.

Fafa Olivier Attidzah

HCR
Représentant



Fafa Olivier Attidzah is the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the Central African Republic. Originally from Togo, Mr Attidzah has been a UNHCR official for 28 years.

Prior to his appointment as UNHCR Representative in Bangui, Central African Republic, Mr Attidzah was Deputy Representative in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. He has also held a number of senior positions in various countries, including Programme Coordinator in the Africa Division at UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva; Head of Sub-Delegation in Dadaab (Kenya); Head of Sub-Delegation in Goma (DR Congo); Head of Sub-Delegation in Shire (Ethiopia). He has also worked as Programme Officer in Bujumbura (Burundi), Monrovia (Liberia), Conakry (Guinea) and Freetown (Sierra Leone).

Mr Attidzah holds a master's degree in business administration from the University of Lomé.

Labia Irène Ivette Ouoba

FAO
Representant



Ms Labia Irène Ivette Ouoba took up her duties as FAO Representative in the Central African Republic on 5 November. She was appointed by the Director-General of FAO with the approval of the Government of the Central African Republic. A national of Burkina Faso and the United Kingdom, Ms Ouoba holds a Ph.D. in applied biochemistry and microbiology from the University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in collaboration with the University of Copenhagen,

Denmark, and a Master's degree and a Bachelor's degree in general biochemistry and microbiology from the University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Ms Ouoba has worked on food systems issues for more than 20 years, including leadership and management positions aimed at strengthening food security and improving the livelihoods of people, mainly in Africa.

Ms Ouoba joined FAO in November 2018 as Regional Coordinator of the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa at the FAO Regional Office for Africa in Accra, Ghana. Her portfolio covered 47 countries, with additional responsibilities as Sub-Regional Coordinator for West and Central Africa. She was responsible for the coordination, management and implementation of national and regional strategic interventions requiring high level expertise. She coordinates multidisciplinary teams and international experts in regional, subregional and national offices that effectively support FAO activities in line with countries' national action plans. In addition, she has developed partnerships with national governments and partners such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the African Union, regional economic communities, civil society organisations, farmers' associations and donors.

Rasmus EGENDAL

WFP

Country Director & WFP Representative in the Central African Republic



Since starting his career with WFP in 1996, Rasmus has been at the forefront of some of the largest and most challenging humanitarian operations in the world.

He has extensive experience managing WFP programmes in countries including Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Russia, Bangladesh, Timor-Leste and Indonesia. In Yemen and Syria, he has led operations to provide vital food assistance to millions of people affected by conflict and displacement.

Prior to joining WFP in CAR, Mr Rasmus was responsible at Headquarters for developing strategic partnerships with donor governments to support WFP's humanitarian and development efforts.

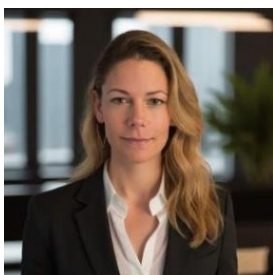
In his new role, Mr Rasmus looks forward to contributing to WFP's mission in CAR to ensure that the most vulnerable populations receive the assistance they need.

vulnerable populations receive the assistance they need, while learning about the rich traditions and culture of the country.

Sophie Van Royen

UNMAS

Programme Manager

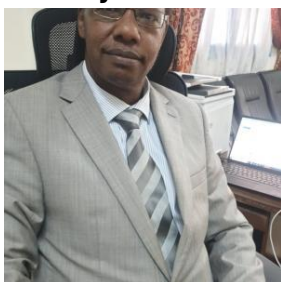


Sophie Van Royen joined UNMAS MINUSCA in December 2023. Prior to her arrival in the Central African Republic, she worked within UNMAS MINUSMA as part of the Explosive Threat Management support to the peacekeeping mission in Mali with the Blue Helmets Safety and Security project team, where she actively supported the mission in developing a comprehensive and holistic explosive threat mitigation framework. Prior to joining the United Nations, Sophie served for 18 years in the Belgian Army, first as a combat engineer officer and then as an explosive ordnance disposal officer. She has been deployed to Afghanistan, Lebanon and Mali, in addition to her day-to-day duties managing and mitigating explosive hazards in Belgium. She holds a Masters Degree in Engineering.

Tharcisse Barihuta

UNAIDS

Country Director



Dr Tharcisse Barihuta joins the United Nations as UNAIDS Country Director in the Central African Republic. He has more than 27 years of experience in strategic planning, resource mobilisation and management of health programmes, particularly communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. He has worked for several years in the prevention and management of communicable diseases, both in hospitals and in health programmes.

25 years of experience in health programme management and HIV/AIDS in its multi-sectoral dimension and resource mobilisation at national and international levels and 18 years at international level.

Dr Tharcisse Barihuta is a Burundian national. He holds a doctorate in human medicine, specialising in internal medicine, as well as a university diploma in tropical medicine and HIV/AIDS care and a university diploma in public health (Universities of Bujumbura - Burundi, Bordeaux and Nancy - France).

Dr Tharcisse Barihuta speaks French, English and some African languages such as Swahili, Kirundi and Kinyarwanda.

IFI's

Guido Rurangwa

Banque mondiale

Représentant resident



Mr Rurangwa will oversee the implementation of the CAR-World Bank Partnership Framework and the management of the portfolio of 20 national projects representing almost \$900 million in commitments financed by the International Development Association (IDA), plus a regional project estimated at \$15 millions. The partnership with the national side will aim to increase investment in human capital, the empowerment of women and girls, road infrastructure (connectivity), digital governance and business competitiveness.

Mr Rurangwa was previously resident representative for Botswana, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and senior economist for Yemen.

A Rwandan national, Guido Rurangwa joined the World Bank in 2001 as an economist in the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Department. He has worked on lending operations and analytical work in the areas of fiscal policy reforms, growth, private sector development and trade in several countries in the Africa, Middle East and North Africa regions. He has also led the World Bank's partnership strategies and their implementation in Djibouti, Egypt and the Solomon Islands.

Prior to joining the World Bank, Mr Rurangwa held senior positions in Rwanda's Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in the areas of tax policy and tax administration. He also worked at the Central Bank of Rwanda as a senior economist in the research and statistics and financial sector supervision departments. Mr Rurangwa holds a Master's degree in Macroeconomic Modelling from ENSAE ParisTech, Paris, France, a Master's degree in Statistics and Applied Economics from the Ecole Nationale de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire and a Bachelor's degree in Statistics from the Institut Africain et Mauricien de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée, Kigali, Rwanda.

M. Mamady Souare

AFDB

Head of the Central African Republic Office



Mamady Souare, a national of Côte d'Ivoire, joined the African Development Bank in 2004 as a senior transport engineer. He is currently Director of the Regional Integration Operations Division in the Development and Regional Integration Department of the African Development Bank.

Prior to his appointment as Head of Country Office in the Central African Republic, he was Head of the Transport Division at the African Development Bank, which manages infrastructure projects for all regional member countries in Central, West, North, East and Southern

Africa. Mamady has a strong background and extensive operational experience, particularly in the public transport and regional integration sectors, where he has worked for over 28 years.

Mamady est titulaire d'un diplôme d'ingénieur de l'École nationale d'ingénieurs (ENSI) de Yamoussoukro, en Côte d'Ivoire, et d'un diplôme d'études supérieures en économie des transports de l'École nationale des travaux publics de l'État (ENTPE) de Lyon, en France.

Diego Escalona Paturel,

European Union Ambassador to the Central African Republic.



Diego Escalona Paturel was accredited as European Union Ambassador to the Central African Republic on 13 September 2024. Before moving to the Central African Republic, Mr Escalona Paturel was Head of Unit - Head of Cooperation at the European Union Delegation in Burkina Faso.

Between 2018 and 2022, Mr Escalona Paturel was seconded in the interest of the service to the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) in Barcelona as Director of Operations and Partnerships. He was Head of Cooperation in Egypt from 2014 to 2018 and in Lebanon from 2010 to 2014. Between 2006 and 2010, he was Head of the Infrastructure and Transport Section in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Mr Escalona Paturel started his career in the private sector, working for Société Générale des Eaux de Barcelone (AGBAR Group). Before joining the European institutions in 2006, he worked as a technical assistant to the EDF National Authorising Officer in Gabon and then in Equatorial Guinea.

Diego Escalona Paturel has dual Spanish and French nationality and is married with two children. He is a civil engineer (ETSICCP de Barcelona) and holds a postgraduate degree in International Relations (University of St Andrews).

MINUSCA

Valentine Rugwabiza

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced on 23 February 2022 the appointment of Valentine Rugwabiza of Rwanda as his new Special Representative for the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

Ms. Rugwabiza succeeds Mankeur Ndiaye of Senegal, who has led the Mission since 2019. The Secretary-General is grateful for Mr. Ndiaye's service to the people of the Central African Republic during a turbulent and critical period in its history. His leadership was instrumental in MINUSCA's comprehensive support to the general elections held in 2020-2021.

Ms. Rugwabiza has worked for more than thirty years on Africa development and security issues in both the public and corporate sectors as a Cabinet Member, a senior diplomat of Rwanda accredited to several countries and organizations and a senior leader in national, regional and multilateral entities. From 2016, Ms. Rugwabiza has served as the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations and non-resident Ambassador of Rwanda to Colombia and Jamaica. From 2014 to 2016, she was the Minister of East African Community

Affairs and a Member of the East African Legislative Assembly. From 2013 to 2014, she served as Chief Executive Officer of the Rwanda Development Board and Member of Cabinet. From 2005 to 2013, Ms. Rugwabiza was the Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva. Prior to that, she served as the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations Office in Geneva and United Nations specialized agencies, as well as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Rwanda to Switzerland, from 2002 to 2005. Ms. Rugwabiza speaks English, French, Swahili and Kinyarwanda.

Njanja Fassu

**Director,
Political Affairs Division at UN MINUSCA**



Nja Njanja Fassu brings more than 29 years of professional experience with the United Nations in the fields of peace and security, human rights, development and humanitarian assistance, both at headquarters and in the field. Most recently, Mr Njanja Fassu served for over three years as Director of the Political Affairs Division of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). He also worked at UN headquarters with the Peacebuilding Support Office for around five years, helping to strengthen strategic, substantive and technical support to the

Peacebuilding Commission. Between 2010 and 2016, Mr. Njanja Fassu was Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General in the former Department of Political Affairs, and then to the Under-Secretary-General in the same department, leading the coordination of UN preventive diplomacy, the UN-African Union partnership, and conflict resolution and peace-building initiatives in Africa. Between 2003 and 2009, Njanja Fassu worked for UNICEF as Chief of Child Protection and Deputy Representative in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti offices respectively. From 1995 to 2003, Mr Njanja Fassu worked for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the former Department of Peacekeeping Operations in Rwanda, the Central African Republic and Sierra Leone.

Mr Njanja Fassu is fluent in English and French, and holds a Master's degree in International Relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University (USA), a Master's degree in International Human Rights Law from Oxford University (UK), and a Licence en Droit from the University of Yaoundé II (Cameroon).

HANAN TALBI

**OHCHR
Director of the Human Rights Division**



Ms Hanan Talbi joins us from Haiti, where she most recently served as Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Head of the UNOHCHR Human Rights Section in Haiti. Ms. Talbi has more than twenty-two years of experience in human rights, legal affairs and the rule of law, including assignments in peace operations and special political missions, UN agencies, funds and programmes, and international NGOs. She has held several senior positions and has extensive experience in programme management, protection, human rights investigations, transitional justice and

accountability in post-conflict contexts, particularly in Mali, CAR and DRC. Ms Talbi holds a Master's degree in Law and is a member of the Brussels Bar.