

**Advice of the Peacebuilding Commission to the Security Council on the renewal of the UN
Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
(MINUSCA) mandate
30 October 2020**

Through Security Council resolution 2282 (2016), the Council expressed its intention to regularly request, deliberate and draw upon the specific, strategic and targeted advice of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to ensure the longer-term perspective required for sustaining peace is reflected in the review of peacekeeping mission mandates. In this context, in 2018, the PBC provided its written observations, upon request of the Security Council, ahead of the renewal of the MINUSCA mandate, which focused on the need to foster national ownership and the inclusivity of the peace process, maintain strategic and operational partnerships, support efforts to implement the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic (Political Agreement), support the timely preparation and organization of elections, nurture the sense of unity among key stakeholders, provide support to the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA), anchor security sector reform and rule of law efforts in the political process and enhance the government's strategic communication capacity. In 2019, the PBC invited the Security Council to consider, through its written advice, inter alia, additional measures to support national authorities in gradually assuming full responsibility for the protection of civilians; concrete ways to involve women and young people in the peace process; ensuring coordination between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts, in accordance with respective mandates; and the use of the PBC as a partnership forum to promote shared analysis and understanding of the multi-dimensional challenges facing CAR.

The CAR Configuration of the PBC would like to draw attention of the Security Council to the following points:

Supporting the implementation of the Political Agreement and enhancing synergies with the RCPCA

- Important progress has been achieved in the implementation of the Political Agreement, which remains the only viable path for peace in CAR. All parties must respect the Agreement and cease the deplorable violence against civilians.
- Highlighting the need for MINUSCA's mandate to maintain effective and dynamic measures to protect civilians and to support efforts to bring to justice those responsible for such grave violations
- MINUSCA should continue to support peacebuilding and sustaining peace initiatives at the local level and ensure, as relevant, linkages with the national level, with a focus on inclusion of the most-vulnerable segments of society including women, young people, displaced populations and returnees. MINUSCA could build on experience from Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) supported projects on security sector reform, justice and the fight against impunity, transitional justice, strategic communications and the provision of peace dividends to populations. Those projects helped prevent and de-escalate tensions in the immediate aftermath of the Political Agreement, catalyzed donor support and ensured that the implementation of the Political Agreement and delivery of peace dividends were mutually reinforcing and part of a comprehensive and sustainable stabilization strategy.

- MINUSCA should continue to create the conditions allowing young people and women from different backgrounds to work together for their communities.
- Supporting the roll-out of decentralized governance, and progressive restoration of state authority and basic public services to populations in marginalized areas will be key in peacebuilding and security efforts, while addressing longstanding perceptions of neglect and political disenfranchisement within the regions. This will require significant technical support for the establishment of new constituencies and to ensure that national stakeholders are well-informed about decentralization and their roles in local governance.
- There is also added value in improved coordination between the PBC and relevant peacebuilding mechanisms of the AU.

Supporting the timely preparation and organization of elections

- While the primary responsibility for holding elections in accordance with legal and constitutional timelines rests with CAR authorities, the presidential, legislative and local elections are essential for the success of the peace process, and the consolidation of CAR's democratic development, despite the challenges, which are being compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Elections should be free, credible, transparent, peaceful and inclusive. The participation of all segments of society across the country, including women, young people, returnees and IDPs is crucial. The participation of Central Africans citizens living as refugees in neighboring countries also remains essential in efforts to build an inclusive society and advance lasting peace and reconciliation. Meanwhile, further efforts should be taken to create conditions conducive to their voluntary, safe and dignified return and reintegration.
- MINUSCA should continue to be given a strong electoral mandate, namely, to provide good offices, technical assistance, logistical and security support, , as well as international coordination, to support the completion of the national elections and the organization and holding of local elections in 2021.
- It is equally important to maintain current Mission capacities to ensure completion of the electoral process and address potential destabilization attempts from spoilers.
- Efforts to prevent and address disinformation, hate speech and incitement to violence in the context of the elections will support a secure environment that is conducive to free and fair elections. In this regard, continued support to the High Council for Communication on the implementation of the National Action Plan for the prevention of hate speech and incitement to violence will be crucial to mitigate tensions.
- Political and financial support from international and regional partners must be galvanized to strengthen national capacity, including to help fill the funding gap of the UNDP Basket Fund. In this regard, MINUSCA's convening and coordinating roles remain essential, together and with the support of the PBC, through its resource mobilization mandate.
- Peacekeeping efforts will only be sustainable if met with development investments by partners in other critical areas including infrastructure, youth employment and basic

services. The Council could consider calling upon development partners to strengthen their efforts to bring tangible peace dividends to the Central African population.

Addressing humanitarian needs while focusing on long-term challenges

- Aligned with the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), the RCPCA is an excellent basis for ensuring coherence in international support for peace and development. In a fragile context like CAR, the articulation between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts should be coordinated, in accordance with respective mandates.
- Supporting the voluntary, safe and dignified return of IDPs and refugees is critical for social cohesion. The PBC can continue to provide advice to the Council, upon its request, on RCPCA implementation in the aftermath of the Political Agreement to lay the groundwork for lasting peace, including through working with ECOSOC and with relevant UN agencies, funds and programs.

Strengthening the rule of law, transitional justice and combatting impunity

- While sustained progress has been made, continued international and United Nations support is necessary to support and improve the functioning of the Special Criminal Court, the ordinary courts, and the justice sector across the country, including the implementation of the national Justice Sector Reform Policy. This support is also crucial to facilitate accountability for crimes perpetrated against civilians, particularly those that also constitute violations of the Political Agreement, and to address serious crimes perpetrated in the past, which could assist to break cycles of violence. The extension of inclusive justice sector institutions throughout the country remains an important element of the extension of state authority and RCPCA implementation, which in turn supports broader efforts to improve service delivery and other people-centered initiatives.
- Progress towards the establishment of the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission (CVJRR) has accelerated since the signing of the APPR. Support for the CVJRR and the broader transitional justice process should be maintained, including through setting up a Trust Fund for reparations for victims, to allow the Commission to swiftly start its proceedings.
- Continued international support to Internal Security Forces, especially to their contribution to the restoration and strengthening of rule of law and combatting impunity, is required.
- Supporting the prison administration to ensure humane treatment of detainees, while taking measures to maintain prison security remains essential.