

## Meeting of the CAR configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission

17 April 2013 – 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

1. On 17 April, the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission met under the Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Ranko Villović, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Commission heard a briefing by Ms. Kaarina Immonen, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General in the Central African Republic, on the recent developments in the country.
2. Speaking on the political situation, **DSRSG Immonen** gave a brief overview of the developments since early December 2012, when the coalition Séléka came together and started military operations in the North-East of the country. She also summarized the various mediation efforts by the Economic Community of the Central African States (ECCAS) and other regional and international actors, including the UN to contain the crisis as it developed, ultimately leading to the January 2013 Libreville peace agreements. The non-implementation, by the Government and Séléka sides, of various provisions stipulated in the Libreville agreement led Séléka to withdraw from the Libreville ceasefire agreement on 20 March, resulting in the final Séléka attack on Bangui and ensuing fall of President Bozizé on 24 March 2013. Additional mediation efforts by ECCAS, UN, and the African Union have since led to an agreement on the transition which should bring about elections within 18 months. A National Transitional Council was established on 13 April, and Michel Djotodia, former leader of the Séléka, was elected President of the Transition.
3. Turning to the security situation, Ms. Immonen depicted a dire situation with a complete breakdown of law and order throughout the country. Looting and plundering as well as violations of human rights and the rights of women and children are common place in Bangui and other parts of the country. The socio-economic situation, already dismal before December 2012, has only further deteriorated since. All international and regional financial institutions have suspended their activities in CAR since the unconstitutional seizure of power by Séléka. On the humanitarian front, the recent crisis has aggravated an already bleak situation, leading to large numbers of displaced and refugees in neighboring countries, and the interruption of ongoing humanitarian assistance linked to the limited or entire lack of access. Ms. Immonen concluded with an update on the status of implementation of projects funded by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), which has also suspended its activities following the unconstitutional change of power.
4. In their interventions Member States expressed concern over the deteriorating security, humanitarian and human rights situation in the country and expressed their high expectation to the outcome of the ECCAS Summit meeting which was scheduled to take on 18 April. Delegations also agreed on the importance of the

Libreville agreements to serve as the basis for a way out of the crisis. Particular attention should be given to the broader regional context. Delegations suggested that the PBC meet again after the upcoming ECCAS summit in N'Djamena, and that thought be given to how the PBC and the Security Council could contribute to normalize the security situation. Delegations also expressed their condolences to the families of the South African soldiers who died during the fall of Bangui.

5. Assistant Secretary General **(ASG) Cheng-Hopkins** (PBSO) suggested that the PBC could play a mitigating role in these situations, but noted that the absence of a Chair for the configuration had made this more difficult in the case of CAR. The creation of a contact group, or a group of friends of CAR under the auspices of the PBC, could have made a difference while also providing a bridge to the Security Council and other regional actors.
6. Responding to questions raised by delegations, **Ms. Immonen** explained that measures were being taken to address the security situation with the deployment of additional police forces in Bangui (500) and throughout the country (1000). She called on the international community to emphasize the need for a quick stabilization of the security situation, while stressing that part of the problem is the fragmented nature of the Séléka coalition, the relative control its leadership has over its soldiers, and the presence of mercenaries in the group demanding to be paid for their participation in the rebellion. On the issue of recruitment of child soldiers, Ms. Immonen stressed that the current circumstances facilitated their recruitment. With closed or looted schools, and no better alternative for their productive employment, many children, including previously demobilized ones, are re-recruited into military or rebel forces. Similarly, because of the security situation, farms have not been tended to, which will inevitably lead to a food shortage situation in the coming months, with basic food prices at their highest in Bangui already. She repeated her call for sustained international attention to the situation in the Central African Republic.
7. The meeting was adjourned.