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The UN Security Council must urgently provide MINUSCA with sufficient resources to implement its mandate fully

As renewal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic's (MINUSCA's) mandate approaches, civil society organizations from the Central African Republic (CAR) and Amnesty International are taking the opportunity of the UN Security Council's April meeting in New York to encourage the Council and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to take the necessary action to ensure that MINUSCA has sufficient resources to implement its mandate properly and overcome any potential obstacles.

- We civil society organizations of the Central African Republic and Amnesty International remain favourable to MINUSCA's deployment in the CAR and recognize that its presence in the country since September 2014 has contributed to protecting civilians and preventing a possible exacerbation of the conflict.
- However, we regret the serious deficiencies, both in human and material terms, that MINUSCA is having to cope with and which have prevented it from effectively fulfilling its mandate and efficiently protecting the population. These shortcomings were highlighted once again in September 2015 during the upsurge in violence that lasted three days and during which at least 75 people, mainly civilians, were killed and another 42,000

displaced. Moreover, at least 12 women were raped in just one day in one area of the capital and more than 500 prisoners broke out of the main prison in Bangui.

- Since the tragic events of September 2015, the Security Council, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and MINUSCA have taken measures to consolidate the peacekeeping mission in terms of both personnel and equipment. We welcome these initiatives and congratulate MINUSCA and the Central African people both for the successful visit of Pope Francis in November 2015 and for the 2016 presidential elections, which took place in a calm and largely peaceful manner.
- We note, among other things, the expulsion of a MINUSCA contingent for unsatisfactory performance in terms of equipment, vetting, recruitment and preparedness for peacekeeping and following allegations of sexual abuse; the adoption of Resolution 2272 (2016) on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in UN Peacekeeping Operations; and the efforts to ensure transparent investigations into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by MINUSCA personnel; and we encourage the Security Council to take further action, among other things ensuring that in-depth, independent, impartial, effective and transparent investigations are conducted into all persons suspected of having committed human rights violations, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and that such persons are held criminally responsible for their actions by the country that contributed the troops.
- We recognize that MINUSCA continues to face difficulties that prevent it from effectively fulfilling its multidimensional mandate, which includes protecting the population and promoting justice.

- We draw the Security Council's and Department of Peacekeeping Operations's attention to the urgent need to provide MINUSCA with the additional resources necessary to fulfil its mandate and manage the withdrawal of most of the 900 French soldiers deployed in the CAR, planned for the end of 2016.

- We strongly encourage the Security Council and Department of Peacekeeping Operations to consider the following recommendations when renewing MINUSCA's mandate, as these will contribute to building a lasting peace in the country:
 1. Assess and urgently reorganize the current capacity and concept of MINUSCA's operations. This will need to be done in consultation with all stakeholders, including the government, civil society organizations and other bodies such as the African Union.
 2. Ensure that adequate human, technical, material, financial and logistical resources are made available to MINUSCA so that it is able to fulfil its multidimensional mandate, which includes bringing to account all those allegedly responsible for crimes under international law. To this must be added the protection of civilians, the reform of the security sector, and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants from all armed groups in the CAR.
 3. Identify how the use of temporary emergency measures might better enable the weaknesses in Central African institutions to be overcome and how such measures might be able to provide MINUSCA with the resources to play a more proactive role in investigating and arresting those suspected of crimes under international law, as well as protecting the civilian population.

4. Support the Central African government, in cooperation with civil society, to provide human rights training for and vetting of the national security forces before they are deployed in order to ensure that they respect and effectively protect the human rights of all communities in the CAR.
5. We remind the Security Council and Department of Peacekeeping Operations that one of the observations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations was that it is essential to ensure a balance between the stabilization mandate and the resources available to fulfil it and to win back the trust of the people and civil society.

Signatory organizations:

- Network of Human Rights Defence and Promotion NGOs in the Central African Republic (*Réseau des ONG de Promotion et Défense des Droits de l'Homme en République Centrafricaine / RONGDH*) – whose 10 members are: Christian action for the Abolition of Torture and Capital Punishment in the Central African Republic (*Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture et la Peine de Mort en Centrafrique / ACAT-RCA*), Association of Women Jurists of the Central African Republic (*Association des Femmes Juriste de Centrafrique / AFJC*), Lawyers without Borders – CAR (*Avocats Sans Frontières Centrafrique / ASF-RCA*), Citizenship and Democracy (*Civisme et Démocratie / CIDEM*), Episcopal Justice and Peace Commission (*Commission Episcopale Justice et Paix / CEJP*), Central African Human Rights League (*Ligue Centrafricaine des Droits de l'Homme / LCDH*), Central African Lead for Sustainable Development (*Lead Centrafrique pour le Développement Durable / Lead Centrafrique*), Movement for Human Rights and Humanitarian Action (*Mouvement des*

Droits de l'Homme et Action Humanitaire / MDDH), Central African Human Rights Observatory (Observatoire Centrafricain des Droits de l'Homme / OCDH), Observatory for Promotion of the Rule of Law (Observatoire pour la Promotion de l'Etat de Droit / OPED)

- Amnesty International (AI)
- Centre for Research Studies and Development Advice (*Centre d'Etude de Recherche et de Conseil au Développement / CERCODE*)
- Children without Borders (*Enfants Sans Frontières / FSF*)
- Woman Man Action Plus (*Femme Homme Action Plus / FHAP*)
- Central African Foundation for Natural Resource Protection (*Fondation Centrafricaine pour la Sauvegarde des Ressources Naturelles / FOCSARENA*)
- Pan-African Network of Human Rights Defenders (*Réseau Panafricain des Défenseurs des Droits Humains / REDHAC*)