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LETTER DATED 4 DECEMBER 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached letter dated 4 December 1997 which I have received from the Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee established pursuant to the mandate of the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB).

Attached to the letter is the first periodic report of the Member States participating in MISAB, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1136 (1997) of 6 November 1997. I should be grateful if you would bring the letter and its enclosure to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

Annex

[Original: French]

Letter dated 4 December 1997 from the Chairman of
the International Monitoring Committee addressed
to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the first report, covering the period from 31 October to 4 December 1997, requested by the Security Council in paragraph 7 of its resolution 1136 (1997) concerning the situation in the Central African Republic.

(Signed) Gen. Amadou Toumani TOURÉ
Chairman of the International
Monitoring Committee

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Enclosure

First report to the Security Council pursuant to
resolution 1136 (1997) concerning the situation
in the Central African Republic

(4 December 1997)

INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3829th meeting, the Security Council unanimously adopted its resolution 1136 (1997), which was essentially a continuation of its earlier resolution 1125 (1997). In other words, the Council approved the continued conduct by Member States participating in the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB) of the operation in a neutral and impartial way to achieve its objective as set out in paragraph 2 of Council resolution 1125 (1997). The Council requested the Member States participating in MISAB, namely, the International Monitoring Committee to supervise the implementation of the Bangui Agreements, which represents them, to provide periodic reports to the Council at least every month through the Secretary-General.
2. This first report describes developments in the situation in the Central African Republic from 31 October to 4 December 1997.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

3. The International Monitoring Committee to supervise the implementation of the Bangui Agreements, chaired by General Amadou Toumani Touré, is the body that directs the actions of MISAB, since it receives the necessary political guidance directly from the heads of State concerned, and especially from the President of the Gabonese Republic, who is Chairman of the International Mediation Committee.
4. The International Monitoring Committee has adopted a plan of action that reflects the gist of the main provisions of the Agreements of 25 January 1997 in the form of a timetable, a significant part of which has already been implemented or is currently being implemented.
5. MISAB is under the patronage of President El Hadj Omar Bongo of Gabon, senior head of State of the International Mediation Committee. It is under the political authority of General Touré, Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee.

LOGISTICAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO THE
INTERNATIONAL MONITORING COMMITTEE

6. It should be noted that since its establishment by the heads of the States members of the International Mediation Committee, the International Monitoring Committee has received logistical and technical support from the United Nations

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Development Programme (UNDP). The continuation of such support will make it possible to carry out, inter alia, diverse operations, namely:

(a) Political monitoring of the pursuit of disarmament operations in Bangui and later in other parts of the country;

(b) Coordination of activities relating to the organization and conduct of various seminars and conferences provided for in the context of national reconciliation.

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO THE MISSION

7. As indicated in the previous reports, MISAB receives logistical support from the participating States, France, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Government of the Central African Republic.

8. While recognizing the generous efforts that the States participating in MISAB, France, OAU and the Government of the Central African Republic continue to make to assist the African contingents based in Bangui, it must be acknowledged that the material conditions of the troops stand in need of improvement, as they are far inferior to those enjoyed by other similar forces operating in other conflict areas. An appropriate solution to this state of affairs should be urgently found in order to avoid demoralization among the troops, which up until now have been endeavouring to carry out their work with selfless dedication.

9. The International Monitoring Committee welcomes the request that the Security Council made to the Secretary-General in its resolution 1136 (1997) to establish a Trust Fund for the Central African Republic that would assist in supporting the troops of States participating in MISAB and in providing logistical support to them. It is important to emphasize that the ability to maintain security in the Central African Republic in a particularly sensitive subregional context will depend on the dispatch with which States Members of the United Nations contribute to the Fund.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BANGUI AGREEMENTS

Provisions already implemented

10. The provisions of the Agreements of 25 January 1997 on the formation of a Government of national union, the adoption of an amnesty law covering offences in the context of the third rebellion and the situation of former heads of State have already been implemented, which is to be commended.

11. The text of the law on the material benefits to be provided to former Presidents of the Republic was adopted on 30 October 1997 by an overwhelming majority. It now remains for the Head of State to issue a decree enacting the law. Under the aforementioned law, "Any former President of the Republic, who was democratically elected and who is currently enjoying his civil rights, shall receive a pension the sum of which shall be equivalent to half of the salary of

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the President of the Republic". It should be noted that the persons concerned shall also receive a number of material benefits and special consideration with respect to protocol and security, which will enable them to maintain a standard of living in keeping with the high office that they previously held.

Suspension of the parliamentary audit

12. The bill on the abandonment of the judicial enforcement of the parliamentary audit has not yet been able to be adopted following the intense debate on the subject that took place in November. This first bill was rejected by a majority of deputies. Currently, the Presidency of the Republic and the Government are redrafting the bill for submission to the National Assembly for a second reading. This resubmission will be preceded by an awareness campaign among members of Parliament. It should be noted that the adoption of the bill is an important point of the Bangui Agreements. It will, for all intents and purposes, be resubmitted for a second reading, unless the Head of State decides otherwise.

Disarmament

13. As indicated in paragraph 11 of the previous report (S/1997/828), a coordination and security meeting took place on 5 November under the chairmanship of Colonel Alioune Ibaba, Coordinator of the International Monitoring Committee, with the participation of the Minister of State for Territorial Administration, responsible for Public Safety and Disarmament, members of the Committee, the command of MISAB as well as the principal officials responsible for various national defence and security services. The meeting made it possible to define a strategy to guide the activities to be carried out in the field in order to recover the remaining arms in good condition. Implementation of the strategy began on 10 November.

14. On the basis of apparently reliable information, the security forces (National Gendarmerie and Central African Police Force) are conducting searches in various neighbourhoods while covered by elements of the Central African Armed Forces, themselves protected by elements of MISAB. Although all the searches conducted to date have yielded no results, it can not yet be said that those to be organized - perhaps with a little more precision - will be useless. In other words, the various participants in these operations have not yet given up and are seeking to refine their methods in order to achieve their objectives. It should be noted that the lack of success in this new phase of disarmament has given rise to suspicion and frustration among certain opposition political parties.

15. Since the signing of the truce agreement of 28 June 1997 and the ceasefire agreement of 2 July 1997, the following weapons have been turned over to MISAB:

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Heavy weapons

Designation	Quantity	Increase (12 November- 2 December 1997)
120 mm mortars	surrendered: 2 out of a total of 4	
81 mm mortars	surrendered: 13 out of a total of 15	
60 mm mortars	surrendered: 14 out of a total of 19	1
14.5 mm machine-guns	surrendered: 6 out of a total of 6	
12.7 mm machine-guns	surrendered: 2 out of a total of 3	1
75 mm recoilless guns	surrendered: 2 out of a total of 2	
73 mm anti-tank rocket launchers	surrendered: 66 out of a total of 67	
Rocket-propelled grenades	surrendered: 7 out of a total of 11	
Total	surrendered: 112 out of a total of 127	
	(weapons recovered: 88.18 per cent)	0.78 per cent

Light weapons

Designation	Quantity	Increase (12 November- 2 December 1997)
Hand-guns (misc.)	surrendered: 16 out of a total of 111	
Submachine-guns	surrendered: 299 out of a total of 459	
Assault rifles	surrendered: 261 out of a total of 541	2
MAS 36-49/56-M14 rifles + muskets	surrendered: 651 out of a total of 1,181	2
Light machine-guns	surrendered: 52 out of a total of 80	
.30-calibre machine-guns	surrendered: 15 out of a total of 17	
Total	surrendered: 1,302 out of a total of 2,389	4
	(weapons recovered: 54.49 per cent)	0.16 per cent

16. In the light of the various factors listed in paragraph 13 of the previous report, it is easy to understand why the recovery of all light arms remains uncertain in spite of all the resources brought to bear and the strategies employed.

17. The status of munitions and explosives recovered and packaged as at 2 December 1997 is set out below:

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Designation	Quantity	Remarks
5.56 mm rounds	69 085	+1
7.5 mm SLC rounds	14 000	
7.5 mm S/B rounds	123 954	+6 621
7.5 mm X rounds	34 075	+75
7.5 mm X S/B rounds	135	
7.62 mm rounds, NATO	15 962	
7.62 mm Kalashnikov rounds	40 955	+295
7.62 mm long rounds	121 261	+1
7.62 mm Tokarev rounds	2 810	+1 910
9 mm Para rounds	5 523	+117
.12-calibre riot control rounds	731	+3
12.7 mm rounds	2 200	+1 472
14.5 mm rounds	15 434	+112
37 fragmentation hand grenades	1 857	+6
Fragmentation hand grenades, China	3 165	+17
GR FLG AP34	16	+13
RPG 7 rockets	1 151	+11
73 anti-tank rocket launchers	6	+6
.37 stun hand grenades	1 046	+3
FL LAC F4 hand grenades	1 304	+4
F4 hand grenades	316	
Russian grenades	1	
60 mm mortars	1 713	+8
81 mm mortars	852	+18
120 mm mortars	113	+11
75 mm recoilless rifle rounds, US	168	+2
75 mm recoilless rifle rounds, China	223	No weapons in inventory
M79 40 mm rounds, US	6 060	No weapons in inventory
Time fuses (inactive)	2 325	
7.5 mm grenade cartridges	755	
Pyro detonator	6 100	+6 100

Total:

Various rounds	446 880
Explosives and detonators	26 416

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Recommendations from the General Meeting on National Defence

18. This provision of the Bangui Agreements remains a kind of apple of discord between those in power and the opposition. Indeed, although everyone is in agreement in recognizing that the rational and consistent implementation of the 282 recommendations from the General Meeting on National Defence can and should form the basis for the solution of many problems facing the Central African Armed Forces, it has proved difficult to find common ground for their implementation.

19. Of all the recommendations, two or three hold the attention of all political circles. These are the recommendations concerning the dissolution of the Centre national de recherche et d'investigation (National Research and Investigation Centre) (CNRI) and the Section d'enquête, de recherche et de la documentation (Survey, Research and Documentation Section (SERD) and that relating to the reduction of the staff of the Presidential Guard. These recommendations touch on sensitive areas in which it is at present difficult to find a modus vivendi between the head of State, supported by the political parties of the presidential majority, on the one hand, and those in the Group of Eleven, on the other. The International Monitoring Committee is very much aware of this situation. The restructuring of the Central African Armed Forces, the National Gendarmerie and the Central African Police Force, as advocated in a number of recommendations, appears to be the key to the response to be given to those recommendations. The implementation of the demobilization, retraining and reintegration project would to some extent promote a move in that direction.

National reconciliation

20. This is the culmination of the long but exciting process of the implementation of the Bangui Agreements. As indicated in the previous reports, this phase is in itself a delicate process in view of the fact that its ultimate aim is to exert a positive influence on the individual and collective psychology of brothers who have had to confront each other and to maintain, or even cultivate, a climate of general distrust from the outset of the crisis. In practice it has fallen to the International Monitoring Committee, and more particularly to its Chairman, General Amadou Toumani Touré, to carry out the twofold task of managing and then eliminating this climate, hence the need to take a number of actions envisaged in the spirit of the Bangui Agreements with a view to restoring the climate of harmony and concord which prevailed in the Central African Republic at the time of the revered patriot, Barthélémy Boganda.

21. Thanks to the logistical, financial and technical support of UNDP, the International Monitoring Committee and the Ministry of Human Rights, National Reconciliation and Democratic Culture have organized awareness-raising seminars in various regions of the country between 18 November and 10 December 1997.

22. Thus, three teams, each composed of deputies, local elected officials, representatives of the Ministry of the Interior and of the Ministry of National Reconciliation, together with resource people designated by the International

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Monitoring Committee, have led, and are leading, seminars on peace, unity and national reconciliation:

- at Bambari (for the central region of the country),
- at Bossangoa (for the north-west),
- at Bangassou (for the south-east),
- at Berbérati (for the south-west),
- at M'Balki (for the south),
- at Kaga Bandoro and Sibut (for the centre-north),
- at Ndélé and Birao (for the north).

23. The systematic coverage of the country has made it possible to reach within a reasonable period of time all the populations of the country. The same messages have been brought to them and rich in-depth discussion meetings have been held on the need to achieve peace and national reconciliation, conditions conducive to the economic recovery and sustainable development of the country. The conclusions reached at these various seminars will provide a data bank to be made available to the participants in the National Reconciliation Conference which could be held in January 1998.

24. With regard to the National Reconciliation Conference, a preparatory committee was established on 17 October 1997, composed of 40 members representing the public authorities (the Presidency of the Republic, the Government, the National Assembly and the judicial authorities), the parties of the four major political groups, trade unions, employers, the various professions (lawyers, doctors, pharmacists, architects, notaries), religious denominations and women. The Preparatory Committee for the National Reconciliation Conference, presided over by the Minister for Human Rights, National Reconciliation and Democratic Culture, is responsible for:

- (a) Preparing the draft rules of procedure and the provisional agenda for the Conference;

- (b) Establishing the criteria for the representation of national entities and quotas for participation;

- (c) Assembling all the necessary documentation for the preparation and smooth functioning of the work of the Conference.

COOPERATION WITH THE CENTRAL AFRICAN AUTHORITIES AND THE VARIOUS GROUPS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

25. General Amadou Toumani Touré, Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee, returned to Bangui on 21 November 1997 after a consultative mission to the various heads of State of countries participating in MISAB. Since his return, at the head of the International Monitoring Committee, he has resumed various contacts with the highest authorities of the Central African Republic (the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister and the President of the

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National Assembly), the former heads of State (Presidents Dacko and Kolingba), the leaders of the various political groups and a number of individuals. These meetings were of assistance in, inter alia:

(a) The evaluation of the progress made in the implementation of the Bangui Agreements;

(b) The search for solutions to those provisions which have not yet been implemented or those which are being implemented at a slow pace;

(c) The study of the various possible hypotheses during the post-MISAB period, in other words after 6 February 1998, the date on which the mandate authorized by the Security Council in resolution 1136 (1997) expires;

(d) The joint search for ways and means of finding a solution to the thorny problem of arrears of wages and salaries;

(e) The study of the elements of the strategy to be adopted to convince the international community of the need to provide direct and effective assistance to the Central African Republic by organizing a round table of donors to be held during the first quarter of 1998.

COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

26. Pursuant to the Security Council's request to the Secretary-General in resolution 1136 (1997) to provide a report within three months on the implementation of that resolution, the arrival of a multidisciplinary mission from the United Nations Secretariat to collect the elements necessary for the preparation of the report was announced. The International Monitoring Committee will follow the work of this mission with great interest.

27. The talks which Mr. Pierre Etienne Ly, Resident Coordinator for the United Nations, had with various leaders at Headquarters at the beginning of November, together with the working meetings a week later which were coordinated by the Department of Political Affairs and in which Ambassador René Valéry Mongbe participated, enabled the United Nations Secretariat to draw up the terms of reference for the multidisciplinary mission, after receiving the expert advice of General Amadou Toumani Touré.

28. The adoption by the Security Council on 6 November 1997 of resolution 1136 (1997), in which the Council approved the extension of the mandate of MISAB for a period of three months, in other words until 6 February 1998, was a source of satisfaction both to the Central African authorities and to all political circles in the country. The latter have indicated their wish to have the protection of a force of one kind or another until the 1999 presidential elections in order to see the whole electoral process take place in an atmosphere of peace, calm, freedom and transparency. The populations, for their part, are feeling more and more secure now that the spectre of the afflictions, horrors and difficulties of all kinds is definitely receding. Like resolution 1125 (1997), therefore, the new resolution has been seen as having a sort of

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catalytic effect on the work of the International Monitoring Committee and MISAB.

29. The International Monitoring Committee and MISAB also welcome the adoption of resolution 1136 (1997) and:

(a) Reaffirm their readiness to work with the Central African people in consolidating the peace which has been restored;

(b) Express the fervent hope that the international community will respond positively and within a reasonable period of time to the invitation by the Security Council in paragraph 6 of the resolution to contribute to the Trust Fund for the Central African Republic which the Secretary-General has been requested to establish;

(c) Hope that paragraph 9 of the resolution, in which the Security Council urges all States, international organizations and financial institutions to assist in post-conflict development in the Central African Republic, will be implemented since, here as in other countries which have encountered the same difficulties, there can be no genuine and lasting peace without a minimum of economic and social development.

30. Moreover, despite the excellent results obtained in agricultural production (in both cash crops and food crops), the Central African Republic, where industrial and commercial activities have clearly been in a state of paralysis for several months, is still experiencing difficulties in meeting its internal obligations (wages and salaries, pensions, scholarships, the functioning of the State apparatus) and its external commitments, in particular the repayment of arrears due to the Bretton Woods institutions.

31. It took an exceptional decision by the head of State and strong action by the Government to constrain those responsible for the major enterprises to discharge some of their arrears and this made it possible for one month's wages and salaries to be paid on 28 and 29 November and then on 2 and 3 December 1997. Moreover, the thorny problem of arrears of wages and salaries, pensions and scholarships provides a reason for the strike which is still taking place in certain sectors, such as higher education. The greatest concern of the Central African authorities is therefore to find the necessary resources to resolve this problem of six months' arrears of wages, salaries and other payments. The official demonstrations planned in celebration of the National Day on 1 December 1997 were cancelled for reasons of economy.

DEPLOYMENT OF THE FORCE

32. There has been no significant change in the arrangements made since the submission of the previous report. MISAB is continuing to ensure security in all neighbourhoods of the Central African capital by occupying 20 surveillance posts and is participating in joint security patrols in conjunction with the Central African security and defence forces in all districts of Bangui.

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33. Hold-ups, armed robberies and other criminal acts have become very rare thanks both to the progress achieved in disarmament and the constant vigilance instituted by the system of joint patrols. It is worth repeating that the image of Bangui as a peaceful city has been restored.

CONCLUSIONS

34. The Security Council's approval of the extension of the mandate of MISAB until 6 February 1998 has given a new impetus to the mediation efforts, in so far as it will to a large extent help MISAB to continue to ensure security and to complete its peace-building mission.

35. The success of the deployment of MISAB will depend above all on the understanding which the international community demonstrates in practice in the implementation of paragraph 6 of resolution 1136 (1997).

36. The International Monitoring Committee hopes to continue to enjoy the logistical and technical support of UNDP in order to pursue its twofold mission of ensuring the political direction of MISAB and monitoring the implementation of the Bangui Agreements through continuing mediation.

37. In order to avoid any slippage or any risk of a return to square one which might lead to social disruption, it is urged that all measures should be taken at the appropriate levels, including the level of the Secretary-General, to arouse a greater awareness among States Members of the United Nations, international organizations and financial institutions with a view to providing the necessary assistance to the development of the Central African Republic, as requested by the Security Council in paragraph 9 of resolution 1136 (1997).

38. A project for the restructuring of the Central African Armed Forces, the National Gendarmerie and the Central African Police Force, taking into account the various recommendations from the General Meeting on National Defence, is being considered by the highest Central African authorities. This project, the preparation and implementation of which are eagerly awaited at the earliest possible date by the whole Central African political community, is strongly supported by the International Monitoring Committee.

39. As it has stated on many occasions, the International Monitoring Committee will continue to spare no effort in urging all the parties to the Central African crisis to continue to work with wisdom and dignity towards the effective implementation of the Bangui Agreements. This is the price of genuine and lasting peace.
