



# Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

*Provisional*

**6240**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Tuesday, 15 December 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Kafando . . . . .	(Burkina Faso)
<i>Members:</i>	Austria . . . . .	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	China . . . . .	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica . . . . .	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia . . . . .	Mr. Viločić
	France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
	Japan . . . . .	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya . . . . .	Mr. Shalgham
	Mexico . . . . .	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey . . . . .	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda . . . . .	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Parham
	United States of America . . . . .	Ms. Rice
	Viet Nam . . . . .	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

## Agenda

### The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in that country (S/2009/627)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The situation in the Central African Republic**

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in that country (S/2009/627)**

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Central African Republic, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Poukré-Kono (Central African Republic) took a seat at the Council table.*

**The President** (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic.

It is so decided.

I invite Ms. Zewde to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Jan Grauls, Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Belgium.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Grauls to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I wish to draw the attention of members to document S/2009/627, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in that country.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde and Ambassador Jan Grauls. I now give the floor to Ms. Zewde.

**Ms. Zewde:** I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. Since this is also your country's last month as an elected member of this Council, along with Libya, Viet Nam, Croatia and Costa Rica, I would like to pay tribute to the outstanding work you have done for the African continent and, indeed, for international peace and security. May I take this opportunity to also congratulate incoming members Nigeria, Gabon, Bosnia, Brazil and Lebanon on their recent election. I hope we can count on their support during their tenure in the Council.

This is my first briefing before the Security Council following my appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Central African Republic. It coincides with the presentation of the last report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2009/627) before the transformation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA) into the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA).

For the past six months, I have held consultations with the stakeholders in the peace process. These include the political parties, the armed groups, civil society, development partners, regional organizations and neighbouring countries. I would therefore would like to share my observations and initial thinking on how we could address the present situation in the country.

The Central African Republic has experienced violence and confrontations between the Government and the rebel groups since 1999. The signing of the

various peace agreements, the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 21 June 2008 and the holding of the inclusive political dialogue in December 2008 gave hope for a return to normalcy in the country. The process has now reached a critical stage where the successful holding of elections before the end of April 2010, and the completion of the disarmament and demobilization part of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) operations before elections will determine the fate of the political process. These two major events are among the key recommendations of the inclusive political dialogue and are critical to the lasting stabilization of the Central African Republic.

An Independent Electoral Commission was established on 8 October and the United Nations has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Government of the Central African Republic on electoral assistance, while such partners as the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie, the United States Agency for International Development and the African Union are involved in the coordination of assistance to the Central African Republic for the conduct of the polls.

In the meantime, a number of factors could derail the electoral calendar. These include attempts by some political actors to create a constitutional vacuum and request an extension of the mandate of the current Administration beyond April 2010, restrictions on the ability of political leaders to carry out normal political activities, and the possibility that political leaders may incite hatred or divisions. In addition, the current level of insecurity generated by the activities of those armed groups that have not yet joined the peace process, the movements of the Lord's Resistance Army in some parts of the country, and the delay in the implementation of the disarmament and demobilization programme pose a serious threat to the entire peace process.

The economic progress accomplished so far resulted in the attainment of the completion point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative earlier this year. However, much more remains to be done to fight poverty. The Government's programme of civil service reform and its fight against corruption, as well as the introduction of a statutory declaration of assets by senior civil servants and heads of public companies, are encouraging. The audit of such key economic sectors as forestry, mining and telecommunications recommended by last year's inclusive political dialogue should be carried out.

The United Nations has continued to work closely with the Government of the Central African Republic authorities to pursue the implementation of 12 priority projects to the tune of \$10 million by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) to address the immediate needs of the country in priority peacebuilding areas. The level of implementation of most of these projects should be increased and the PBF Steering Committee, which I co-chair with the Central African Republic's Minister of Planning, Economic Affairs and International Cooperation, has been discussing strategies to accelerate the process of implementing these key projects. Discussions have already started on the release of a second allocation with the convening of a national consultation on 25 September to revise the national PBF priority plan of June 2008 to align it with the main pillars of the strategic framework for peacebuilding in the Central African Republic.

The implementation of the strategic framework remains the most viable way for dealing with the challenges facing the Central African Republic in the three key peacebuilding areas of security sector reform and DDR, good governance and the rule of law, and socio-economic development. In that regard, I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to members of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), especially its country-specific configuration for the Central African Republic chaired by Ambassador Jan Grauls of Belgium, for their commitment to the sustainable stabilization of the Central African Republic. The PBC delegation's recent visit to the Central African Republic indicated the readiness of the Commission to support the efforts of local authorities.

To achieve peace and stability in the Central African Republic, the Government, national political actors and other stakeholders should show commitment and political will to confront the multiple challenges facing the country. Similarly, concerted regional and international support and assistance are required at this very critical point to support the peace process. In this connection, political discussions and good offices with all the parties and actors in the peace process should be intensified in order to obtain the full implementation of the outcome of the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the inclusive political dialogue.

The capacity of the Dialogue Follow-up Committee set up on 29 January should be reinforced to speed up the decision-making process and ensure the implementation of the decisions. Mediation efforts and local peace initiatives should continue to ensure that the forthcoming polls do not ignite a political crisis.

Meanwhile, the permanent consultation framework recommended by the inclusive political dialogue should be established. As recommended by the recently deployed United Nations electoral needs assessment mission to the Central African Republic, the capacity of the United Nations to provide political guidance during the electoral and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes should be strengthened. Likewise, there should be an increase of the regional and international support to the Independent Electoral Commission to allow it to fulfil its mandate. To that effect, international efforts and assistance should be coordinated and provided in a timely manner.

The progress made by the DDR Steering Committee and the deployment of the 31 military observers are commendable. These observers should be deployed during the coming days to ensure the completion of the disarmament and demobilization process prior to the holding of the elections. In the meantime, the reintegration programme for ex-combatants belonging to the various rebel movements that have signed the peace accords and the disarmament of other armed groups, ethnic militias, self-defence and unconventional armed elements which are not included in the process should be accelerated.

Those objectives would be at the top of my priorities. I will continue to work closely with the national stakeholders, the United Nations family, international non-governmental organizations, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, the African Union, representatives of the international community accredited to Bangui, the ECCAS Mission for the Consolidation of Peace, the Central Africa Multinational Force, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan to achieve the aforementioned goals.

The Security Council may wish to support the aforementioned recommendations. With its blessing, the international community would assist in providing the necessary means to accelerate the DDR process. That would encourage the implementation of the recommendations of the inclusive political dialogue and pave the way for reconciliation with groups that have not yet joined the process. It would also help

create conditions for free and fair elections and promote economic assistance.

Let me now provide a brief update on the process of transforming BONUCA to an integrated, peacebuilding office: BINUCA. Based on the Council's decision of 7 April (see S/PRST/2009/5), and in view of the budgetary cycle of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Field Support, in close coordination with BONUCA, have been working hard to ensure that an integrated office is in place on 1 January 2010. We have completed all substantive interviews for the substantive posts of the new mission. I am determined to have a functioning integrated office by the time of my next report to the Council, early next year. I count on the Council's support during this transition process, which, as members know, is not an easy exercise. We are working hard to ensure the full implementation of the mission's mandate by taking a harmonized approach and putting in place coordination mechanisms for the whole United Nations system in the Central African Republic. To achieve this, the mission will need appropriate human and financial resources and full support and cooperation from the Peacebuilding Commission, other international and regional efforts and other United Nations missions in the region.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the overall political, security and socio-economic situation in the Central African Republic remains fragile and challenging. Only a clear course of action by the international and regional actors will help the Central African Republic to shift from conflict to being a post-conflict country. A peaceful Central African Republic would contribute to stability in Central Africa, as the region is experiencing security challenges.

A combination of factors — good offices, mediation, financial support and effective action — would help to bring about a lasting peace and sustainable socio-economic development in this paradoxically mineral-resources-endowed but poor country.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic for her briefing.

I call now on Ambassador Jan Grauls of Belgium, Chairman of the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission on the Central African Republic.

**Mr. Grauls** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for kindly inviting me to brief the Council as Chairman of the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission on the Central African Republic. I welcome the presence of Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic, who in just a few months has demonstrated that she is entirely equipped to carry out the difficult task before her.

The report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2009/627), which Ms. Zewde has just introduced, correctly describes the situation in that country, including both recent progress and the central challenges of the day.

The Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission had called for the transformation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA) into the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) and welcomed the 7 April 2009 presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/5), which formalizes that transition. The integrated office will make it possible to better support the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in the Central African Republic. The peacebuilding effort requires coordination and consistency, and those are the two main focuses of the mandate of the new United Nations presence in Bangui.

Since the adoption in May of our Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in the Central African Republic, I have visited the field twice, first in late August, then more recently from 3 to 10 December, along with a delegation from the Central African Republic configuration comprising representatives of China, France, Gabon, Japan, Poland, South Africa and Belgium and of the International Organization of la Francophonie. I think I can say that since the adoption of the Strategic Framework — which to some extent is the road map for our work — the first six-month report is positive. There has been significant progress, although the situation in the Central African Republic continues to present enormous challenges.

Bearing in mind the situation in that country and the recommendations of the inclusive political dialogue held in Bangui in December 2008, we have initially focused our attention on the security sector. The Peacebuilding Commission has kept a watchful but benevolent eye on the process that made it possible to

finalize a document on the project for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants. The cost of the project is \$27 million, with financing provided through contributions not only from the Peacebuilding Fund and some members of the Peacebuilding Commission, including from the European Union, but also and above all from subregional organizations such as the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Economic Community of Central African States. I note that the latter subregional organization has provided military observers, who have already arrived in the Central African Republic.

Thanks to these joint efforts of the Central African Republic authorities and the international community, the process is ready to get under way; it awaits the formation of a body responsible for coordinating the reintegration programme. The launch of this DDR programme is of the greatest urgency, because elections must be held before April 2010 and because it is necessary to establish security throughout the territory of the Central African Republic prior to the elections.

In the broader area of security sector reform, the round table held in Bangui in late October enabled the Central African Republic authorities to adopt a national strategy in that sphere. That was an important step showing that national ownership by the Central African authorities has become a reality at the technical and political levels. In the months to come, we will have to focus on the operationalization and financing of security sector reform. In that context, it would seem timely to organize a security sector reform pledging conference during the first half of 2010 to mobilize resources for the implementation of the national strategy. The Commission believes that the time has come to establish solid links between the DDR and security sector reform.

The Peacebuilding Commission is working simultaneously on other priorities of the Strategic Framework. All are equally essential. In the area of good governance and the rule of law, progress has been made thanks to the joint efforts of the Government and its international partners, such as the International Organization of la Francophonie and the United Nations Development Programme. The vital campaign to combat corruption, one of the essential conditions for socio-economic recovery, is one example of that.

Moreover, the adoption of the revised electoral code and the establishment of the Independent

Electoral Commission are clear signals of the Government's resolve to hold elections next year within the constitutional timetable. The Peacebuilding Commission and its members have expressed their support for the organization of those elections. In that respect, some Commission members have already announced contributions to support, in particular, the work of the Independent Electoral Commission, the members of which were appointed from the bodies that took part in the inclusive political dialogue.

However, there are significant financial needs that must still be met and many difficulties to be overcome, such as the composition of electoral rolls and the logistical organization of the ballot. The Independent Electoral Commission still needs to set a calendar for the elections as well as a detailed draft budget. I call on the Central African Republic Government to honour its own financing provided for in the budgets for 2009 and 2010 and to give the Independent Electoral Commission the means and political space for a transparent composition of the rolls.

I also call on the international community to make contributions to the Trust Fund that the United Nations Development Programme has just established for the elections, and to provide technical assistance to the Independent Electoral Commission. Finally, the deployment of international electoral observer missions before, during and after the elections should be ensured.

The preparation for the development poles project has made considerable progress and 2010 will finally see the realization of that project, which falls under the development pillar of our Strategic Framework. Those poles will improve the living conditions of the people, especially those who have suffered most in the conflict. The European Commission, the author of the concept and a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, has already announced a substantial contribution. In this area, too, considerable efforts will be needed to mobilize the necessary resources for that project.

In the next six months, we must concentrate on a restricted number of priority actions, such as the effective launching of the DDR process, the mobilization of resources for security sector reform in the framework of the donors' roundtable, the organization of free and transparent elections in 2010, and the genuine implementation of the development poles project. Those priorities are closely linked, and it is important above all to undertake the initial phases of

DDR before the holding of presidential and legislative elections. A failure in DDR might compromise the electoral process and even destabilize the country.

However, although the technical preparations for DDR have been finalized with the arrival of military observers from the Economic Community of Central African States and their imminent deployment in the field, it does not appear that all the necessary political and security preconditions have been established. For example, the recent clashes between the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix and the Central African Armed Forces in Ndélé show that inter-ethnic tensions persist in the north-eastern part of the country.

In the North-West, the ongoing roadblocks and the activities of self-defence groups serve as pretexts for the Armée populaire pour la restauration de la démocratie (APRD) to not disarm. Additionally, the kidnapping of two humanitarian workers near Birao shows that the deployment of military observers is not risk-free. I appeal to the Central African Republic Government to redouble its efforts to promote dialogue and mediation among the various ethnic and armed groups in order to create an environment conducive to the success of DDR, which should start, as scheduled, before the end of the year. No new delays are acceptable.

I would like to indicate finally that the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission takes very seriously the situation of women and children, who are often the primary victims of conflict, and makes every effort to implement the resolutions of the Security Council on the fight against sexual violence, the protection of children in armed conflict, and the protection of civilians through the priority areas of the Strategic Framework.

During our most recent visit, we were, unfortunately, denied access to a centre for demobilized child soldiers by the APRD, the armed group led by Jean-Jacques Démafouth with which those children were associated.

In all priority areas, considerable efforts are called for on the part of all partners in peacebuilding in the Central African Republic, with the assistance of the international community. I call on all of those actors to participate with conviction and the unanimous will to change the country.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Grauls for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

**Mr. Poukré-Kono** (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): It is a pleasure for me to take the floor before this body under your presidency, Sir, to convey the viewpoint of the Government of the Central African Republic on the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in my country (S/2009/627). First, however, let me express my appreciation for the mediation role that Burkina Faso has been playing in the various crises in West Africa. We are all well aware of the results of those efforts.

Let me also thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report, which will help the Council to assess the role of the peacebuilding partners of the Central African Republic.

I endorse the statements made earlier by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific configuration for the Central African Republic.

One year has passed since the holding of the inclusive political dialogue that launched the process to establish peace and stability in my country. Clearly, meaningful progress has been made, but there have also been delays. Some recommendations were urgently required for the effective implementation of the conclusions of that dialogue, including the establishment of a national unity Government, the establishment of the Steering Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization And Reintegration (DDR), the establishment of the Dialogue Follow-Up Committee for the implementation of the recommendations arising from the dialogue, and the holding of elections in 2010.

That vast programme can be implemented only through priority actions agreed with outside partners, including security sector reform, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, the establishment of good governance and the rule of law, and the setting up of development poles necessary to socio-economic development.

A country that truly wants to aspire to genuine and lasting peace must be duty-bound to reject the logic of war. Thus, the Government and the political-military parties have agreed to adopt as our top priority the disarmament and demobilization of rebels. On 13 August 2009, the Central African Republic's independence day, the sensitization campaign for the DDR programme was formally launched by President

Bozizé, reflecting the Government's political will to put an end to that logic. Except for one single rebel group, all of the others have decided to cooperate. A tally of the exact number of soldiers has already begun and pre-cantonment has also been announced.

On the initiative of the Government, the Economic Community of Central African States and the DDR Steering Committee have signed a memorandum of understanding that clears the way for the deployment of military observers to monitor the DDR process. With current funding, the launch of the DDR programme should logically be under way before the end of December 2009. However, DDR cannot take place without security sector reform measures.

Here too, efforts are being undertaken to deploy a defence and security force in the liberated areas, but training is needed in order to restore trust between the people and the security forces. We also need to provide a context of peace and security in which all actors can move freely. The relevant authorities are working to that end.

The Central African Republic is currently experiencing electoral fervour. The Government is determined that this civic duty will be fulfilled by the deadline set in the Constitution, even if the schedule is tight. It is only a process: the electoral code has been adopted; the Independent Electoral Commission has been set up drawn from the six groups, as provided for by the electoral code, and its President has been elected. With total available funding of 331 million CFA francs, the Commission could usefully work out a time-bound programme. Furthermore, the technical expertise is in place, and assistance from the United Nations Development Programme poses no problems.

With the start of the disarmament and demobilization process, the elections can be held on schedule, yet it must be understood that the overall programme is complex and requires a lot of time. To do this, an enormous amount of awareness-raising and support will be necessary for a successful outcome.

Ownership needs to remain national, as has been repeatedly demonstrated. At the same time, the Government has to be supported in its difficult and very delicate mission. The challenges are enormous, but the will is there. The problem of financing the various programmes requires a response from the international community. Gains already made need to be preserved. We are grateful for the Secretary-General's appeal in his report for support for the Commission and the electoral process and for his

participation in the round table on security sector reform. The international community is duty-bound to assist the Central African Republic, in a spirit of solidarity.

Much positive progress has been made in the economic sphere, which shows that the Government is determined to carry out its programmes in a spirit of good governance, which requires implementation of the plan to modernize the justice system, fight corruption and bring about administrative reform. All of these measures will have positive effects on the people of the Central African Republic, who ultimately remain the beneficiaries of the peace dividends.

Reform in all sectors has at last enabled the Central African Republic to attain the completion point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative and to benefit from external debt alleviation. The Government intends to take advantage of this turn of events to curb part of its internal debt.

The concerns of the Government do not relate only to the reluctance of certain national rebel groups that refuse to join the peace process despite the mediation and reconciliation efforts under way; there is also the presence of foreign armed groups that undermine the process, while the security sector is suffering a shortage of capacity to extend its authority into remote rural regions. We therefore commend the subregional efforts to put together a single transboundary front against banditry and the illegal circulation of small arms.

On 28 September, the Central African Republic acceded to the Paris Principles on children associated with armed conflict, thanks to UNICEF and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. This is important because it demonstrates the commitment of the Government to no longer allow children to be used in armed groups. We commend UNICEF and the Peacebuilding Fund for their commitment and for having created a training centre for these young people so that they can be reintegrated into civilian life with income-generating activities.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission on the Central African Republic for its remarkable and committed efforts for peacebuilding in Central Africa. The Peacebuilding Fund is also taking concrete action that encourages sectors of the population that has been subject to the repercussions of conflict. The United Nations has always stood with my country in times of serious crisis and continues to support it even in a period of calm. We are grateful for the work done together with other partners. I encourage the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic as a replacement for the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic, which bequeaths nine years of attention on the Central African Republic.

I must not conclude without paying tribute to Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, who, through her work and her unequalled devotion in a difficult context, has been able to bring her vast experience to bear in building the trust of Central Africans. I wish her every success.

We also would thank our bilateral and multilateral partners for their contributions to the cause of peace in the Central African Republic.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not congratulate Gabon, whose mandate as a mediator in the Central African crisis was extended during the most recent summit of the Economic Community of Central African States.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

*The meeting rose at 11 a.m.*