



Asamblea General Consejo de Seguridad

Distr. general
7 de febrero de 2019
Español
Original: francés

Asamblea General
Septuagésimo tercer período de sesiones
Tema 102 f) del programa
Examen y aplicación del Documento de Clausura del
Duodécimo Período Extraordinario de Sesiones de la
Asamblea General: medidas de fomento de la confianza
en el plano regional: actividades del Comité Consultivo
Permanente de las Naciones Unidas sobre las Cuestiones
de Seguridad en África Central

Consejo de Seguridad
Septuagésimo cuarto año

Carta de fecha 31 de enero de 2019 dirigida al Secretario General por el Representante Permanente del Chad ante las Naciones Unidas

En mi calidad de representante del país que ocupa la Presidencia del Comité Consultivo Permanente de las Naciones Unidas sobre las Cuestiones de Seguridad en África Central, tengo el honor de transmitir adjunto el informe de la 47ª reunión ministerial del Comité (véase el anexo), celebrada en Yamena del 3 al 7 de diciembre de 2018, así como los documentos siguientes:

- Comunicado de la 47ª reunión del Comité;
- Informe de las actividades de la Mesa saliente, presidida por el Congo;
- Estado de las contribuciones al Fondo Fiduciario desde la creación del Comité;
- Lista de participantes.

Le agradecería que tuviera a bien hacer distribuir la presente carta y su anexo como documento de la Asamblea General, en relación con el tema 102 f) del programa, y del Consejo de Seguridad.

(Firmado) Ali Alifei **Moustapha**
Representante Permanente



**Anexo de la carta de fecha 31 de enero de 2019 dirigida al Secretario General
por el Representante Permanente del Chad ante las Naciones Unidas**

**Informe del Comité Consultivo Permanente de las Naciones Unidas sobre las
Cuestiones de Seguridad en África Central**

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Introduction

1. The forty-seventh meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa was held in N'Djamena from 3 to 7 December 2018.
2. The following member States participated in the meeting: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.
3. The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) served as the Committee secretariat. The Secretary-General of the United Nations was represented by his Special Representative for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, François Louncény Fall. The Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Ambassador Ahmad Allam-Mi, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, and the Special Representative of the African Union for the Great Lakes Region and Head of the African Union Liaison Office in Burundi, Ambassador Basile Ikouébé, also participated in the meeting.
4. The following United Nations entities took part as observers: the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa and the United Nations Regional Office for West Africa and the Sahel.
5. Representatives of the following organizations also participated as observers: the African Union Commission, the General Secretariat of ECCAS, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC); the Executive Secretariat of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Interregional Coordination Centre for Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea.
6. The following institutions were invited and also followed the proceedings: the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations country team and the United Nations Development Programme country office in Chad, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Office to the African Union, MINUSCA and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).
7. The meeting of experts was held under the auspices of Lieutenant-Colonel Abdelkerim Deby, the representative of Chad, Chair of the forty-seventh meeting.
8. At the opening ceremony of the ministerial meeting, a number of speeches were made. Speaking on behalf of the outgoing Chair, the Congo, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and the Diaspora, Jean-Claude Gakosso, thanked the authorities of Chad for their warm and fraternal welcome. He praised the international community for its efforts to promote confidence-building measures and reiterated the joint commitment of States members of the Committee to implement the Brazzaville Declaration on Confidence-Building Measures, adopted in June 2018. He wished the incoming Bureau every success for its six-month term.
9. In his statement, the Secretary-General of ECCAS welcomed the regularity of the Committee's meetings and the relevance of the recommendations adopted at those meetings. He drew particular attention to the grave situation in the Central African

Republic and called for a strategic dialogue among the various actors of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic.

10. The representative of the African Union Commission congratulated Chad for its efforts to maintain security and stability in the subregion. He encouraged the United Nations to continue to support peace efforts and democratic governance in the region and requested the strengthening of joint initiatives among organizations in the subregion. In that regard, he welcomed the meeting convened in November 2018 in Libreville by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, on the theme of conflict prevention and capacity-building for the regional economic communities, which had been attended by all the regional economic communities in Africa.

11. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA encouraged States to invest in local and subregional infrastructure for early warning, dialogue and the promotion of human rights. He emphasized the need to promote the active engagement and contributions of civil society, in particular women and young people, which was indispensable for peacebuilding and stability. He reiterated the commitment of the United Nations to continuing to support capacity-building for such endeavours and to work with States and ECCAS, including with regard to the implementation of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and all Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (Kinshasa Convention).

12. The forty-seventh ministerial meeting of the Committee was officially opened by the Minister of State and Secretary-General of the Presidency, Kalzeubé Pahimi Deubet, who welcomed all the delegates to the country on behalf of the President, Idriss Deby Itno. He commended the efforts of ECCAS and the United Nations to promote security and peacebuilding in Central Africa and noted that, despite the progress made on the security front, new sources of insecurity were emerging in the region, including mercenary activity, transhumance and maritime piracy. He welcomed the efforts made by the members of the Committee since the forty-fifth meeting, held in Kigali, with regard to security sector reform and promotion of disarmament, and hoped that the recommendations adopted at the forty-seventh meeting would include a call for concrete confidence-building measures, in particular regarding mercenary activity, as well as the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). He encouraged member States to ratify the 1977 Organization of African Unity Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa and the 1989 International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries. Chad strongly and unequivocally condemned all threats to security in the subregion and hoped that a spirit of community would help to build trust among States. He concluded by inviting bilateral and multilateral partners to work together to seek lasting solutions to the conflict in the Central African Republic, urging the parties to work together to resolve the conflict.

13. The launching of the joint project to support the implementation of the Kinshasa Convention was one of the highlights of the forty-seventh meeting of the Committee. The launching ceremony took place on the margins of the ministerial segment, on 7 December, and culminated in the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the General Secretariat of ECCAS, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and UNOCA.

14. At a closed meeting held during the ministerial meeting, the Central African Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the other heads of delegation considered the situation in the Central African Republic, the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the fight against mercenary activity. The communiqué issued following the closed meeting is attached to the present report as enclosure I.

II. Proceedings

A. Report of the outgoing Bureau

15. The outgoing Chair presented the activity report of the country's six-month term, the highlights of which included a field visit to Maro and Sido, in the Moyen-Chari region of Chad, conducted from 15 to 18 October 2018, and monitoring of the implementation of the eight recommendations adopted at the forty-sixth meeting of the Committee, held in Brazzaville. The recommendations were evaluated at a working meeting of the focal points, held on 3 December, in N'Djamena, where the efforts of member States to implement them had been discussed. On 19 October, the outgoing Chair led a workshop on the preparation of the draft agenda for the forty-seventh meeting. The full activity report, including the status of implementation of the recommendations, is attached to the present report as enclosure II.

16. At the end of its term, the outgoing Bureau made the following major recommendations:

- That the General Secretariat of ECCAS adopt the conclusions from the field visit by taking them into consideration in its initiatives on pastoralism and transhumance, including in the implementation of the Lomé Declaration on Peace, Security, Stability and the Fight against Terrorism and Violent Extremism and the project to adopt community regulations on pastoralism;
- That the incoming Bureau send a note verbale to States members of the Committee inviting them to make voluntary contributions to the trust fund to finance the Committee's activities.

B. Election of the Bureau

17. Chad was elected Chair of the Committee by acclamation, for a period of six months.

18. The following countries were also elected:

- Democratic Republic of the Congo: First Vice-Chair;
- Angola: Second Vice-Chair;
- Equatorial Guinea: Rapporteur.

C. Adoption of the agenda

19. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Report of the outgoing Bureau.
2. Election of the Bureau.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa.
5. Briefing on the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
6. Follow-up on the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities and Ceasefire Agreement in Pool Department, the Congo
7. Follow-up on the situation in the Central African Republic.

8. Combating insecurity, armed groups, violent extremism and terrorism in Central Africa.
9. Promoting disarmament and security sector reform in Central Africa.
10. Piracy and maritime security.
11. Free movement of persons in Central Africa.
12. Transhumance and cross-border security.
13. Briefing by the General Secretariat of the Economic Community of Central African States on the institutional reform of the Community.
14. Implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in Central Africa.
15. Briefing on the protection and promotion of human rights in Central Africa.
16. Briefings by entities with observer status in the Committee.
17. Review of the financial situation of the Committee.
18. Venue and date of the next meeting.
19. Other matters.
20. Closed ministerial meeting.
21. Adoption of the report of the forty-seventh ministerial meeting.

D. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa

20. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS reviewed the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa, focusing on the following areas: (a) overview of the situation; (b) political and institutional developments within ECCAS; (c) internal and cross-border security in the ECCAS area; (d) issues related to governance, the humanitarian situation and human rights in the ECCAS area; and (e) presentation on the situation in each State member of ECCAS.

21. During the review, the heads of delegation of Cameroon, Burundi, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo gave updates on recent political and security developments in their countries. The representative of Gabon reassured the Committee as to the health status of the President of Gabon and current Chair of ECCAS, Ali Bongo Ondimba.

22. The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, referring also to recent expulsions of Congolese nationals from Angola, expressed regret that its sister republic of Angola had not first resorted either to subregional dialogue mechanisms and frameworks or to the diplomatic channel in order to manage the situation. The Chair of the Committee noted the comments made, while decrying the resulting humanitarian consequences.

23. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS said that the geopolitical situation in the second half of 2018 had been marked by the following: prolonged economic hardship in the majority of member States; challenges relating to electoral processes in some States; ongoing activities of armed groups, terrorist groups and other negative forces against civilian populations, national armed forces, peacekeeping troops of the United Nations and other groups; ongoing security risks around Lake Chad and the influence of terrorist groups in the Sahel-Saharan strip; and the ongoing migration crisis. Despite those many challenges, the Governments of

most Central African States remained firmly committed to the maintenance of peace, security and stability.

24. The following events were also worth highlighting: the Joint Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) on Peace, Security, Stability and the Fight against Terrorism and Violent Extremism (ECOWAS-ECCAS Joint Summit), held in Lomé in July 2018, which had concluded with the adoption of the Lomé Declaration; the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa, on 17 and 18 November 2018, which had resulted in the adoption of measures for reforming the Union; continuation of the ECCAS institutional reform process, including through the holding of a meeting in Libreville, from 6 to 12 August, for the midpoint presentation of the provisional assessment report of the firm Agora Consulting to the ambassadors of the States members of the Committee accredited in Libreville and to the staff of the General Secretariat of ECCAS.

25. The political and institutional backdrop against which the forty-seventh meeting of the Committee was being held was characterized by difficulties with the implementation of the decisions taken by the Central African Heads of State and the assessment of the implementation, in particular with regard to the situation in the Central African Republic; the impact of the financial crisis on the social climate; the ECCAS institutional reform process; full freedom of movement within CEMAC, whose six member States were also members of the Committee; and electoral processes that had already been concluded or were under way.

26. With regard to domestic and cross-border security, the situation within the member States had not changed. MONUSCO and MINUSCA still had a presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, respectively. The following points were also to be noted: security-related tensions in several border areas; ongoing violence in the Central African Republic; recurring attacks by the terrorist group Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin and terrorist attacks by the Allied Democratic Forces in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo; and sociopolitical grievances, accompanied by violence in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon.

27. In addition, the major challenges that the region had been facing for decades remained: drug trafficking and its impact on security; uncontrolled circulation of small arms and light weapons; illegal exploitation of natural resources, which fuelled conflicts; an alarming humanitarian situation; and democratic and economic governance and human rights issues. The region was still home to a large number of internally displaced persons and refugees, as a result of conflicts or crises in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Lake Chad basin region and the Sudan.

28. The following highlights were noted in respect of each State member of the Committee:

1. Angola

29. In terms of governance, the Government had pursued its anti-corruption and economic recovery policies. Angola had made every effort to overcome the financial difficulties resulting from low commodity prices on the international market. That economic situation presented the Government with the challenge of lowering the level of public debt, which remained relatively high. In that connection, the authorities had just confirmed that they had applied to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a loan of \$4.5 billion, two years after the Fund had refused to approve the financial support requested under the former President, José Eduardo dos Santos. The

Government had also conducted an operation against the exploitation of natural resources, known as “Operação Transparência”, in eight provinces, which had resulted in the departure of illegal migrants who had been plundering the country’s natural resources. The Government had also launched a second, cross-country operation to restore law and order.

30. As part of the troika of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Head of State, João Lourenço, had been involved in the monitoring of the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

31. Overall, the security situation had been calm.

2. Burundi

32. On 7 June 2018, the President, Pierre Nkurunziza, had promulgated the new Constitution of Burundi, following its adoption by referendum on 17 May, and had also announced that he would not stand for election for a new term in 2020 when his current term expired. On 29 August, the National Assembly and the Senate had each approved, with near unanimity, a new independent national electoral commission.

33. In June, information had been leaked to the media concerning a confidential report sent by Benjamin Mkapa to the Heads of State and Government of the States members of the East African Community. Since 2016, Mr. Mkapa had been the facilitator of the inter-Burundian dialogue, supporting the chief mediator, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda. In his report, Mr. Mkapa had detailed the many difficulties that he faced in his mission and had urged the Heads of State and Government to engage in the process with a view to breaking the stalemate in the talks.

34. At the diplomatic level, relations between Burundi and Rwanda had remained tense, to the extent that official travel between the countries had been suspended in both directions.

35. The security situation in Burundi was calm and the Government exercised effective control over the territory.

3. Cameroon

36. At the political level, Paul Biya had won the presidential election of October 2018, with 71.28 per cent of the votes. The resolution of the crisis in the South-West and North-West regions, on the one hand, and the fight against Boko Haram in the north of the country, on the other, were the main challenges of the new presidential term.

37. With regard to security, the country continued to deal effectively with the incursions of Boko Haram terrorists in the north and the violence by secessionists in both the South-West and the North-West regions. To address the security challenges, the Government had announced in a press release the recruitment of 2,600 elite commandos, of whom 2,000 would be for the Rapid Intervention Battalion, an elite corps deeply engaged in the fighting in the Far North region and other regions.

38. The crisis in the North-West and South-West regions continued to be a major concern for the Cameroonian authorities. Developments on the ground had shown that, in general, the situation in both regions was relatively calm. Civilian populations were gradually returning to their villages which they had deserted as a result of the violence, as were repentant former Boko Haram fighters and former members of armed groups in the North-West and South-West regions. Under the leadership of the President of the Republic, the following measures had been taken to help restore calm.

39. In June 2018, an emergency humanitarian assistance plan in the North-West and South-West regions (2018–2019) had been developed to alleviate the suffering of displaced persons, victims of abuses in host localities and communities, and refugees. A national coordination centre for emergency humanitarian assistance had been established by prime ministerial decree of 21 November 2018 in relation to the situation in the North-West and South-West regions. The mission of the centre's mission was to coordinate humanitarian assistance mobilized by Cameroonians from the other regions and by the country's international partners, including United Nations agencies.

40. The President had also renewed his commitment to focus, in his new term, on resolving the sociopolitical crisis in the North-West and South-West regions and on combating the Boko Haram terrorist sect.

41. A national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration committee had been established on 30 November 2018 by presidential decree. Under the authority of the Prime Minister and Head of Government, the committee was charged with organizing, supervising and managing the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former Boko Haram fighters and armed groups in the North-West and South-West regions wishing to respond favourably to the offer from the Head of State to lay down their weapons. The first meeting of the committee had been held on 6 December, under the supervision of the Prime Minister.

42. On the humanitarian level, the country continued to host a large number of internally displaced persons and refugees from the Central African Republic and Nigeria.

43. In the light of the foregoing, in particular the Government's efforts to resolve the crisis, the Standing Advisory Committee encouraged the Government of Cameroon to pursue its initiatives to resolve the crisis in the South-West and North-West regions of the country, and welcomed the establishment of the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration committee on 30 November and the appointment of its national coordinator on 4 December, which brought hope for the resolution of the crisis.

4. Congo

44. On the political front, the Government had made efforts to normalize life and build peace in Pool Department.

45. On the economic front, the Government had continued its discussions with the IMF. Following its mission in November 2018, the IMF had welcomed the efforts made by the Government to improve financial governance.

46. The security situation had remained calm throughout the country. Since the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities and Ceasefire Agreement between the Government and representatives of Pastor Ntumi, in Kinkala, the Congo, on 23 December 2017, the security situation had improved in Pool Department. With the support of international partners, including the United Nations, the Government had made efforts to revitalize and rehabilitate the department. The disarming of former combatants loyal to Pastor Ntumi had continued under the supervision of the joint ad hoc committee comprising representatives of the Government and the former rebels. The resumption of rail traffic between the economic capital, Pointe Noire, and Brazzaville following the rehabilitation of infrastructure destroyed by the former rebels during the hostilities, and the movement of persons and goods on the roads contributed to that progress. The operation to disarm the combatants loyal to Pastor Ntumi had continued on a voluntary basis under the supervision of the joint ad hoc committee established as part of the monitoring framework for the agreement.

47. The Committee noted with satisfaction the positive developments in the security and humanitarian situation in Pool Department and encouraged the Government of the Republic of the Congo to finalize the establishment of the National Council for Dialogue and to launch its activities. The Committee also encouraged the Government to implement a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in accordance with international standards.

5. Gabon

48. On the political front, the provisional results of the October 2018 legislative elections had put the Gabonese Democratic Party and its allies in the lead. The Party was expected to confirm its numerical and political supremacy in the next parliament.

49. Since October 2018, the people of Gabon had been concerned about the health status of their President, Ali Bongo Ondimba. A Cabinet meeting chaired by the Vice-President had been held on 16 November, with the approval of the Constitutional Court. While wishing the President a speedy recovery, the African Union had offered to provide its good offices to Gabon if necessary.

50. The security situation had remained calm throughout the country.

6. Equatorial Guinea

51. On the political front, the Government was engaging in discussions with the political actors, to which end it had organized, in July in Malabo, the fifth national dialogue round table, to help ease the political tensions and strengthen national cohesion. In the same spirit, the President of the Republic had decided to grant full amnesty to all political prisoners and opponents convicted of crimes or banned from operating in the country.

52. On the diplomatic front, the seventh diplomatic conference, on the theme “50 years of diplomacy: Equatorial Guinea on the international stage”, aimed at assessing the country’s foreign policy achievements since independence, had been held in early October.

53. The security situation had remained calm throughout the country. It was in that context that the country had celebrated, on 12 October, the fiftieth anniversary of its independence with a momentous military and civilian parade, in which several battalions from brotherly and friendly countries, including Chad, the Congo, Gabon, France and Spain, to name only a few, had participated.

54. The following events had also taken place during the reporting period: inauguration in Malabo on 5 October of the Information Centre for South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific; extraordinary session of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons; and the recent political dialogue between Equatorial Guinea and the European Union.

7. Central African Republic

55. On the political level, the restoration of State authority was gradually under way, despite challenges on the ground. However, logistics and support measures, together with security risks, did not always allow State authorities to act effectively. The implementation of the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan was continuing in areas with adequate security to allow partners to carry out projects. In addition to the issue of insecurity, there was a lack of national operational and financial capacities to step up the pace of implementation and ownership of the development agenda.

56. In October 2018, the former Speaker of the National Assembly, Karim Meckassoua, had been removed and replaced by Laurent Ngon-Baba. That move had led to violence in the chamber, when a member of the Assembly, Alfred Yekatom Rombhot, had fired shots into the air to express his discontent. He had been arrested on 29 October and transferred to the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, on 17 November. It was expected that the change of Speaker of the National Assembly would bring a renewed focus to and harmonize the political, economic and social guidelines connected to the Head of State's political agenda, which aimed to foster the country's recovery after several years of crisis.

57. On the economic level, the IMF had just completed a mission to Bangui in connection with the release of a new tranche of funds under a \$37 million credit facility. The IMF mission had drawn the Government's attention to the urgent need to centralize public revenues in order to improve the management of public finances. Similar efforts should be made to improve the business climate for the revival of the private sector.

58. There was still a general sense of insecurity in the country, despite the presence of MINUSCA peacekeepers and the increased capacity of the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic. There had been renewed acts of violence committed by armed groups not recognized by the Government, including in Bambari, in the central part of the country, in October; around Zémio, in Haut-Mbomou; and in Batangafo, in Ouham, in the north, in early November. The Lord's Resistance Army remained active and had continued to cause casualties. The General Secretariat of ECCAS was considering a request from the African Union to address the matter of the Lord's Resistance Army.

59. With regard to humanitarian matters, the number of internally displaced persons in the Central African Republic had increased in 2017, according to the United Nations. At the beginning of 2018, they numbered nearly 688,000, with a further 546,000 people of the Central African Republic having taken refuge in neighbouring countries. The outbreak of violence in December 2017 had forced some 78,000 people to flee the town of Paoua, in Ouham-Pendé prefecture. Some 2.5 million inhabitants, over half the population, needed humanitarian assistance. According to humanitarian organizations, such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, over 50 per cent of the population of the Central African Republic was in need of humanitarian assistance.

60. On the diplomatic level, at the end of 2017, despite the arms embargo imposed on the Central African Republic since 2013, the Security Council had authorized the Russian Federation to train and equip the new army of the Central African Republic. The Russian Federation had gradually increased its political and economic cooperation with the country. At the end of August 2018, Moscow had initiated a process of mediation between armed groups, deemed by some observers to be in parallel, if not concurrent, with that of the African Union, with a meeting held in late August in Khartoum. Even if the mediation did not run counter to the African initiative, some were of the view that it had political and diplomatic connotations.

61. It was against that backdrop that the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, Jean-Yves Le Drian, made a 48-hour visit to Bangui on 1 November to express the commitment of France to the Central African Republic. During the visit, he had signed agreements for aid amounting to €24 million and for a forthcoming delivery of weapons to the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic.

62. The Committee recommended that technical and financial partners fulfil their commitments to providing humanitarian assistance to the Central African Republic and to supporting the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central

African Republic, in order to end the violence and bring the armed groups to the negotiating table.

8. Democratic Republic of the Congo

63. On the political front, the country had been moving irreversibly towards the 23 December presidential, legislative and provincial elections. To that end, the Independent National Electoral Commission had continued to deliver electoral materials throughout the provinces. However, some coalitions of political opponents and civil society organizations had continued to put pressure on the Commission to dispense with the use of voting machines.

64. In connection with the elections, the country had been at the centre of a major diplomatic initiative involving visits by representatives of the United Nations, the African Union, ECCAS, SADC and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. The General Secretariat of ECCAS would deploy an election observation mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to monitor the elections scheduled for 23 December.

65. The security situation in the eastern part of the country continued to be a matter of concern. However, according to various sources, the Government had the situation under control.

66. On the humanitarian front, the forced return of between 200,000 and 300,000 Congolese expelled from Angola should be noted.

67. On the diplomatic front, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had informed the Angolan authorities of its outrage at the mass expulsion of its citizens from that neighbouring country. While the Angolan authorities had maintained that only irregular migrants had been expelled, human rights organizations had identified cases in which regular migrants had been expelled. Several States had expressed outrage at the situation, and, fortunately, for the sake of peace in the region, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola had opted for diplomacy in handling the case of Congolese nationals with irregular status in Angola.

9. Rwanda

68. On the diplomatic front, the election of the country's former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Louise Mushikiwabo, as Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie, had been interpreted by a number of observers as a significant step towards normalization of diplomatic relations between France and Rwanda.

69. Diplomatic relations between France and Rwanda were gradually warming, but relations with Burundi remained tense.

70. The security situation had remained calm.

10. Sao Tome and Principe

71. On the political front, the electoral process had gone smoothly in the run-up to the 7 October legislative, local and regional elections. Legislative elections took place every four years in the Portuguese-speaking archipelago, considered as a model with respect to democratic change of government in Central Africa. The country had been led since 2014 by Prime Minister Patrice Trovoada, son of former President Miguel Trovoada. Two political parties and one coalition were competing for leadership of the country, namely the Movement for the Liberation of Sao Tome and Principe – Social Democratic Party (MLSTP-PSD), Independent Democratic Action (ADI), the party in power, and PCD-MDFM-UDD, a coalition between the Democratic

Convergence Party, the Force for Change Democratic Movement and the Union of Democrats for Citizenship and Development. Since the July 2014 presidential elections, ADI controlled the legislative and executive branches. The Prime Minister and President Evaristo Carvalho were both members of ADI.

72. According to the provisional results announced by the National Electoral Commission on 7 October, ADI had won the legislative elections with a relative majority of 25 deputies, while 23 deputies had been elected from MLSTP-PSD, 5 deputies from the PCD-MDFM-UDD coalition, and 2 deputies from the Independent Citizens Movement. The opposition parties had therefore obtained a majority in the National Assembly. However, there had been doubts about the reliability of the results, which had triggered an open post-election crisis between ADI and the opposition MLSTP-PSD and PCD-MDFM-UDD.

73. To avoid an escalation of tensions arising from the provisional results of the vote, the incumbent Chair of ECCAS had dispatched a good offices mission to assist the authorities of Sao Tome and Principe. On that occasion, the President of Sao Tome and Principe had commended the prompt response by President Ali Bongo Ondimba, a demonstration of the continuing commitment of the Community's leaders to suppressing any hint of violence following an election. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA had visited Sao Tome and Principe to meet with the authorities and facilitate dialogue.

74. The post-election tensions had been dispelled upon the announcement of the final, unchanged results by the Constitutional Court. Consequently, in accordance with the Constitution, the President of the Republic had called on the winning party, ADI, to nominate a candidate for the position of Prime Minister and Head of Government. As ADI had not nominated a candidate, the President had invited the second-placed party, MLSTP-PSD, to nominate a candidate for that position. Hence, on 30 November, the President had appointed the leader of MLSTP-PSD, Jorge Lopes Bom Jesus, as Prime Minister and Head of the seventeenth constitutional Government. The new Government, comprising 11 ministers and two secretaries of State, had taken office on 2 December.

75. The security situation had remained stable and calm throughout the country.

11. Chad

76. On the political front, the high authorities had emphasized dialogue among all of the political parties in order to harness the country's energies and ensure the normal functioning of the Fourth Republic. There was ongoing dialogue between the political parties and the National Council for Political Dialogue. The legislative elections, initially scheduled for the latter half of 2018, had been postponed to 2019, owing to the financial cost of the elections, estimated at 75 billion CFA francs.

77. On the economic and social front, the decline in the price of oil on the global market had had a negative impact on household purchasing power. Workers had regularly organized strikes to demand payment of wages and better working conditions. The strikes had ended following an agreement between the Government, the trade unions and the workers' union. Chad had experienced a gradual return to economic growth and the outlook for 2019 was encouraging.

78. The security situation had remained generally under control, despite jihadist and Boko Haram incursions into Chadian territory, as well as several attacks by an organized armed group. Committed to securing the country's borders, the Government had stepped up the deployment of security forces to protect the entire territory.

79. On the diplomatic front, the Presidency of the Republic had been actively involved in diplomatic efforts in the subregion, including in the Central African Republic and Libya.

E. Briefing on the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

80. The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, reporting on the preparations for the presidential elections scheduled for 23 December 2018, said that the Government had made efforts to ensure that the elections were held on the scheduled date, including by funding them fully, unlike the 2006 and 2011 elections, for which it had received support from the international community. Nonetheless, there were a number of challenges: the activities of armed groups in the eastern part of the country, which were contributing to population displacement and the departure of humanitarian actors from an area affected by the Ebola virus; and the disagreement of members of the opposition with certain aspects of the electoral preparations, including the use of voting machines.

81. The Independent National Electoral Commission had made progress in preparing for the elections, including registering voters, cleaning up the electoral register, thereby reducing the number of voters from 45 million to 40 million; raising public awareness of the elections and the electoral calendar; receiving electoral kits; receiving voting machines, deploying them throughout the country, and providing training on their use; and launching the electoral campaign on 22 November.

82. ECCAS had opened a liaison office in Kinshasa and the ECCAS election observation mission, which included two participants from each country and the head of which had just been appointed, would be deployed at the time of the elections. Lastly, the representative drew attention to the 6 August 2018 statement by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the 21 November 2018 statement by the Security Council, which had stressed the importance of holding the elections on the scheduled date of 23 December, to avoid the risk of destabilization, as well as the need for national actors to continue fostering an environment conducive to credible and fair elections.

83. The representative of MONUSCO provided an update on the good offices undertaken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo to support the process for the 23 December elections, and on the technical assistance provided by MONUSCO to the Independent National Electoral Commission. The representative reiterated that MONUSCO, in accordance with its mandate, stood ready to provide logistical support at the request of the Government, and then reported on the Mission's efforts to respond to the threat of armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to the Ebola virus outbreak.

84. The Committee took note of the Government's determination to carry the electoral process through to completion and to provide security throughout the process. The Committee also encouraged the Government to make every effort to ensure that the presidential elections were held on 23 December in a secure and calm atmosphere, and invited all stakeholders in the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to respect the independence of the Independent National Electoral Commission.

F. Follow-up on the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities and Ceasefire Agreement in Pool Department, the Congo

85. The representative of the Congo drew attention to the events that had led to the Cessation of Hostilities and Ceasefire Agreement, including the launching by the President of the Republic of a peacemaking and peacebuilding process in Pool Department on 3 October 2017, following the armed rebellion led by Pastor Ntumi since 4 April 2016, which had contributed to massive population displacements; the signing of the agreement on 23 December 2017; and the establishment of a joint ad hoc committee, including representatives of the Government and of Pastor Ntumi, to ensure its implementation.

86. The representative also provided an update on the process to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate the former rebels, stating that the end of the process was near, although a specific date had not yet been established. The demobilization process comprised the registry of the former rebels in a database, which was transmitted to the High Commission for the Reintegration of Former Combatants, followed by the issuance of an identity document to the former rebels. The final phase of the process would be focused on the social and economic reintegration of the former rebels, which would be carried out by the High Commission. The Congo had requested the financial support of the international community for the implementation and completion of that programme.

87. The representative of UNOCA said that the United Nations was supporting efforts to mobilize resources for the project to implement a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, which would cost \$16 million and meet international standards. The Government of the Republic of the Congo had already contributed \$4 million to the programme. Furthermore, implementation of a peacebuilding project at a cost of \$3 million had begun in Pool Department. In that connection, the representative drew attention to the proposed establishment of the National Council for Dialogue and called on the Government to officially establish it and support its operations, for which financial assistance from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund would also be provided.

88. The Chair of the Committee welcomed the efforts by the Republic of the Congo to achieve lasting peace, as well as the support of the United Nations. The Committee noted with satisfaction the positive developments in the security and humanitarian situation in Pool Department and encouraged the Government of the Republic of the Congo to finalize the establishment and operationalization of the National Council for Dialogue. The Committee also encouraged the Government to implement a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in accordance with international standards.

G. Follow-up on the situation in the Central African Republic

89. The representative of the Central African Republic provided an update on the progress of the ongoing security and defence reforms and on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, stating that that progress had enabled the gradual deployment of the army of the Central African Republic in certain areas of the country, together with United Nations forces. A 15 per cent quota for women had been established in recruitment for the national defence and security forces. The integration of 232 former combatants into the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic and ensuring geographical balance in recruitment for the defence and security forces were essential elements of the Government's national reconciliation strategy. The European Union and the Russian Federation had provided support for

the implementation of the defence sector reforms, with 96 of the 122 gendarmerie brigades called for in the reforms being already operational.

90. With the support of MINUSCA and other partners, the Government had continued to make efforts to restore State authority across the country, including by deploying prefects, sub-prefects and representatives of the judicial authorities, and by gradually improving basic social services.

91. Other positive developments included the revival of cotton production and cocoa marketing, as well as the resumption of mining activities following the partial lifting of the ban under the Kimberley Process. In addition, some displaced persons had returned, although the upsurge in violence in the northern and eastern parts of the country had recently caused thousands of people to be displaced again.

92. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS, referring to the implementation of the road map of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, adopted in 2017, said that the Panel of Facilitators, established in September 2017, had conducted several field missions and set up a communication and alert unit. Several capacity-building workshops for relevant actors had been organized and civil society organizations, including many women's organizations, had received support. The African Initiative had been accepted by the people of the Central African Republic and by bilateral and multilateral partners, including the United Nations; the countries bordering the Central African Republic and non-State actors such as the Community of Sant'Egidio had been included in the Panel of Facilitators; and ECCAS had a liaison office in Bangui. Lastly, the representative welcomed the redeployment of the army of the Central African Republic in many provinces, in collaboration with MINUSCA, and provided information on the workings of the Special Criminal Court.

93. The representative of MINUSCA provided an update on the meeting of experts of the Committee, saying that, since the forty-sixth ministerial meeting, the situation in Bangui had been relatively calm, despite incidents recorded in the third district over the previous two weeks. However, the overall security situation remained fragile. Nonetheless, some significant progress had been made, such as the gradual redeployment of local authorities, including prefects and sub-prefects; the deployment of the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic and internal security forces in most of the country's prefectures; and the gradual stabilization of some urban areas in the western and south-eastern parts of the country, such as the town of Bangassou, where a MINUSCA mission conducted on 27 and 28 November had highlighted improved security conditions and a stronger desire to live together.

94. However, those positive developments should not detract from the seriousness and urgency of the situation, which required determined efforts for the multidimensional crisis in the Central African Republic to be addressed in a satisfactory manner. The continued presence of armed groups and criminal gangs in some parts of the country remained a major obstacle to the full provision of security for persons and property and to the full redeployment of the State. That situation had been illustrated by the recent killings in the locality of Alindao, in which more than 60 people had lost their lives. It had also been evidenced by the clashes in recent weeks in the PK5 district of Bangui. MINUSCA stood ready and was doing its best to address the situation, within the limits of its mandate and resources.

95. In that regard, the ratio of peacekeepers to civilians was only 1 to 400, and there was only 1 MINUSCA soldier per 50 km². MINUSCA therefore encouraged member States to increase their support for its efforts to put an end to the presence of armed groups and to their economic predation and illegal taxation activities. The humanitarian situation was worrying, with 63 per cent of the population in need of assistance. The Central African Republic had approximately 643,396 internally

displaced persons and 573,342 refugees, mainly in neighbouring States, whose return would require a significant improvement in the redeployment of the State, security, justice and basic social services. Action by the United Nations and other humanitarian partners was critical. In that regard, States in the region were encouraged to promote better resource mobilization and a more generous response to the humanitarian appeal.

96. The representative of MINUSCA reminded member States of the various political processes under way aimed at finding a solution to the crisis in the Central African Republic, in particular the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. That African Union initiative, supported by the States of the region, ECCAS, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Security Council, was led by the Panel of Facilitators, whose members included Cameroon, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon and the Sudan, and had achieved significant progress. Thanks to the African Initiative, preliminary contact had been established with the various parties with a view to holding the direct dialogue called for by the Government of the Central African Republic. As part of the Initiative, the armed groups had also been consulted and had presented a consolidated platform of demands and a list of issues to be discussed during the direct dialogue. The level of preparation reached by the African Initiative was now considered sufficient to launch the dialogue called for by the President of the Central African Republic, Faustin-Archange Touadéra. To that end, the representative of MINUSCA called on member States to support the Government of the Central African Republic and to encourage all partners involved in the crisis to accelerate the political process. In addition to support for the effective launch of the dialogue envisaged under the African Initiative, the representative requested member States to provide wide-ranging assistance for peacemaking and security, in particular by reactivating the joint commissions to foster bilateral cooperation with neighbouring States and by ensuring increased and stricter monitoring of the implementation of the arms embargo. In accordance with its mandate, MINUSCA was a member of the Panel of Facilitators and continued to support the African Initiative as a mechanism for seeking a political solution to the crisis in the Central African Republic. That support had been reflected in the political and diplomatic assistance offered by the Secretary-General and in the provision of technical assistance and significant logistical support.

97. At the end of the various briefings on the situation in the Central African Republic, the Committee noted with concern the fragile security situation in the country and urged the international community and member States to continue to actively support the African Initiative. The Committee recommended that the member States represented on the Panel of Facilitators pay their financial contributions; facilitate the holding of the planned dialogue between the Government of the Central African Republic and the armed groups; implement the recommendations on post-conflict assistance adopted at the ECCAS Summit of Heads of State and Government held on 30 November 2016, including by supporting the strengthening of the technical and material capacities of the internal security forces; fully lift the embargo on arms destined for the defence and security forces; strengthen border control to combat the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons; reactivate the joint commissions between the Central African Republic and its neighbours; and respond more generously to the humanitarian appeal.

H. Combating insecurity, armed groups, violent extremism and terrorism in Central Africa

1. Mercenary activity and poaching in Central Africa

98. The representative of Chad said that, like other countries in the region, Chad was a victim of mercenary activity, despite having legal instruments, such as its Penal Code, which prohibited mercenary activities.

99. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS said that the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa and the ECOWAS-ECCAS Joint Summit had addressed mercenary activity, which affected countries in the subregions and remained a complex and sensitive issue and required access to, among other things, national intelligence channels. It would also be important to develop a strategy on the matter in the Committee, with the technical support of UNOCA and the General Secretariat of ECCAS.

100. Following recent developments on the security situation in the subregion, mercenary activity had become a major security issue and some member States, including Chad and Equatorial Guinea, had expressed the wish that the issue be discussed in the Committee. It had therefore been considered during the closed ministerial meeting on confidence-building measures in the region.

101. The representative of UNODC, presenting that organization's mandate in the region, said that its subregional programme, which was on the verge of being finalized, included a project in the Central African Republic designed to strengthen the operational capacity of the Special Criminal Court, and two regional projects on maritime security and illicit trafficking in natural resources. The aims of those regional projects were to strengthen national capacities, bolster regional and international cooperation and address trafficking financing networks, with special emphasis on cross-border areas exposed to trafficking and poaching. Implementation of those projects would begin in 2019.

102. The representative of Chad, making a presentation on the poaching of elephants, whose population had dropped from 50,000 to 1,500 heads in 50 years, said that the threat from poachers, some of whom originated from neighbouring countries, such as the Sudan, was ongoing and that armed and trained poachers operated in groups and travelled on horseback or on camelback. In addition to elephants, poachers were increasingly attacking other species by poisoning water sources to kill fish and animals that drank from those sources. The poisoned animals were then sold to locals, who might in turn be contaminated by the poison.

103. The Committee recommended that anti-poaching efforts be integrated into an eco-security process, to highlight the close linkages between trafficking in natural resources and security issues in Central Africa.

2. Implementation of the regional strategy to combat terrorism and trafficking in small arms and light weapons in Central Africa

104. The participants discussed the importance of continuing the efforts to implement the strategy, adopted at the forty-first meeting of the Committee, and reiterated the importance of the role of the General Secretariat of ECCAS in monitoring its implementation.

3. Fight against Boko Haram and humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad basin

105. The representative of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, presenting the objectives of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin, which was built on nine

pillars, said that the means of its implementation were as follows: the Steering Committee, which reported to the Council of Ministers of the Commission at its annual meeting and included the African Union Commission, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Multinational Joint Task Force; joint territorial action plans developed with the governors of the regions affected; and a technical coordination unit. The Commission was considering a renewable, five-year plan for the implementation of the Strategy and also planned, during the start-up phase, to hold a forum for investment in the Lake Chad region for the implementation of the Strategy.

106. The representative of the Multinational Joint Task Force said that the security situation was calm but unpredictable. Over the past two months, the Force had neutralized 54 Boko Haram elements. Three Boko Haram terrorists (including one woman) had been arrested in Cameroon on 1 November, and since October, 40 Boko Haram elements had surrendered to troops of various contingents of the Task Force. On 15 November, the Task Force had carried out air strikes that had neutralized the head of communications of the sect. Joint and bilateral operations had also been conducted with national armies. In all, 2,438 Boko Haram elements had surrendered and were participating in a demobilization and reintegration process. There were a total of 2.31 million internally displaced persons, 199,000 refugees and 198,000 returnees.

107. The Task Force continued to conduct ground, sea and air operations against Boko Haram, as the use of improvised explosive devices had resumed a few weeks earlier. As a result of the pressure it faced, Boko Haram was currently going through an internal crisis, with more and more of its members likely to surrender. Some leaders, including Mamman Nur, in their attempt to surrender, had been caught and executed by the hierarchy of the sect. To address the significant challenges posed by their operations on the ground, support with communication and night vision equipment would be essential for the Task Force.

108. The Committee called on member States and international partners to help mobilize resources to support the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Multinational Joint Task Force in the implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin, including by providing means of transportation and communication, and surveillance and night vision equipment.

4. Briefing from the Democratic Republic of the Congo

109. The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo said that the country was facing violent international terrorism in the Ruwenzori region from the Allied Democratic Forces and former elements of the Lord's Resistance Army working in collusion with the latter. The Kanyabayonga, Walungu and Kisangani camps had been closed and disarmed Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda fighters and their dependants had been repatriated to Rwanda.

110. The Committee considered that the Allied Democratic Forces posed a serious threat to security in the region and strongly condemned it.

I. Promotion of disarmament and security sector reform in Central Africa

111. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS said that the Kinshasa Convention, which had been adopted on 30 April 2010 and entered into force on 8 March 2017, had been negotiated as part of the Sao Tome Initiative adopted at the twenty-fifth meeting of the Committee.

112. With regard to the implementation of the Convention in the ECCAS area, the General Secretariat had worked with Chad to convene, in N'Djamena, on 17 and 18 July, a preparatory meeting for the establishment of a national commission for combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. It had provided technical assistance to Cameroon and Gabon, both of which had drafted legislation to be submitted to their national assemblies for the establishment of their national commissions. The General Secretariat stood ready to support the other countries and to visit Sao Tome and Principe, Equatorial Guinea and the Congo.

113. Seven of the States members of ECCAS – Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe – had ratified the Kinshasa Convention, while four others – Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Rwanda – had signed the Convention. The General Secretariat had been working with those four countries over the previous months to encourage them to ratify the Convention, as urged by the Ministers of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, on 3 and 4 March 2018.

114. A workshop would be held in early 2019 in Equatorial Guinea, which was in the process of setting up its national commission. The General Secretariat was in discussion with Burundi, Equatorial Guinea and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to organize awareness workshops on the ratification of the Convention.

115. Lastly, the first Conference of States Parties to the Kinshasa Convention had been held in Yaoundé, from 11 to 13 June 2018, at the invitation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in accordance with article 34 of the Convention, on the topic of access of non-state actors to small arms and light weapons and the threats faced by Central African States. At the Conference, regulatory documents had been developed and the participants had discussed the establishment of a permanent secretariat, funding issues and national conferences, and had agreed that a review conference would be held in March 2022, five years following the entry into force of the Convention.

116. The representative of Burundi shared the country's experience with developing effective institutions for the management of small arms and light weapons, promotion and effective assistance in the management of small arms and light weapons (marking of weapons, record-keeping, physical security of stocks, disarming of the civilian population, destruction of surplus and obsolete materials and border control) and in the effective generation and dissemination of information on those weapons and the disarming of the population. Burundi also faced a number of challenges in controlling the flow of weapons, including continuing acts of violence, such as rape, banditry and land conflicts brought to light by the monitoring of violence; porosity of borders, which remained a factor in the flow of weapons to criminals; non-assessment of the national action plan for the control and management of small arms and light weapons and the disarming of the civilian population; shortage of financial resources; lack of sufficient means of implementation of programmes for disarmament and combating the proliferation of such weapons.

117. The representative of Burundi recommended that all international partners help to strengthen the capacities of national commissions to control small arms and light weapons through financial and material support, and called upon States members of ECCAS that had not yet done so to establish a national authority to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, in their efforts to implement the Kinshasa Convention. The delegation also requested the support of the General Secretariat of ECCAS for the establishment in Burundi of a regional centre of excellence for combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, which would include the East African Community and ECCAS.

118. The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, providing a briefing on the country's efforts to ratify the Kinshasa Convention, said that, after considering the report of the Defence and Security Committee, the National Assembly had, on 22 November, adopted a bill authorizing the ratification of the Convention. Efforts made in 2010 had already helped to reduce the extent of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the country. Those efforts had included the marking and tracing of weapons; reform of the army and the security sector; fighting against the presence and harmfulness of armed groups; and capacity-building for the police.

119. The representative of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa presented the joint project it had developed with ECCAS and UNOCA to support the implementation of the Kinshasa Convention in the 11 countries of ECCAS. The project had been officially launched at the current meeting.

120. The representative of Cameroon, reporting on the first Conference of States Parties to the Kinshasa Convention, held recently in Yaoundé, said that the collaborative spirit and fellowship displayed at the Conference on the issue of combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons should be commended. In the implementation of the Kinshasa Convention and all accompanying activities, member States should make every effort to take ownership of the Convention, starting with its ratification. It was also necessary to adopt a coordinated and holistic approach in the establishment of national institutions responsible for implementing the Convention and community institutions and mechanisms, and in the consolidation of consultation frameworks. The representative welcomed the presentation by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and noted that member States would have their say in the recruitment of national experts and consultants. As Chair of the Conference for the current biennium, Cameroon reaffirmed its commitment to do its utmost to achieve the objectives set in Yaoundé for the effective implementation of the Kinshasa Convention, and called for the coordination of all initiatives that would be taken to implement the Convention in the subregion.

121. In response to a question from the representative of Sao Tome and Principe on the choice of English for the disarmament awareness programme implemented in Burundi for young people, the representative of Burundi stated that his country also used two national languages.

J. Piracy and maritime security

122. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS, reporting on the situation regarding piracy and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, said that the Gulf of Guinea area, which included seven coastal States members of ECCAS, was of great strategic importance, because it accounted for 50 per cent of the oil produced on the African continent (representing 10 per cent of world production). In addition, 90 per cent of the trade volume of States in the area travelled along the maritime routes of the Gulf of Guinea. However, while more than 1 million tons of fish were caught in the Gulf each year, 40 per cent of that volume came from illegal fishing, representing an annual loss of more than \$1.5 billion for the States in the area.

123. With regard to maritime safety, while a semblance of calm had returned to the maritime area of ECCAS in previous years, the situation seemed to be becoming unglued, with an upsurge in acts of violence. From 1 to 31 October, the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa had recorded one act of robbery, one act of piracy, one hostage-taking, three boarding attempts and one ship hijacking. Those events had taken place in many areas, including the area comprising Angola, the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on the edge of area D, in the

waters south of Gabon, where the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre of area A had not been activated.

124. The main challenges highlighted remained the lack of transmission and naval equipment for the Central African Regional Maritime Security Centre, the Multilateral Maritime Coordination Centre and national maritime operations centres for monitoring the area; lack of coercive and deterrent judicial procedures; non-compliance with the information-sharing protocol; and absence of sustainable funding mechanisms. The representative of the Interregional Coordination Centre for Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea thanked the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa for his support of actions taken in support of resource mobilization.

125. During the discussions that followed the presentation, the representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS noted that, as part of institutional reform, a review of the procedures for the financing of the maritime safety and security architecture was envisioned; it would take effect when the reform was implemented.

126. The Committee encouraged the General Secretariat of ECCAS to activate the Multilateral Maritime Coordination Centre of area A, which concerned Angola, the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Committee invited member States to pay their financial contributions to the Interregional Coordination Centre for Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea. The Committee would like a briefing on the progress made by Interregional Centre to be included in the agenda of its future meetings.

K. Free movement of persons in Central Africa

127. The representative of CEMAC, briefing the Committee on efforts to ensure the free movement of persons and goods in Central Africa, said that such movement was now effective and complete between the countries of CEMAC, whose citizens could travel to its member countries without visa formalities if they were in possession of a CEMAC biometric passport. However, there was a delay in the production of those passports. Four of the six CEMAC countries – Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo and Equatorial Guinea – were in the process of producing biometric passports, while Chad and Gabon were working on it. A CEMAC delegation would be travelling to Gabon by the end of the month to assist the country in its process to introduce that passport. The next step in the subregion would be to extend the CEMAC free trade area to all ECCAS States. That project was under way.

128. The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo said that while the free movement of persons and goods remained a priority for the country, the security emergencies it was facing did not allow for the immediate implementation of the project.

129. The representative of Sao Tome and Principe, noting that free movement was an important issue but one that presented challenges, and seeking clarification about the harmonization of the production of CEMAC passports and the future ECCAS passport, asked whether citizens of CEMAC and ECCAS would in the future have to obtain and travel with both passports. The representative of CEMAC said that detailed clarifications could not be given on that issue at the current time.

130. The Committee commended Rwanda, which had already opened its borders for the free movement of all African citizens, and encouraged States members of ECCAS and CEMAC to take the issue of free movement into consideration when finalizing their rationalization process.

L. Transhumance and cross-border security

131. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS, referring to the issue of transhumance, said that agriculture and pastoralism were means of subsistence and a source of income for more than half of the population of the subregion and contributed significantly to State revenues. Transhumance had evolved in recent years to become a potential cause of conflict that exacerbated recurrent tensions between farmers and pastoralists.

132. The movement of small arms and light weapons, which had for some time been associated with pastoralism and transhumance, was becoming increasingly troubling. In general, the security issue related to pastoralism and transhumance could be solved overall if States pooled their security and free movement services in addressing pastoralism and transhumance.

133. The absence or poor marking of traditional transhumance corridors, crop expansion, the increase in herd sizes and the proliferation of armed groups were factors now linked to the issue of transhumance.

134. As many pastoralists were engaged in pastoralism for reasons of prestige, not for economic reasons, the representative proposed that, as part of a broader strategy of the States of the subregion, pastoralists should be encouraged to transform pastoralism into an economically viable activity. The representative reiterated the importance of developing community regulations on pastoralism, based on the ECOWAS model.

M. Briefing from the General Secretariat of the Economic Community of Central African States on the institutional reform of the Community

135. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS said that the reform process was ongoing and remained a priority, and that the reform proposal had been shared with the missions of States members of ECCAS accredited in Libreville.

N. Implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in Central Africa

136. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS, referring to the status of implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) among States members of ECCAS, welcomed the adoption of national action plans by seven States (Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda), while encouraging Chad, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe to do the same. However, the level of awareness of the resolution in the subregion remained low.

137. The region was facing a terrorist threat and the rate of participation of women in mechanisms to prevent radicalization and violent extremism was low. The individual and collective protection needs of women and girls negatively affected by armed conflict and terrorist groups were also scarcely addressed. The Committee was called upon to address the training needs of the defence and security forces concerning the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and the protection of women and girls affected by conflict.

138. The existence of certain temporary special measures for elections designed to increase the proportion of women and young people represented in decision-making

bodies was commendable. Increasing the proportion of women in the defence and security forces of States members of ECCAS also remained a priority.

139. The General Secretariat of ECCAS was waiting for written confirmation from Equatorial Guinea that it would host the Women's Conference for Peace, scheduled for 2019 in Malabo, as proposed at the Committee's forty-sixth meeting.

140. The representative of the UN-Women West and Central Africa Regional Office welcomed the validation by experts of the ECCAS regional action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the establishment of steering committees for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations at the national level. The Committee should be commended for the many recommendations concerning women and peace and security adopted at its previous meetings and for the progress reported during the presentation of the Bureau's activity report. However, the Committee should address the need to integrate more women into the peace and security architecture, in order to achieve lasting results. More than 18 years following the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), UN-Women regretted the slow progress made in that area and encouraged States to make a commitment to accelerate their efforts, relying on various existing networks, such as the African Union's Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation and the African Women Leaders Network.

141. During the discussions on the two presentations, the representative of Sao Tome and Principe called for respect of women's rights and for the active participation of women in the construction and development of the country. The representative of the Central African Republic gave an update on the latest developments in the country, including the appointment of a woman as Minister of Defence, the adoption of a 15-per-cent quota for women in the defence and security forces, and the promotion of women to higher ranks. In addition, the second draft of the action plan of the Central African Republic for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) was being developed and women's platforms addressing issues relating to mediation and conflict prevention and resolution in the Central African Republic were beginning to emerge.

142. The representative of Cameroon said that Cameroonian women in the South-West and North-West regions were working to silence the guns and put an end to violence. UN-Women played a commendable role in raising awareness of resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions and work was under way to monitor the effective implementation of the national action plan. Lastly, Cameroon wished to participate actively in all subregional initiatives concerning women and peace and security. It was also worth noting that President Biya had made a firm commitment to women and young people and would be setting up a secretariat.

143. The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo gave the example of the important role that women had played in the repatriation of fighters of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda and in their influence in achieving lasting peace in the region.

144. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS gave more details about a project to develop a subregional convention on the prevention of gender-based violence, but pointed out that the convention was still in its start-up phase and that member States would be involved in the process in due course. The representative of Cameroon proposed that the subregional convention go further by addressing issues related to other types of violence and discrimination. The representative of Rwanda strongly encouraged States to include at least one woman in their delegations attending the Committee's meetings.

145. The Committee recommended that member States ensure that more women were recruited in the defence and security forces and that more women participated in peacekeeping missions; and that they set up effective mechanisms for the protection of women and young people and for their involvement in processes for dialogue, prevention and combating of radicalization and violent extremism. The Committee encouraged the Panel of Facilitators of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic to be expanded to include women of influence and mediators.

146. The Committee also invited member States to design and launch gender partnership programmes, in order to encourage men to join forces to combat violence against women; to adopt and implement a national action plan for resolution 1325 (2000); to establish national committees to monitor the implementation of those national plans; to expedite the preparation of national plans in member States that had not yet done so; and to include women experts in their delegations.

O. Briefing on the promotion of human rights in Central Africa

147. The representative of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa gave a presentation on the situation of human rights and democracy in the subregion, and on the main activities undertaken by the Centre to provide technical assistance to States to enable them to comply with their obligations under the international and regional instruments that they had ratified.

148. Commending the recent electoral processes which had been unmarred by violence, including the presidential election in Cameroon, held in October, and the parliamentary elections held in Rwanda, in September and in Gabon, in October, the representative said that the Centre had provided technical support to various actors, including electoral bodies, political parties, media professionals, members of the security forces and civil society. The main aim had been to ensure that persons belonging to traditionally marginalized groups participated fully and effectively in political and public life, and to promote human rights in electoral processes in order to prevent violence.

149. However, the human rights situation in the Central African subregion continued to be affected in many respects by a number of incidents that had taken place in an increasingly unstable economic environment and that could delay the achievement of many of the Sustainable Development Goals in many countries.

150. The security situation in Burundi had improved following the sociopolitical crisis that the country had experienced in April 2015. However, there were still allegations of human rights violations, including cases of enforced disappearance, extrajudicial executions and restrictions on public freedoms, such as freedom of expression and assembly for members of the opposition and opponents to the amendment of the Constitution. It should be noted that, however, that owing to the suspension of cooperation between the Government and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) since October 2016, it had been difficult to verify those allegations.

151. The representative of Burundi said that the allegations made against Burundi were unfounded and did not reflect the reality on the ground, and that even the authors of the report had claimed not to have been able to verify the allegations.

152. The peaceful conduct of the presidential election in Cameroon was welcomed. The representative of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa stated that the Centre welcomed the fact that the legal proceedings initiated following the election had enabled the subregion and the world to witness

the exercise of the right of access to justice in the electoral context. The post-election situation was returning to normal, thanks to the Government's efforts to reduce tensions, evidenced most recently on 4 December 2018 with the stay of legal proceedings against members of the opposition. However, the Centre was concerned at the increase in hate speech and incitement to violence, in particular on social networks.

153. The Centre had taken due note of the commencement of the trial of 47 individuals who had been extradited from Nigeria in January 2018, in the context of the crisis in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon, and of the fair trial guarantees provided by the authorities. The representative reiterated the commitment of the United Nations to respecting the territorial integrity and national unity and diversity of Cameroon.

154. However, the crisis situation in the North-West and South-West regions was creating an unstable security environment, sometimes prompting people to seek refuge in the bush, in neighbouring regions or in neighbouring Nigeria, and resulting in the internal displacement of hundreds of people and of nearly 30,000 refugees, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. While the numbers might not be accurate, the human and economic toll continued to rise. Many deaths had been recorded, among both the civilian population and the defence and security forces, as had kidnappings, often with ransom demands, instances of sexual violence, allegations of extrajudicial executions and cases of children deprived of their right to education over the previous two years. The recent establishment of a national committee for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration could be seen as a hopeful sign, as one of the responses necessary to resolve the crisis.

155. In addition, Boko Haram, although weakened, continued to carry out sporadic attacks, leading to loss of human life, non-enjoyment of social and economic rights and internal population displacement. In that regard, the Centre, through the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, had provided support to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agents to respect human rights in the administration of justice, including for terrorist suspects.

156. With regard to cooperation with United Nations mechanisms, the Centre had provided the Government of Cameroon with technical support for its participation in the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council in May 2018.

157. The Centre commended the efforts made by the authorities of the Congo to find a lasting solution to the situation in Pool Department, in particular through the effective implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities and Ceasefire Agreement. The Centre welcomed the decision of the authorities to investigate the human rights situation in Pool Department and the post-election violence of 2016, in collaboration with OHCHR. The Centre also welcomed the effective cooperation between the authorities of the Congo and the United Nations system in carrying out peacebuilding activities. In that regard, the Centre and UNOCA had strengthened the capacities of the security forces and civil society organizations in Pool Department concerning the promotion of human rights, in the context of the reconciliation process and the agreement with the Ninja militia.

158. Nevertheless, the Centre deplored the death of 13 young people while in custody in Chacona police station, in the Mpila district of Brazzaville. The Centre had welcomed the opening of an investigation by the authorities of the Congo with a view to clarifying the circumstances of the deaths and determining accountability through a just and fair trial for the defendants.

159. The representative of the Congo took note of the briefing and said that an enquiry had been opened into the tragic incident at Chacona police station, in order to establish criminal and civil liability. Furthermore, it should be noted that the Congo had successfully concluded the third cycle of the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council on 14 November 2018, in Geneva.

160. The Centre welcomed the peaceful legislative elections held recently in Gabon. In cooperation with the authorities of Gabon, through the Ministry of Justice, the Centre had been able to strengthen the capacity of the members of the interministerial committee to draft reports and to compile the recommendations of all international human rights mechanisms concerning Gabon, with a view to their effective implementation. The Centre had also provided support to the Gabonese authorities for the establishment of a national mechanism to prevent torture, and the adoption of the appropriate draft legislation by the relevant bodies.

161. The Centre welcomed the holding of the sixth national dialogue in Equatorial Guinea, organized by President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, in July 2018, and the decision to grant a general amnesty to all leaders of the opposition in exile, to allow them to participate fully and effectively in the national dialogue. The Centre also welcomed the holding of a meeting on 6 November to validate the drafting process for a national report to be considered during the third cycle of the universal periodic review mechanism, in 2019.

162. The Central African Republic unfortunately continued to experience violence, with frequent attacks by armed groups in several localities, including Mbrès and elsewhere in Nana-Grébizi, Bambari and the surrounding areas of Ouaka prefecture, Pombolo in Mbomou prefecture, Ouham-Pendé, Haute-Kotto and, occasionally, Bangui. The attacks involved killings, cruel and inhumane acts, sexual violence, kidnapping and looting, as well as attacks on protected entities, including humanitarian workers and MINUSCA peacekeepers.

163. The Centre welcomed the adoption by the High Council for Communication of a national plan for the prevention of public incitement to violence and hate speech in the Central African Republic, and the decision to extend the mandate of the Executive Committee of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission. As a result of the efforts of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the country's national human rights commission had been granted "A" accreditation status, which was conferred on national human rights institutions deemed to be in compliance with General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 1993, by which the Paris Principles had been adopted. That status was granted by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions to national human rights institutions deemed to be independent.

164. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the positive developments in the electoral process could help to promote the exercise of civil rights and fundamental freedoms. Nonetheless, those positive developments could be hampered by the situation in the eastern part of the country, which continued to suffer attacks by armed groups and ethnic conflict, in particular between the Hema and Walendu communities in Djugu territory, in the province of Ituri, and between Bafuliro and Banyamulenge communities in South Kivu, with an increase in human rights abuses perpetrated by various Mai-Mai groups, which made children and women more vulnerable.

165. For a number of human rights observers, the presidential election scheduled for 23 December 2018 marked the beginning of an era of hope with regard to the full, effective and equal enjoyment of all human rights for all. The Centre had conducted training for members of the interministerial committee on the drafting of reports for human rights bodies, including for the universal periodic review. The Centre had also provided the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with technical support for the drafting of the action plan for the implementation of the

recommendations of human rights mechanisms, which it called upon the Government to adopt.

166. The representative of the Centre commended the decision of Rwanda to enact the law establishing the national mechanism for the prevention of torture.

167. In Sao Tome and Principe, cooperation with the Government had led to the ratification of the major international human rights conventions. The Centre was working to provide the competent authorities with technical support for the preparation of the country's initial report, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

168. Chad had been preparing its national report for the November 2018 universal periodic review. With the support of partners, including OHCHR, resource mobilization efforts had been made with a view to opening a country office in Chad with a mandate to promote and protect human rights in the country. Significant progress had been made since the adoption of the new Constitution in March 2018, with the elaboration of a text on the establishment of a national human rights commission. The Government of Chad had issued an order to that effect in June 2018 specifying the remit and role of the commission. The hope was that the text could be adopted as legislation in order to give the commission independent status, in accordance with the Paris Principles.

169. Lastly, the representative of the Centre set out the priorities for the Centre's four-year strategic plan for 2018 to 2021, including the strengthening of the rule of law and of accountability for human rights violations, with a focus on mechanisms to combat torture; the strengthening and protection of civic space and the participation of the people, with a focus on the political participation of marginalized groups and the protection of fundamental freedoms; the strengthening of equality and non-discrimination, with a focus on strengthening protection mechanisms at the national level; the integration of human rights in development spheres, with a focus on the observance of human rights by businesses, as well as in the exploitation of natural resources and in combating corruption; early warning, prevention and protection of human rights in situations of conflict and insecurity, with a focus on human rights in the context of counter-terrorism; and stronger implementation of the recommendations of international human rights mechanisms.

170. Following the Centre's presentation, the Committee recommended that member States authorize access to conflict areas, understanding that the role of OHCHR was solely of peacebuilding, with a view to preventing the propagation of allegations of human rights violations, often referred to as "fake news". The Committee also recommended that member States put in place effective strategies to implement the recommendations of human rights mechanisms.

P. Briefings by entities with observer status in the Committee

171. The representative of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), welcoming the holding of the ECOWAS-ECCAS Joint Summit and the memorandum of understanding between the two subregional organizations signed on 30 June, on the margins of the Summit of the African Union, said that the strategy adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Lake Chad Basin Commission addressed the challenges facing the Lake Chad basin, which affected both regions. The support of UNOWAS and UNOCA for stabilization and resilience-building efforts in the Lake Chad basin area and the need for continued commitment to mobilizing financial resources and providing the necessary equipment were also noteworthy.

172. The representative of UNOWAS also welcomed the designation of Chad as host of the next ECOWAS-ECCAS Joint Summit and recommended that the agendas of the upcoming meetings of the Committee include briefings on the implementation of the decisions of the 2018 Joint Summit and preparations for the 2020 Joint Summit.

173. The representative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS reported that a plan for the implementation of the decisions taken at the ECOWAS-ECCAS Joint Summit was to be approved soon but regretted that the meeting for that purpose which was to have been held before the end of 2018 had not taken place. The representative reiterated that the two communities should ensure that the commitments made at the Summit were implemented and hoped that the implementation plan and a monitoring committee would be established as soon as possible.

174. The Committee recommended that a briefing by the General Secretariat of ECCAS on cooperation between ECCAS and other subregional entities be added to the agenda. The Committee invited the international community, including the United Nations, to support the implementation of the Declaration of the Joint Summit of ECOWAS and ECCAS on Peace, Security, Stability and the Fight against Terrorism and Violent Extremism.

Q. Review of the financial situation of the Committee

175. The Committee took note that no contributions had been recorded since its forty-sixth meeting and appealed to member States to pay their contributions. The Committee recommended that the incoming Chair send a note verbale to member States inviting them to pay their voluntary contributions to the trust fund to finance the activities of the Committee. The Committee congratulated Rwanda on being up to date with its contributions. The status of contributions is provided in enclosure III of the present report.

176. The banking details of the trust fund are as follows:

Bank: J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, International Agencies Bank Group

Address: 4 New York Plaza, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10004, United States of America

Account Name: United Nations General Trust Fund

Account Number: 485-0019-69

ABA routing number: 021-000-021:

Swift Code: CHASUS33

Beneficiary: SQA Trust Fund of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

R. Venue and date of next meeting

177. The next meeting of the Committee will be held in Kinshasa.

178. The Committee decided that the incumbent Chair of the Committee, Chad, would contact the First Vice-Chair of the Committee, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as soon as possible, to confirm the date of the next meeting.

S. Other matters

179. The Committee recommended that the agenda item “Other matters” be replaced by the monitoring of revitalization measures, as adopted by ministers at the forty-fourth meeting of the Committee.

180. Equatorial Guinea requested that interpretation services for Spanish be provided at subsequent meetings, to allow it to speak in its official language.

T. Adoption of the report of the forty-seventh ministerial meeting

181. The Committee adopted the present report on 7 December, in N’Djamena.

III. Resolution of gratitude

182. On behalf of the Committee, the following resolution of gratitude was read out by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, the Francophonie and Regional Integration of Gabon, Clotilde Chantal Mboumba Louey:

“We, the ministers and members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, meeting on the occasion of the forty-seventh ministerial meeting, held from 3 to 7 December 2018, in N’Djamena, Republic of Chad:

- Reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of peace, security and stability that are so dear to our respective peoples and essential for the socioeconomic development of our subregion;
- Welcome the efforts made by our countries, individually and collectively, to promote peace, security, stability and development;
- Welcome the hosting of the meeting by the Government of Chad, with the support of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, as well as the atmosphere of conviviality, fraternity and mutual trust which prevailed throughout our work;
- Commend the leadership of His Excellency President Idriss Deby Itno and the ongoing efforts made at the subregional and continental levels to institute reforms aimed at promoting stability, peacebuilding and economic development in Africa;
- Commend also the immeasurable efforts and sacrifices made by the Republic of Chad and all the other States involved in the fight against violent extremism and Boko Haram;
- Express our sincerest thanks and our deepest gratitude to His Excellency President Idriss Deby Itno, and to the Government and people of Chad, for the warm welcome and fraternal hospitality that we received during our stay in the Republic of Chad.”

N’Djamena, 7 December 2018

Enclosure I

Communiqué of the forty-seventh meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

The United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa held its forty-seventh ministerial meeting in N'Djamena, on 7 December 2018. At the meeting, the ministers adopted the report of the meeting of experts held from 3 to 6 December in N'Djamena.

The focus of the ministerial meeting was on the political and security situation in Central Africa. The Committee noted that, despite positive developments, the subregion continued to face significant security challenges and that complex challenges were also emerging, including mercenary activity and security issues relating to transhumance.

At the closed meeting that followed the plenary session, the ministers reviewed the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the run-up to the 23 December general elections, the security situation in the Central African Republic and the phenomenon of mercenary activity. Following their discussions, the ministers:

Concerning the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

1. Took note of the positive developments in the electoral process;
2. Encouraged all actors to work to ensure that the elections are peaceful, safe and that they are held on the scheduled date;
3. Condemned the actions of terrorist groups, including the Allied Democratic Forces, that continued to commit abuses and acts of violence;

Concerning the situation in the Central African Republic

4. Invited the Central African Republic and neighbouring States (including Cameroon and Chad) to expedite the process of reactivating their respective joint commissions;
5. Reiterated their call upon member States and the international community to support the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, and called for the dialogue between the Government and the armed groups to be held as soon as possible, under the African Initiative;
6. Took note of the appeal from the authorities of the Central African Republic for the total lifting of the arms embargo;
7. Recognized that the progress made to date was, to a large extent, the result of unity among national, regional and international actors and called for that unity to be maintained;
8. Took note of the limited resources of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic and called for an increase in the military and other resources of the Mission, to ensure the effective and efficient deployment of peacekeepers for the implementation of its mandate;

Concerning mercenary activity

9. Called upon the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the United Nations to increase their cooperation, with a view to

strengthening their commitments to combating mercenary activity, including through the implementation of existing legal instruments.

On the margins of the ministerial meeting, the Secretary-General of ECCAS, the Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa launched the joint ECCAS-Regional Centre-UNOCA project for the implementation of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (Kinshasa Convention) in the 11 ECCAS countries. Funding in the amount of \$431,638 shall be provided for the project, entitled “Supporting African States towards the vision of ‘Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020’: capacity-building in Central Africa”.

The forty-seventh meeting concluded with the reading of a resolution of gratitude to His Excellency Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad, and to the Government and people of Chad.

Done at N'Djamena, 7 December 2018

Enclosure II

Activity report of the outgoing Bureau chaired by the Congo

The present report covers two areas:

1. Field visit to Maro and Sido, in the Moyen-Chari region of Chad, from 15 to 18 October 2018;
2. Status of implementation of the recommendations of the forty-sixth ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

It should be noted that two technical meetings, organized by the Committee secretariat, were led by the outgoing Chair in preparation for the forty-seventh meeting of the Committee: the workshop on the preparation of the draft agenda, held on 19 October 2018; and the focal points meeting, held on 3 December 2018, on the margins of the forty-seventh meeting. Both meetings were held in N'Djamena.

I. Field visit to Maro and Sido

Background and justification

As part of the Committee's activities, members of the Bureau carried out a field visit to Chad from 15 to 18 October 2018, in the Moyen-Chari region, along the border with the Central African Republic (closed since 2014).

The visit was organized in response to the conclusions of the Committee's forty-fifth and forty-sixth ministerial meetings, during which the issue of transhumance and its impact on the security and stability of States had been discussed.

At the conclusion of its fifth ordinary session, the Council of Ministers of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa had recommended that States adopt community laws on pastoralism.

In addition, at the Joint Summit of ECOWAS and ECCAS Heads of State and Government on Peace, Security, Stability and the Fight against Terrorism and Violent Extremism, held in Lomé, on 30 July 2018, the upsurge in and spread of violent conflicts between herders and farmers as a result of transhumance had been highlighted. Accordingly, the Heads of State had requested the ministers responsible for agriculture, livestock farming and security to hold regular consultations in order to identify measures for the prevention and peaceful management of those conflicts.

Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chad were identified as the countries affected by that phenomenon. However, as transhumance is inextricably linked with pastoralism, all countries in the subregion could potentially benefit from community efforts to address those issues.

In view of the above, the Bureau of the Committee decided, in close collaboration with UNOCA and the General Secretariat of ECCAS, to visit Chad, a country in the subregion where pastoralism has been gaining significant momentum.

Led by the Congo, as current Chair of the Bureau, the delegation was composed of Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Chad. Representatives of UNOCA and the General Secretariat of ECCAS also participated in the mission. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, which had originally been expected to be part of the mission, was unable to participate.

The present report was prepared on the basis of information received on the ground, both from the Chadian administrative authorities and from local actors involved in matters relating to pastoralism and transhumance. The delegation visited the localities of Sarh, Maro and Sido, in the Moyen-Chari region, along the border with the Central African Republic.

1. Objectives of the field visit

The objectives of the visit were to gain a concrete insight into the challenges relating to transhumance; contribute to ongoing subregional discussions on the adoption of regional regulations; and identify areas of inter-State and subregional cooperation, to reduce the negative impact of transhumance on the security of States and populations.

2. Conduct of the visit

The mission involved the following activities:

- Travel to the localities of Sarh, Maro and Sido, in the Moyen-Chari region;
- Interactive meetings and discussions with local authorities, humanitarian actors and target groups;
- Site visits, including to the Maro refugee camp.

3. Main interlocutors met

The delegation met with State and non-State entities involved in the management of pastoralism and transhumance, including local authorities (the Governor of the Moyen-Chari region, the Prefect of Grande Sido and the Sub-Prefect of Sido), humanitarian actors, heads of committees on the settlement and management of conflicts between herders and farmers, refugee groups and representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees based in Maro.

4. Emerging issues related to transhumance, including security challenges, humanitarian issues, free movement of persons and goods, and social cohesion

All interlocutors welcomed the interest shown by member States in this matter, as demonstrated by the sending of a large subregional delegation to the field to experience first-hand the issues relating to pastoralism and transhumance.

They noted that the challenges associated with these issues, while not new, were changing in a manner that might have security implications if concerted efforts were not made to mitigate them.

(a) Emerging issues and challenges related to transhumance

Pastoralism and transhumance play a major role in the economy of Chad and other countries in the subregion. In Chad, the livestock farming sector is considered to be one of the two mainstays of the economy, together with agriculture. Owing to its geographical position, Chad is a thoroughfare for herders from the northern part of the country or from the Sudan that travel to the southern part of the country, on their way to countries in the subregion such as Cameroon, Nigeria, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The passage of herders through cultivated areas sometimes causes damage to crops and precipitates conflict between herders and farmers, which can lead to violence. Moreover, owing to demographic pressure and its impact on land management, some transhumance corridors are being converted into farms or villages.

Desertification in northern Chad and in the Sudan, the effects of deforestation, overexploitation of water sources and the impact of climate change are forcing herders to head south, causing them either to become sedentary or to migrate to green, wet areas, and to wind up in countries such as Cameroon, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It was also observed that some herders only practised livestock farming for reasons of prestige and owned sizeable yet innumerable heads of cattle, with no benefit to the local or national economy. This situation is not conducive to livestock farming that focuses on animal quality, or to the development of an industry based on the processing of livestock products (dairy products). Moreover, cattle are often entrusted to cowherds, sometimes minors, who are unfamiliar with transhumance corridors.

Lastly, the ongoing armed conflicts in some countries in the subregion has created insecure areas for herders and transhumant herders who, to protect themselves or for other reasons, carry arms. Several interlocutors lamented that the northern part of the Central African Republic was not controlled by the appropriate administrative authorities, a situation that contributed to insecurity, illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, cattle theft, risk of animal disease, and serious crime. The influx of refugees, including herders, also limits the availability of arable land and sources of drinking water, increasing the risk of tensions between communities, between refugees and local populations, and between herders and farmers.

(b) Good practices identified

The entities with which the delegation met noted that, through its experience with pastoralism, Chad had been able to work with humanitarian actors to establish effective measures and mechanisms to address these challenges, including:

- Establishment of the National and Nomadic Guard and of border checkpoints to provide security and monitor the movement of herders;
- Establishment of local committees to manage conflicts between herders and farmers;
- Training in and raising awareness of the peaceful management of pastoral conflicts and respect of transhumance corridors by members of the committees and various relevant actors;
- Establishment of a pastoral map, with the support of development partners and non-governmental organizations, to identify points of passage, transhumance corridors and water retention basins;
- Revitalization of points of passage and transhumance corridors, together with the development of local infrastructure (boreholes, local forests and parks, etc.).

5. Recommendations

The main recommendations from the mission are as follows:

(a) To member States

- Support the return to lasting peace in the Central African Republic, the Sudan and the Lake Chad basin area;
- Strengthen cooperation and the exchange of information among States for border monitoring;
- Strengthen cross-border cooperation among States, including by reactivating the joint commissions;

- Develop and strengthen mechanisms for cooperation among States and among local administrations in border regions, to address security challenges related to transhumance;
- Deploy security forces along borders and provide them with appropriate means of mobility and intervention;
- Establish harmonized mechanisms for tracking owners and livestock;
- Regulate livestock ownership (number of cattle) and improve control of the livestock population;
- Ensure that criminal justice institutions (courts, prisons, police stations) are present in the main cities along transhumance corridors and promote the development of administrative and animal accommodation infrastructure in those cities;
- Implement harmonized programmes for the enhancement and demarcation of national points of passage, transhumance corridors and vaccination points at borders;
- Promote the establishment and operationalization of permanent coordination frameworks for the management of conflicts among the various communities affected by pastoralism and transhumance;
- Implement awareness-raising programmes on peaceful coexistence and respect of human rights, and strengthen the role and participation of women and young people in peacebuilding;
- Establish a national map of transhumance corridors in each member State, with a view to developing a subregional map;
- Ensure coordination among States in implementing research programmes on enhancing animal breeds, in order to generate greater economic benefits for herders and States;
- Support initiatives to process and market animal products, in order to reduce the vulnerability of herders and diversify sources of revenue in the livestock sector.

(b) To the General Secretariat of the Economic Community of Central African States

- Propose the establishment of a committee to monitor the development of the future regional or community instrument on pastoralism;
- Consider the relevance of a disarmament programme aimed at herders and farmers;
- Support the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Lomé Declaration on Peace, Security, Stability and the Fight against Terrorism and Violent Extremism, adopted at the ECOWAS-ECCAS Joint Summit.

(c) To the United Nations system

- Support the organization of a subregional workshop on pastoralism and transhumance in Central Africa;
- Support the implementation of community regulations on pastoralism and transhumance and of all related subregional initiatives;
- Support the mobilization of funds for awareness-raising and training of herders, farmers and all relevant actors on peaceful coexistence, peaceful management of conflicts, respect of transhumance corridors and compliance with human

rights and national and community regulations relating to livestock farming and agriculture.

(d) To the Committee secretariat

- Consider carrying out a field visit to another country in order to take into account the specificities of each country;
- Continue to support member States in their efforts to maintain peace and stability in Central Africa.

6. Acknowledgements

The Bureau of the Committee wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the Government of Chad for providing the delegation with all the amenities and facilities necessary to conduct the mission under the best possible conditions.

It also wishes to thank the United Nations system in Chad for its logistical support, as well as UNOCA for providing secretariat support to the Committee.

II. Status of implementation of the recommendations of the forty-sixth ministerial meeting of the Committee

1. Holding of a subregional meeting on mercenary activity and confidence-building measures, with the support of the United Nations

Current status

In accordance with the Lomé Declaration, adopted at the ECOWAS-ECCAS Joint Summit, the two subregional organizations are developing a joint action plan for the implementation of the Declaration. A draft agreement on cooperation on criminal police matters between Central African States, West African States and Mauritania is expected to be approved before the end of 2018.

2. Recommendation to member States and relevant ECCAS bodies to implement the integrated strategy for combating terrorism and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa, adopted at the forty-first meeting of the Committee, held in Libreville on 26 November 2015

Current status

The approval process is under way in the 11 States members of the Committee and in the relevant ECCAS bodies. On 14 February 2017, the Central African Republic signed decrees for the establishment of the National Commission to Combat Small Arms and Light Weapons and for the appointment of its members. A workshop to develop the strategy and the plan of action was held in Bangui from 10 to 13 July.

3. Recommendation to the General Secretariat of ECCAS to initiate discussions at the regional level on the accessibility of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors, in partnership with subregional organizations

Current status

A study on this topic between ECCAS, UNOCA and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa is planned.

4. **Recommendation to member States to establish a specialized technical group to monitor the implementation of the ECCAS regional action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), adopted in Brazzaville on 24 May 2018**

Current status

The establishment of the specialized technical group is under way in most States members of the Committee.

5. **Recommendation to member States to increase the number of women in defence and security forces, peacekeeping operations and peace processes in Central Africa**

Current status

Gabon has female military personnel engaged in the peacekeeping process in the Central African Republic. For example, a female general serves as head of the coordination unit responsible for issues relating to conduct and discipline in the Ministry of National Defence. She monitors these issues as part of the Gabonese contingent in Bangui. There are 37 women in the current Gabonese battalion of the United Nations Integrated Multidimensional Mission in the Central African Republic, accounting for 8 per cent of the force. There are plans to gradually increase this number. Women are expected to comprise 10 per cent of the next battalion, taking all ranks into consideration. In Burundi, the number of women in the national police and defence forces has been steadily increasing. In recruiting personnel for these bodies, the Government takes into account the ratio of young women, in order to ensure gender balance, in accordance with the country's Constitution. In the Congo, the proportion of women in the armed and security forces increased significantly between 2012 and 2018, from 4.10 per cent to 8.5 per cent. The proportion of women participating in peacekeeping operations is more than 12 per cent. In Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe, awareness-raising campaigns are under way to implement this recommendation. In Rwanda, women account for 18 per cent of all military and police personnel in peacekeeping operations. In the Central African Republic, of the 500 police and gendarmes that have been recruited, 114 are women. A 15 per cent quota is reserved for women in the ongoing recruitment process for the defence and security forces. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, although women are already integrated into the defence and security forces, efforts are under way to deploy them in peacekeeping missions and those efforts are expected to come to fruition by 2019.

6. **Reiteration of the recommendation that member State delegations participating in upcoming statutory meetings include at least one woman, in accordance with the Sao Tome Declaration**

Current status

This recommendation is already being implemented in several countries. At the Committee's forty-seventh meeting, the delegations of Burundi, Cameroon, the Congo, Gabon, Rwanda and Chad included at least one woman.

7. **Call on member States, in particular those that have never done so, to contribute to the trust fund before the Committee's next meeting**

Current status

Contributions are still set at \$10,000 per member State. They are non-binding. States are strongly encouraged to make these contributions. Since the Committee's

forty-sixth meeting, held in Brazzaville, no new contributions have been received. However, Rwanda is up to date with its payments.

8. Recommendation to Member States to strengthen border security cooperation among the countries in the subregion in order to combat organized crime, in accordance with the Brazzaville Declaration on Confidence-Building Measures, adopted at the Committee's forty-sixth meeting

Current status

Several States in the subregion have established frameworks for border security cooperation under which joint commissions regularly meet. In March 2018, under the auspices of ECCAS, the Congo, Cameroon and Gabon met, under the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, to discuss security issues in the tri-border area of Minkébé.

Final recommendations of the outgoing Bureau

The General Secretariat of ECCAS should take the conclusions of the field mission into consideration in its initiatives on pastoralism and transhumance, including in the implementation of the Lomé Declaration and in the adoption of draft community regulations on pastoralism.

In view of the funding challenges facing the Committee, the Chair should issue a note verbal reminding member States of the need to pay their contributions to the trust fund.

Enclosure III

Status of contributions to the special fund since the establishment of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

(in United States dollars)

<i>Member State</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Contributions to date</i>	<i>Amount outstanding in accordance with the Libreville Declaration concerning the trust fund</i>
Angola	2017	10 000.00	
	2015	40 000.00	
	2011	10 000.00	
	2010	10 000.00	
Subtotal		70 000.00	20 000.00
Burundi		–	90 000.00
Cameroon		–	90 000.00
Central African Republic	2018	18 715.85	
	2017	25 598.32	
Subtotal		43 314.17	45 685.83
Chad		–	90 000.00
Congo	2016	50 000.00	
	2011	10 961.00	
	2010	9 299.00	
Subtotal		70 260.00	19 740.00
Democratic Republic of the Congo		–	90 000.00
Equatorial Guinea		–	90 000.00
Gabon	2017	19 783.29	
	2012	30 000.00	
	1997	1 932.00	
Subtotal		57 530.29	32 469.71
Rwanda	2018	9 975.00	
	2017	10 000.00	
	2016	80 000.00	
Subtotal		99 975.00	–
Sao Tome and Principe	2011	25 273.00	64 727.00
Subtotal		25 273.00	64 727.00
Total		230 397.46	
Balance as at 6 December 2018		149 016.00	

Enclosure IV**List of participants****Country representatives****Angola**

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