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**United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) / African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA)**

Short Mission Report

**I. MINUSCA and MISCA Activity Summary**

**Overview**

The ongoing crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) has led sub-regional, regional, international, and bilateral actors to undertake multiple peacekeeping efforts there, but no operation has yet succeeded in eliminating the country's political, economic, and social instability. Intervening forces have been challenged in an area of extreme volatility and violence, and mediation efforts face difficulties in gaining commitments from fragmented and fluid conflict actors. The ever-changing sponsors of successive peacekeeping operations, most recently the AU and the UN, reflect complex regional and sub-regional dynamics in the Central African region. CAR's more powerful neighbors, particularly Chad, wield significant influence that does not necessarily align with CAR's interests or even regional stability.

**Background**

Rich in natural resources but poor in governance, CAR has experienced five coups and regular instability since its independence from France in 1960. Throughout the Cold War, France remained a political player in CAR and often used its influence to contain the turmoil there. A series of army mutinies in the 1990s, coinciding with waning French influence and Chad's increasing presence as a powerbroker, concluded with a coup in 2003 led by General François Bozizé, who was subsequently elected president in 2005. Unrest continued through the 2000s: the government maintained only minimal control over its territory, rebel groups contested Bozizé's rule, and social grievances festered over unpaid government and teacher salaries, economic stagnation, and an exclusionary military.<sup>[1]</sup> Mediation attempts were conducted largely through the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The present UN mission finds its origins in the ECCAS-led Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in Central Africa (MICOPAX), which commenced following an earlier attempt at a comprehensive peace agreement in Libreville on 20 June 2008.

The continuing conflict reached crisis levels in December 2012, when Séléka, a coalition of mostly Muslim fighters led by Michel Djotodia, escalated its insurgency. At the time, the AU called for both political and security engagement, so as to secure constitutional government and stability, but there was little response regionally or internationally. The short-lived Libreville agreements of 11 January 2013 attempted to establish a unity government with Bozizé remaining as president, but the Bozizé government remained weak and unpopular. The AU's call for engagement and preventative action was spurred by its (correct) early warning that the crisis was set to deepen, and its fear of an unconstitutional change in government. However, the lack of positive reaction was in turn occasioned by the consensus among the governments of the region and internationally (including France) that Bozizé's government was losing what little legitimacy it possessed and that it would be an error to seek to keep it in power.

In March, Bozizé was forced out by a Séléka attack aided by fighters from Chad, and possibly also from Sudan and Uganda.<sup>[iii]</sup> Bozizé had benefitted from the support of Chadian mercenaries in his 2003 coup, but nonpayment and a failure to integrate them into CAR's military caused some of them to join Séléka.<sup>[iii]</sup> Sudan's role remains unclear: it had trained Bozizé's presidential guard but, like Chad, lost patience with his style of government.

A government headed by Michel Djotodia ruled briefly from March-December 2013, leading to the predicted breakdown of what little law and order remained. Instead, the government took control of gold, diamond, and ivory trafficking networks such that "their systematic looting destroyed what was already a phantom state."<sup>[iv]</sup> Djotodia's ability to retain unity among his coalition proved limited, and Séléka's Muslim composition was in contrast to the national population, of which Muslims comprised a mere 15%. Djotodia attempted to dissolve Séléka as an organization during his 2013 administration, but the disbanded ex-Séléka remained an armed and potent fighting force. Ex-Séléka militias clashed with Christian defense militias called Anti-balaka that sought revenge for Séléka abuses, leading to an ongoing cycle of violence and attacks on civilians. As the situation deteriorated, France took the decision in December 2013 to intervene with its own troops, under UNSC authorization, with the stated aim of preventing genocidal violence and the wider objective of stabilizing the country.

ECCAS-led mediation efforts have not brought an end to the conflict, though a May 2015 National Forum in Bangui appeared more promising than its predecessors. Similarly, peacekeeping efforts have not solved the country's challenges, but as of July 2015, the security situation had improved in Bangui and major towns. However, most of the country remained unstable, particularly in the west and in the center, a site of ongoing clashes between ex-Séléka and Anti-balaka.<sup>[v]</sup> A new outbreak of violence at the end of September 2015 represents a further setback for the country. 2.7 million people, half of CAR's population, need humanitarian assistance, 460,000 are refugees, and another 400,000 are internally displaced; a number of mostly Muslim enclaves lack access to basic services.<sup>[vi]</sup> Civilian deaths since the start of the current conflict number at least 3,000-6,000.<sup>[vii]</sup>

### Transition from MICOPAX to MISCA

In July 2013, four months into Djotodia's rule, the AU began planning to absorb the sub-regional MICOPAX into a new regional African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) in order to stem the continuing violence and instability. MICOPAX was the first peacekeeping operation launched under ECCAS' Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa,<sup>[viii]</sup> and Chad, in turn, has exerted significant influence over ECCAS.<sup>[ix]</sup> MICOPAX found itself eclipsed when the AU, EU, and United States concluded that ECCAS' peacekeeping force would be unable to restore order.<sup>[x]</sup> MICOPAX never exceeded 2,800 troops at its December 2013 peak.<sup>[xi]</sup>

With increasing international recognition that MICOPAX was not up to the task, the AU at the 386<sup>th</sup> meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council (19 July 2013) proposed a mission consisting of 3,500 uniformed personnel (2,475 troops and 1,025 police) centered on protection of civilians (POC) and restoration of order, stabilization and reestablishment of government authority, security sector reform (SSR), and humanitarian access. UN Security Council resolution 2121 (10 October 2013) welcomed the AU decision to establish MISCA, oriented continued conflict resolution processes around the Libreville agreements of January 2013, and pushed for SSR and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR).

The AU Peace and Security Council's 406<sup>th</sup> meeting (13 November 2013) set the MICOPAX transition to take place on 19 December 2013. However this was overtaken by events: the increasing sectarian violence, especially in Bangui, and French concern over this, brought the matter to the UN Security Council.

UN Security Council resolution 2127 (5 December 2013) officially authorized MISCA under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, mandating it to focus on POC, stabilization, and humanitarian access, with government-

led, UN-assisted SSR, as well as Security Council advisory support to the AU. The resolution also established the Security Council's Commission of Inquiry to study violations of humanitarian and human rights law in CAR. The muscle of the resolution was French troops. Operation Sangaris, a 1,600-troop bilateral French force, was authorized to use all necessary means to support MISCA.<sup>[xii]</sup> France is the penholder (Security Council drafting lead) on CAR-related issues. Notably, MISCA's "possible transformation into a United Nations peacekeeping operation" was envisioned in its authorizing resolution.<sup>[xiii]</sup>

Additionally, resolution 2127 imposed an arms embargo and created a Security Council Sanctions Committee and Panel of Experts for monitoring and implementation. Resolution 2134 (28 January 2014) added provisions for a travel ban and asset freeze for individuals and groups involved in undermining CAR's peace, stability, or security. Sanctions have continued through subsequent resolutions 2196 (22 January 2015) and 2217 (28 April 2015).

MISCA was headed by Special Representative Jean-Marie Mokoko, a general from the Republic of the Congo. The mission's 1 January-31 December 2014 budget reached \$166.2 million, with primary troop-contributing countries including Cameroon, Burundi, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Rwanda, with Gabon and Equatorial Guinea also contributing, and Burkina Faso, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and Mauritania playing smaller contributing roles.<sup>[xiv]</sup> At the conclusion of its deployment, MISCA consisted of 5,142 troops and 888 police, and had suffered 21 total deaths.<sup>[xv]</sup>

As violence flared in December 2013, it soon became clear that MISCA would need to be dramatically expanded, and the AU Peace and Security Council's 408<sup>th</sup> meeting (13 December 2013) raised the troop cap to 6,000. Even then, MISCA's military, police, and civilian capacities were insufficient to resolve the conflict.<sup>[xvi]</sup>

### **Establishment of MINUSCA as Crisis Deepens**

The December 2013 clashes placed Djotodia under immense pressure, particularly from Chad and ECCAS, over his inability to prevent the violence. As chair of ECCAS, Chad hosted a crisis meeting that transported the entire CAR legislature to N'Djamena, where Chad and ECCAS successfully pushed Djotodia into resigning on 10 January 2014. Former Bangui Mayor Catherine Samba-Panza was subsequently selected as Interim President by the interim parliament.

Stability, however, remained elusive, and the Security Council soon began efforts to have the UN take over the AU's role. From the start, some members of the Security Council had harbored doubts about MISCA's re-hatted MICOPAX troops, "both in terms of quality and their possible alliances with different factions in the CAR."<sup>[xvii]</sup> While the US, Russia, African countries on the Security Council, and the AU were in favor of giving MISCA time to succeed, CAR penholder France and other Security Council members supported a UN-led mission.<sup>[xviii]</sup>

Security Council resolution 2149 (10 April 2014) called for a transition of peacekeeping from AU to UN hands after only nine months of MISCA activity, effective 15 September 2014. MISCA and the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) were absorbed into a new 10,000-troop operation, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). MINUSCA's ambitious objectives were outlined as POC, extension of state authority, electoral assistance, support for reconciliation processes, humanitarian access, human rights monitoring, DDR, and SSR-related vetting and advice as conditions permitted. The mandate designated gender as a cross-cutting issue and tasked MINUSCA with aiding the government in women's participation in such areas as SSR, DDR, and political dialogue.

One of the most unique facets of MINUSCA's mandate is a clause in response to Interim President Samba-Panza's request that MINUSCA temporarily assume control of law and order functions in CAR.<sup>[xix]</sup> While not taking on full authority, MINUSCA may adopt limited "urgent temporary measures" at the formal request of the government to "maintain basic law and order and fight impunity" in areas where CAR's security sector is not present or operational, somewhat reminiscent of the rarely-used transitional authority PKO structure seen in Timor-Leste, though on a far smaller scale. Functionally, this has placed MINUSCA directly into a policing and jailing role, and it focused for its first three months on apprehending figures suspected of leading the violence.<sup>[xx]</sup>

MINUSCA's troop cap was increased via Security Council resolution 2212 (26 March 2015) and formalized in resolution 2217 (28 April 2015) at 10,750, which also emphasized the reinforcement of MINUSCA's police component and urged a comprehensive government SSR strategy with MINUSCA support.

MINUSCA was headed by Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Babacar Gaye (Senegal) until 12 August 2015 and is currently led by Acting SRSG Parfait Onanga-Anyanga (Gabon). Diane Corner (United Kingdom) serves as Deputy Special Representative and Aurélien Agbenonci (Benin) serves as Deputy Special Representative and as Resident Coordinator in the UN integrated mission structure. MINUSCA's July 2014-June 2015 budget was \$628.7 million and rose to \$814.1 million for July 2015-June 2016. As of 14 July 2015, 9,389 troops had been deployed (87% of authorized levels), along with 307 individual police officers (76% of authorized levels) and 1,248 formed police unit personnel. Two troops have been killed thus far. Troop contributions come primarily from Cameroon, Burundi, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Morocco, with additional troop support from Gabon, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Indonesia, and minor contributions from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, France, Ghana, Jordan, Kenya, and Senegal.<sup>[xxi]</sup>

<b>Multilateral Peacekeeping Operations in the Central African Republic since 2008 (as of July 2015)</b>			
<b>Mission Name</b>	<b>Lead Organization</b>	<b>Dates Active</b>	<b>Max. Troops Deployed</b>
MICOPAX	ECCAS	07/2008 – 12/2013	2,800
MISCA	African Union	12/2013 – 9/2014	5,142
MINUSCA	United Nations	9/2014 – Present	9,389

## **Conflict Dynamics, Human Rights Concerns, and Mediation Attempts**

### *Retaliatory Violence and Impunity*

A succession of peacekeeping operations in CAR have been challenged by the difficulty in addressing the root causes of the conflict, which include long-term struggles for political and economic power as well as natural resources.<sup>[xxii]</sup> Since December 2012, mission resources and activities have been constrained by cycles of extreme violence and insecurity. Worse, the violence has taken on a sectarian aspect due to abuses by Djotodia's Muslim-dominated Séléka government, the continued violent capabilities of ex-Séléka forces, and retaliatory anti-Muslim violence by Christian Anti-balaka militias. Some Anti-balaka have voiced desire for equal treatment to Séléka in terms of disarmament and reintegration benefits, while others describe themselves as liberators of the country.<sup>[xxiii]</sup> Estimates of armed group membership varies widely: in July 2014, ex-Séléka reported 7,000-10,000 in their ranks, and Anti-balaka were estimated at 50,000-70,000.<sup>[xxiv]</sup> Of these, the Panel of Experts reported in October 2014 that approximately 2,000 ex-Séléka and 1,500 Anti-balaka continue to pose a long-term threat to stability.<sup>[xxv]</sup>

The Security Council's Commission of Inquiry and the Panel of Experts both found that the continuing conflict in CAR is fueled by a sense of impunity for grave crimes.<sup>[xxvi]</sup> Civilian killings since the start of the

conflict number 3,000-6,000, and possibly higher[BCZ1], with all parties “involved in serious violations of international humanitarian law and gross abuses of human rights including rape and other gender based sexual offences and violations.”[xxvii] Of CAR’s 5.39 million people, 2.7 million need humanitarian assistance; since December 2013, 25% of the population has been internally displaced while 460,000 refugees have flowed to Cameroon, Chad, the Republic of Congo, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.[xxviii] Some observers warn of ethnic cleansing, and many refugees are Muslims fleeing from communities where most of their number have been expelled or killed.

The feeble state of the CAR government renders it unable to assert control over its territory, despite Interim President Samba-Panza’s technocratic cabinet, which in turn increases the burdens that MINUSCA must bear. The Global Peace Index ranked CAR 158 out of 162 countries in 2015 in terms of peacefulness, and Fragile States Index rated CAR third among 178 countries in terms of instability in the same year, with indicators approaching the maximum warning level for group grievance, human rights and rule of law violations, state illegitimacy, and poor security institutions.[xxix]

### *Sanctions*

While the Panel of Experts reported in October 2014 that it had not found any major violations of the arms embargo imposed by resolution 2127, its movement was limited by the extremely difficult security situation.[xxx] The Security Council is also host to divergent views on the value of sanctions: the US and France view sanctions as “counterproductive to the political process at this point [August 2015],” and Russia and China are generally sanctions-averse, but non-permanent members such as Lithuania continue to push for sanctions that target criminals as opposed to political actors.[xxxi] Perhaps because of this reluctance, the listing of individuals and groups suggested in the Panel of Experts’ reports has been slow, with only six individuals and one organization added to the sanctions list as of 20 August 2015.[xxxii] Sanctions do not appear to have prevented Bozizé from reportedly providing advice and financial support to some Anti-balaka forces.[xxxiii] The Security Council’s Committee of Inquiry on human rights and humanitarian law violations in CAR suggested in its final report that while “the steps being taken by the Sanctions Committee are important in a variety of ways, these measures are no substitute for [...] criminal accountability.”[xxxiv]

Unlike the arms embargo, and despite the country’s May 2013 suspension from the Kimberly Process for the certification of non-conflict diamonds, smuggling flows continue.[xxxv] The Panel of Experts found that \$24 million of diamonds had been smuggled since CAR’s suspension.[xxxvi] As of July 2014, Anti-balaka dominated diamond sources in the west, while ex-Séléka oversaw gold in the east, taking some of it to Sudan.[xxxvii] Resolution 2149 tasked MINUSCA, as conditions permit, with assisting the Sanctions Committee and Panel of Experts, including by providing information and advice to support sanctions implementation and prevent groups from “exploiting natural resources.” Differences in opinion among UN member states over sanctions on political actors also extend to the matter of illicit resource flows, hindering contributions that MINUSCA can make in conjunction with the Sanctions Committee and Panel of Experts. During a November 2014 presentation by the Panel of Experts, the Committee failed to agree on a recommendation to request that CAR’s neighbors to confidentially report statistics on natural resource imports and exports, including diamonds and gold.[xxxviii]

### *Mediation*

Long-standing mediation, primarily under ECCAS’s auspices by President Denis Sassou-Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo, has faced various setbacks even with the recent addition of Kenya’s support. After Séléka’s attack on the government in December 2012, regional leaders convened in Libreville in January 2013 to promote a unity government. The process, however, was mediated primarily by the presidents of Chad, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon, who were “self-interested and insider mediators and guarantors,” while the warring parties themselves had little interest in settlement—particularly Séléka, which held the upper hand militarily.[xxxix] The 11 January 2013 Libreville agreements,

which were negotiated on a three-day deadline, soon collapsed, giving way to Djotodia's government in March.

Following the demise of Djotodia's own administration, the Brazzaville Ceasefire Agreement of 23 July 2014 ended in failure because negotiators had insufficient clout among their respective groups, with the nebulous shape of the Anti-balaka leadership proving particularly challenging. Most recently, the National Forum on Reconciliation held in Bangui from 4-11 May 2015 centered on four themes: peace and security, governance, justice and reconciliation, and social development. The Bangui Forum was supported politically and logistically by MINUSCA and improved on its predecessors, inviting 600 participants from across society and conducting advance discussions in April with ten armed groups on DDR principles. The Forum resulted in the Republican Pact for Peace, National Reconciliation and Reconstruction, which outlines commitments for elections, decentralization, judicial reform, and DDR.<sup>[xi]</sup>

### *MINUSCA Activities and Strategy*

MINUSCA's immediate priority, in line with its most recent mandate update in resolution 2217 (28 April 2015), is to support the 2015 elections, followed by long-term stabilization assistance. A constitutional referendum was scheduled for 4 October 2015, with a combined presidential and parliamentary election on 18 October 2015, but new violence at the end of September 2015 has caused their delay. In addition to electoral support, the mission has provided robust responses to threatened groups as part of its POC mandate, together with advice and technical support to the government in early stages of SSR and vetting.

One of the Mission's most important recent activities has been to provide logistical and political support to the abovementioned Bangui Forum. MINUSCA has also assisted in the early stages of rebuilding CAR's shattered security and rule of law institutions, including by supporting jury trials in the Court of Appeals and training corrections and police personnel. Between mission start-up and 30 June 2015, MINUSCA arrested 365 criminal suspects under its urgent temporary measures mandate, including those believed to have committed "serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law," and subsequently assisted in transferring them to authorities in Bangui; the mission is also provided "technical advice to the judicial police, prosecutors and investigative magistrates on due process procedures."<sup>[xii]</sup>

## **II. Key Issues, Insights, and Challenges Emerging from MINUSCA and MISCA**

### **1. Ongoing Influence of Regional and Bilateral Actors**

CAR has been host to various outside actors, including ECCAS, the AU, the EU, the UN, and neighboring and international bilateral actors, which has had important implications for the country's stability and the successes of various peacekeeping operations. Governments have persistently been made and unmade by wider regional processes.

France, CAR's former colonial ruler which long maintained a military base in Bangui, has maintained an interest in the country, particularly as regards security matters and SSR. The Security Council granted France, penholder on CAR matters, the latitude to conduct operations in CAR in support of both MISCA under resolution 2127 and MINUSCA under resolution 2149.

CAR is located in an active "conflict neighborhood," facing incursions by the Lord's Resistance Army and bordered by four countries hosting peacekeeping operations: Chad, Sudan, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In light of the regional embeddedness of the CAR conflict, more coordination between missions may be needed.<sup>[xiii]</sup>

### *Regional Highlight: Chad*

The involvement of Chad in particular illustrates the challenge of managing regional powers in peacekeeping settings, with the need on one hand to prevent them from opportunistically shaping the course of events, while on the other to ensure that they remain involved in the peace process rather than becoming fomenters of instability. Angela Meyer suggests that the ECCAS intervention was “compromised by the primacy of national interests over regional interests (and human concerns and needs), and inadequate (supranational) mechanisms for mediation.”<sup>[xliii]</sup> As Meyer notes, President Ange-Félix Patassé, who was overthrown by Bozizé in 2003, had hoped that his government would be supported by regional actors, but these hopes were “dashed by the Chadian regime, which was apparently more interested in political change than in regional stability,” allegedly supporting the 2003 coup with arms and troops.<sup>[xliv]</sup>

Chad’s involvement has remained deft and strategic, but rarely to CAR’s benefit: Martin Welz notes that even during the MICOPAX-MISCA period, President Idriss Déby “skillfully used the ECCAS and France as conduits through which to [...] secure the tightest possible hold on the CAR, with security interests dominating his thinking.”<sup>[xlv]</sup> These concerns included stability of the Chad-CAR border, where various anti-Déby forces were based. The regional impact on peace is not limited to the high-level political actors: as noted previously, Chadian fighters of uncertain affiliation have been associated with Séléka and ex-Séléka forces. In the intense December 2013 violence that led to Djotodia’s ouster by ECCAS and Chad, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights noted reports of Chadian nationals colluding with ex-Séléka and killing civilians.<sup>[xlvi]</sup>

Despite remaining relatively silent during its 2014-2015 stint as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Chad did make a dramatic statement at the start of its tenure, denouncing “the insidious media campaign craftily organized by power-hungry groups seeking to distort international public opinion by blurring the lines between Séléka and Muslims and Muslims and Chadians, without the slightest proof.”<sup>[xlvii]</sup> When non-MISCA troops from Chad were criticized for killing 30 people in a CAR market in March 2014, Chad angrily withdrew its MISCA forces in April in response, while emphasizing to the Security Council that it remained committed to the region.<sup>[xlviii]</sup>

## 2. International and Regional Dimensions to Mission Start-up and Succession

CAR’s worsening situation led to multiple mission hand-overs that underline the tensions between sub-regional, regional, and international organizations involved in peacekeeping. The AU, assessing that ECCAS was unable to contain the conflict in CAR via MICOPAX, attempted to varnish its role as a security actor in Africa via MISCA. While the AU’s involvement was perceived positively on a regional level, it was not received as such within ECCAS, and rivalries caused the re-hatting of MICOPAX to take four months, all while civilians faced serious danger.<sup>[xlix]</sup> In turn, the AU’s efforts proved insufficient for the UN Security Council, which began planning for MISCA’s dissolution within months of its authorization and ultimately absorbed the mission into MINUSCA in less than a year, despite the AU’s wishes to the contrary. The AU’s desire to be seen as a capable peacekeeper, Welz suggests, was undermined by this rapid handover.<sup>[l]</sup>

However, these transfers represent not merely organizational rivalries but real limits to the capacities of regional and sub-regional peacekeeping. The AU should consider MINUSCA’s establishment as an indicator of the need for further capacity building and readiness in the African Security Architecture, as well as for an expanded AU peacekeeping budget. Robert Perito suggests that AU troops are generally “less well trained, armed, and equipped than UN military units.”<sup>[li]</sup> As Paul Williams and Arthur Boutellis note, the AU’s peacekeeping budget, planning capacity, and institutional knowledge are dwarfed by those of the UN, and the AU does not have any peace and security advisors in New York who might provide input and insights into Security Council decisions.<sup>[lii]</sup>

## 3. Mediation Challenges: Fragmented Groups and the Need for All-of-Society Approaches

Important lessons are evident in the progression of peace processes during the deployment of MISCA and MINUSCA. International forces must retain a high level of awareness of the dynamics of indistinctly defined or fluid armed groups that are parties to negotiations, while also making certain that all levels of society are closely involved in the peace talks. The ill-fated Libreville agreements of January 2013 were weak on both counts: a peace accord was negotiated on high and pushed mainly by regional powers, while at the same time Séléka fighters had little interest in the talks, and their lack of a unified command structure or vision ensured that the agreements would not be honored.

The 23 July 2014 Brazzaville Ceasefire Agreement was ineffective for similar reasons: negotiators had insufficient rank and influence among the agents they were representing, and the fractious armed groups were not unified in their goals. Some analysts noted the difficulties stemming from “strong internal divisions within Séléka and the fact that the Anti-balaka militias were a movement with no centralized organization and coordination.”<sup>[liii]</sup> Indeed, a Joint Assessment Mission by the AU, UN, and EU in July 2014 observed more generally that “the highly fluid nature of the loyalties of the various groups is among the biggest threats to peace in CAR [and] the trading of alliances of foreign fighters has been a structural feature of armed rebellions in the country.”<sup>[liv]</sup> The Anti-balaka’s political goals, organizational structure, and leadership are all unclear.<sup>[lv]</sup> Séléka, in turn, was poorly understood from the start, with French and regional leaders’ incorrect assumption that Djotodia fully controlled his coalition leading to the misperception that his resignation would help resolve the conflict.<sup>[lvi]</sup>

Peace prospects improved with the May 2015 Bangui Forum, described by the Secretary-General as a “historic milestone.”<sup>[lvii]</sup> MINUSCA’s good offices role included political and logistical support to the Forum, as well as defusing immediate spoilers by facilitating discussions with armed groups prior to the Forum that led towards DDR principles. Unlike the top-driven Libreville agreements, the Forum consisted of 600 representatives, including 120 women, from various strata of society. Greater inclusivity and awareness of potential fractures in armed groups appear to have resulted in better mediation processes.

#### 4. Neglected Aspects of Conflict: Pastoral-Farming Issues

Resentments and violence related to livestock and pastoral practices add a subtle dynamic to the instability in CAR. As the International Crisis Group has noted, existing rivalries between pastoralist and farming groups have been exacerbated by the current conflict because pastoralists are associated (correctly, in some cases) with ex-Séléka fighters, while both ex-Séléka and Anti-balaka have been involved in cattle theft. Pastoralists, in turn, “often respond to cattle thefts with brutal retaliations as cattle is the wealth of the poor.”<sup>[lviii]</sup> Complicating the issue is involvement in the arbitration of pastoral-farming conflicts by ex-Séléka who take a cut for themselves, which has militarized traditional conflict resolution procedures that international NGOs had hoped to support.<sup>[lix]</sup>

The issue is not confined to these communities. As pastoralists have left CAR, their absence has damaged other domestic and regional trade flows: “disruption of the sector’s entire supply chain has brought trade to a standstill. Use of credit systems by butchers, offered by wholesalers and Nigerian traders has declined. In Bangui, butchers used to survive and buy cattle thanks to the credit extended by the Nigerian traders. The Nigerians, specialists in the export of hides to Nigeria, have left and this injection of cash into the economy has therefore ceased.”<sup>[lx]</sup>

#### 5. The Political Difficulty and Practical Necessity of SSR and DDR

CAR’s history of coups and the government’s inability to monopolize the legitimate use of force point dramatically to the need for security sector reform. On one hand, the exclusionary and rebellion-prone security sector indicates weak civilian oversight. The Joint Assessment Mission noted in July 2014 that the armed forces were “inefficient because of tribalism, lack of equipment and political interference, leading to their involvement and/or non ability to resist throughout several mutinies, military coups, looting,



extrajudicial killings, torture and other human rights violations.”<sup>[ixi]</sup> At the same time, the capacity of security institutions is quite low, with the Secretary-General observing in March 2014 that the December 2013 violence left a battered army, and a police and gendarmerie that “lacked equipment, including radios and protection gear, and ha[d] only six vehicles.”<sup>[xii]</sup> This problem is long-standing: the Global Peace Index in 2011 observed a very low number of military personnel per 100,000 people and low expenditures as a percentage of GDP.<sup>[xiii]</sup>

Ambitious SSR discussions were undertaken in 2007, and a national seminar on SSR was held in April 2008, with the president, opposition parties, and international representatives among the 150 attendees.<sup>[xiv]</sup> The seminar laid out a full SSR plan for CAR that included national ownership, democratic oversight, and civil society involvement in the process, but these seeming steps forward were not backed by the domestic political will: the government “proved particularly resistant to any reforms that would diminish its control over resources.”<sup>[xv]</sup> In turn, the international community’s attention turned in 2011 to electoral support, at the expense of SSR and other objectives.<sup>[xvi]</sup>

MINUSCA has supported the government in vetting its armed forces personnel, training police and corrections officers, and preparing SSR strategies in conjunction with reintegrating former fighters. Given the weak and instrumentalized history of the security sector in CAR, MINUSCA should be certain to make a holistic and governance-focused approach to the security sector part of its efforts, as emphasized in Security Council resolution 2151 (28 April 2014) on SSR.

A DDR program began in 2011 based on the 2008 Libreville agreement, but insufficient political consensus and confidence, as well as a coordination gap between SSR and DDR efforts, rendered this earlier program ineffective. The Joint Assessment Mission of 2014 also noted a “discontinuation between the disarmament and demobilisation phase that ended with significant time elapsed before the reinsertion and reintegration phase which led to frustration among armed groups that were already demobilised.”<sup>[xvii]</sup>

## 6. Ongoing Need for Discipline Among Peacekeeping Troops

Misconduct by both MINUSCA and non-MINUSCA troops has seriously marred the mission’s reputation, inviting unusually strong responses. MINUSCA has investigated 57 cases of misconduct, 11 of them involving sexual misconduct, as of August 2015. Reports of sexual abuse by non-UN troops from France, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea have nonetheless invited criticism of the UN presence as well. Most dramatically, the killings of two civilians and rape of a girl, both in early August 2015, led the Secretary-General to take the highly unusual step of requesting the resignation of SRSG Gaye on 12 August 2015. Political appointments are rarely terminated in this fashion, reflecting deep consternation within the UN regarding not only the misconduct but wider public perceptions of UN peacekeeping.

UN peacekeeping depends upon its troop-contributing countries, and these incidents underline the profound importance of proper troop training, sensitization to human rights norms, and strict discipline within missions’ military and police contingents. The recommendations of the Secretary-General’s High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (16 June 2015) include addressing peacekeeper misconduct, such as by eliminating impunity for actions committed in a private capacity and not in the course of official duties. Given its troubled history on this front, MINUSCA will be an important mission to watch in ascertaining any future legal improvements surrounding the conduct of UN peacekeepers in general.

## III. MINUSCA and MISCA Literature Review

### Analyses and Scholarly Works

**African Union, European Union, African Security Sector Network, and United Nations. *Report of the Joint Security Sector Reform (SSR) Assessment Mission to the Central African Republic.* Jean-Marie Michel Mokoko, Head of Joint Assessment Mission. 18-26 May 2014.**

The Joint Assessment Mission's report offers insights into security sector issues in CAR as perceived by the AU, UN, and EU. The report includes background and threat assessments for CAR, analyzes various conflict actors and security sector components including the police, gendarmerie, military, and justice system, and covers the DDR process.

**Fuor, Teodora and David Law. *Security Sector Reform in the Central African Republic: Chronicle of a Death Foretold.* Centre for Security Governance SSR 2.0 Brief, Issue No. 1. Kitchener: Center for Security Governance, October 2014.**

Fuor and Law's piece provides a useful orienting point for SSR in CAR prior to MISCA and MINUSCA. The authors examine the history of military-driven instability, progress made starting in 2007 and continuing in 2008's national security seminar, and the domestic resistance and failure of political will that undermined reforms. The importance of regional dynamics and international roles are also examined.

**Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research. *Conflict Barometer 2014.* Heidelberg: University of Heidelberg, 2015.**

The annual *Conflict Barometer* offers concise overviews of conflict-affected states, including CAR. It is most useful in its precise chronicling of individual clashes and casualties over the past year, illustrating the back-and-forth and many small-scale violent episodes that comprise larger movements towards conflict or peace.

**Ingerstad, Gabriella. *Willing and Able? Challenges to Security Sector Reform in Weak Post-war States – Insights from the Central African Republic.* Swedish Defense Research Agency – FOI. Stockholm: FOI, 2012.**

Ingerstad uses CAR as a case study for SSR in fragile states, centering her approach on the comprehensive, holistic understanding to SSR now common to the UN which emphasizes governance and local ownership, as opposed to train-and-equip activities. Her analysis, which stops short of the December 2012 collapse, covers the fluid movement of actors between government and rebel positions, as well as the 2008 national seminar on SSR and the roles of France, the EU, and the UN.

**International Crisis Group. *The Central African Crisis: From Predation to Stabilisation.* Africa Report No. 219. Nairobi/Brussels: International Crisis Group, June 2014.**

International Crisis Group's report provides insight on resource flows and patterns of bad economic governance in CAR, noting the expansion of the trade in conflict minerals and looting of public funds under the Séléka government.

**International Crisis Group. *The Central African Republic's Hidden Conflict.* Africa Briefing No. 105. Nairobi/Brussels: International Crisis Group, December 2014.**

International Crisis Group's briefing highlights the pastoral-farming aspect of the CAR conflict, detailing the tension between these groups which has contributed to violence and instability. The report also explains the negative impact of militant groups on traditional conflict resolution measures and social interactions in this area.

**Meyer, Angela. "Regional Conflict Management in Central Africa: From FOMUC to MICOPAX." *African Security* 2:2-3 (2009): 158-174.**

Meyer's article provides useful background for understanding the small-scale sub-regional peacekeeping operations that preceded MISCA and MINUSCA, as well as the limited efficacy of sub-regional cooperation among countries concerned primarily with their clout and domestic influence.

**Perito, Robert M. *UN Peacekeeping in the Sahel: Overcoming New Challenges*. United States Institute of Peace Special Report. Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2015.**

As part of a larger piece on peacekeeping in the Sahel, Perito provides a concise summary of the conflict in CAR, including the government request for MINUSCA to take up law and justice functions, as well as ongoing efforts by the UN Police.

**Welz, Martin. "Briefing: Crisis in the Central African Republic and the International Response." *African Affairs* 113/453 (2014): 601-610.**

Welz's article focuses on the dynamics between various international, regional, and sub-regional actors involved in peacekeeping in CAR at different points, noting the challenges of shifting between operations and the resultant delays in action. Covering MICOPAX, MISCA, and MINUSCA, this piece offers an analysis of organizational tensions. Regional interactions, particularly the skillful maneuvering of Chad through ECCAS, are also explored.

**Williams, Paul D. and Arthur Boutellis. "Partnership Peacekeeping: Challenges and Opportunities in the United Nations-African Union Relationship." *African Affairs* 113/451 (2014): 254-278.**

Williams and Boutellis' article on growing Chapter VIII AU-UN cooperation in peacekeeping highlights challenges faced by the AU in influencing the UN agenda, including the Peace and Security Council's limited peacekeeping budget and insufficient expert presence in New York.

### **Relevant Resolutions, Reports, and Agreements**

African Union. Peace and Security Council Communiqué. PSC/PR/COMM.2 (CCCLXXXV). 19 July 2013.

African Union. Peace and Security Council Communiqué. PSC/PR/COMM.1 (CDVI). 13 November 2013.

African Union. Peace and Security Council Communiqué. PSC/PR/COMM.2 (CDVIII). 13 December 2013.

Brazzaville Ceasefire Agreement. 23 July 2014.

Libreville Agreements. 11 January 2013.

Republican Pact for Peace, National Reconciliation and Reconstruction. 15 May 2015.

United Nations. Final Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on the Central African Republic. S/2014/928. 22 December 2014.

United Nations. Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2127 (2013). S/2014/762. 29 October 2014.

United Nations. Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2127 (2013). S/2014/452. 1 July 2014.

United Nations. Report of the Secretary-General. S/2014/142. 3 March 2014.

United Nations. Report of the Secretary-General. S/2014/562. 1 August 2014.

United Nations. Report of the Secretary-General. S/2014/857. 28 November 2014.

United Nations. Report of the Secretary-General. S/2015/227. 1 April 2015.

United Nations. Report of the Secretary-General. S/2015/576. 29 July 2015.

United Nations. Security Council Resolution 2121. S/RES/2121. 10 October 2013.

United Nations. Security Council Resolution 2127. S/RES/2127. 5 December 2013.

United Nations. Security Council Resolution 2134. S/RES/2134. 28 January 2014.

United Nations. Security Council Resolution 2149. S/RES/2149. 10 April 2014.

United Nations. Security Council Resolution 2196. S/RES/2196. 22 January 2015.

United Nations. Security Council Resolution 2212. S/RES/2212. 26 March 2015.

United Nations. Security Council Resolution 2217. S/RES/2217. 28 April 2015.