



**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT OF THE JOINT FIELD MISSION OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL OF
THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE EUROPEAN UNION POLITICAL AND SECURITY COMMITTEE AU PSC
AND EU PSC TO THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

Bangui, 9 March 2018 - From 7 to 9 March 2018, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) and the Political and Security Committee (PSC) of the European Union undertook a Joint Field Mission to the Central African Republic (CAR). The Joint Field Mission brought together fifteen Member States of the AU PSC and twenty eight Members of the EUPSC and was co-led by Ambassador Adam Maïga Zakariaou, Chairperson of the AU PSC for the month of March 2018 and Ambassador Walter Stevens, Permanent Chairman of the EU PSC.

The Joint Field Mission was undertaken within the context of the partnership between the AUPSC and the EUPSC in promoting peace and security in Africa in general, but more specifically, in the context of the common agenda of the two organizations that aims at supporting the sustainable stabilisation of the CAR, which is based on the trilateral peace and security cooperation between the AU, the and the United Nations (UN).

The Joint Mission underlined that the return to constitutional order in the CAR and the progress made to date by the Government and the constitutional institutions, are the first key steps in the process of recovery, stabilization and peacebuilding in the country. Furthermore, the Joint Mission expressed the support being provided by the AU and the EU, in close coordination with the UN, is to achieve this objective. In this regard, it reiterated its full support to President Faustin- Archange Touadera and his Government, and all other national institutions, in their efforts to build sustainable peace, ensure development of the country and strengthen the CAR defence and security forces. The Joint Mission took note of the priorities of the CAR Government, focusing in particular on the restructuring of the defence and security forces, national reconciliation and justice, as well as economic recovery and called upon the international community to continue to provide support to this end.

The Joint Mission, while taking note of the progress achieved in the recovery process expressed deep concern over the continued deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation, as well as the slow pace of the peace process. In this regard, the Joint Mission underscored the importance for the Government and other CAR stakeholders, as well as the country's bilateral partners to redouble their efforts, in order to more effectively address the challenges currently facing the country.

The Joint Mission stressed the importance of preserving the gains made to date and, in this regard, urged all CAR stakeholders to continue to work together and make tangible and visible progress in 2018, particularly in the areas of the rule of law, reconciliation, provision of public services, governance and redeployment of State institutions throughout the country. The Joint Mission welcomed the efforts being deployed by President Touadera in promoting dialogue and national reconciliation. The Joint Mission urged the authorities to ensure effective mobilisation for increased representation of women in political and civil life. It encouraged the implementation of Joint Commissions, in particular on the transhumance of livestock.

The Joint Mission strongly condemned the clashes between various CAR armed groups that have left hundreds dead and displaced an estimated 1.2 million people, including as refugees to the neighbouring countries. It appealed to the armed groups to immediately cease all hostilities and



participate, without any precondition, in the peace process under the auspices of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR. In the same context, the Joint Mission condemned all acts of violence against humanitarian actors and urged the CAR Government to deploy all efforts at its disposal to ensure their protection and access to the population in need.

The Joint Mission reaffirmed full support for the implementation of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR and the Libreville Roadmap and welcomed the efforts of the AU and the Panel of Facilitators with the contribution of the OIF and Sant'Egidio aimed at expediting the implementation process. The Joint Mission emphasized the important role of the region in efforts towards the resolution of the conflict in the CAR. It underscored the importance of including more women in the Panel, in order to ensure that their specific concerns are fully taken into account.

The Joint Mission called upon all the stakeholders, to show restraint and refrain from any actions that may incite violence, including hate speech and work for genuine national reconciliation.

The Joint Mission stressed the need for all Government institutions to reflect the national character of the CAR, particularly in the administration and public life, including in the national defence and security forces, within the context of diversity management.

The Joint Mission welcomed the completion of the pilot phase of Disarmament (in full) DDRR and the decision to extend it to the whole country. In this regard, the Joint Mission urged the international community to provide the necessary support.

The Joint Mission highlighted the importance of justice for lasting peacebuilding in the CAR and underscored the primordial nature of the work of the Special Criminal Court for Bangui and the Central African National Justice. In particular, it emphasized the importance of fighting impunity, in conformity with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2399 (2399). In that regard, the Joint Mission welcomed the recent judgements pronounced by Criminal Court of Bangui, condemning elements from Anti-Balakas and Ex Selekas, , as an encouraging signal in the fight against impunity.

The Joint Mission commended the role played by the AU in the CAR, through the AU Mission for the CAR (MISAC), and reiterated its full support for MINUSCA, whose presence remains essential for the stability of the CAR. In this regard, the Joint Mission welcomed the review of the mandate of MINUSCA which should make it possible to further enhance the protection of the civilian population and support the deployment of State authority over the entire territory of the CAR.

The Joint Mission also commended support of the EU for the recovery of the CAR, especially the work of the European Training Mission (EUTM) in the CAR, which constituted a strong base for the rebuilding of the Republican, inclusive and professional FACA. It stressed the importance of full transparency and coordination between the Government and all the partners supporting the Security Sector Reform in the CAR.

The Joint Mission expressed its commitment to further enhance the trilateral cooperation among the AU, the EU and the UN in the peace process in the CAR.

The Joint Mission expressed its grave concern over the humanitarian situation in the country and called on all the international community to provide support to the needy population in CAR. As part of its contribution to the efforts of the CAR Government to address the current humanitarian situation, the AU handed over a contribution of 100,000USD to the Government of the CAR. The Joint Mission welcomed the outcome of the Brussels Donors Conference on CAR, held in November 2016 and within



the framework of the African Solidarity on the CAR, in February 2017 and called upon The Joint Mission called upon all the donors to continue to honour the pledges they made to support the efforts by the Government of CAR, including within the framework of the national plan for recovery and peace consolidation in CAR (RCPCA) to achieve peace, security and reconciliation, as well as to promote development and economic recovery and humanitarian assistance. The contribution of the EU for the period 2017-2020 amounts to 487 million Euro.

The Joint Mission expressed its profound gratitude to the people and the Government of the Central African Republic for the warm welcome. The Joint Mission commended the President of the Republic for having made himself available to the delegation during the visit in Bangui.

Background:

During its working visit, the delegation was received in audience by H.E. Faustin Archange Touadéra, President of the Republic, followed by a meeting with the Council of Ministers. The Joint Mission also met with H.E. Mr Karim Meckassoua, Speaker of the National Assembly (NA) and with the Bureau and the Chairmen of the Commissions of the NA. Representatives of the Central African civil society were also met. On the side of the CAR partners, the Mission met with Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and his team, as well as Mr. Bédializoun Moussa Nebié, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission and Head of MISAC and the Facilitation Panel for an exchange of views on the Status of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation. The EU PSC also held discussions with the European Military Training Mission (EUTM RCA) and paid a visit to the Kassai camp of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA). The AU PSC also visited an IDP Camp in Bria on 7 March 2018 and handed over USD 100,000 to the Government of the CAR by H.E. Ambassador Hagi Mohammed Ali Nur of the Federal Republic of Somalia, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the AU Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) Sub-Committee for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, as AU contribution to support on humanitarian situation in the country.