

AFRICAN UNION
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE
UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

P. O. Box 3243

Telephone: 5517 700

Fax: 5517844

Website: www.Africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
255th MEETING
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
23 DECEMBER 2010

PSC/PR/2(CCLV)

**REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION ON
THE SITUATION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

**REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION ON
THE SITUATION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report is submitted as part of the regular review by the Peace and Security Council of the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR). It covers the developments in that country since the 215th meeting of Council held on 8 January 2010.

II. POLITICAL SITUATION

2. In its Communiqué of 8 January 2010, Council called on all political actors in CAR to promote the national interest, work together continuously and constructively to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the recommendations of the Inclusive Political Dialogue (IPD), particularly the preparation and holding, within legal limits, of free, fair, transparent and credible presidential and legislative elections, thereby avoiding an institutional vacuum. Pursuant to this Communiqué, the Commission closely monitored and give its full support to the efforts to ensure the holding of elections within the set time frame, including the activities of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).

3. Established in October 2009, pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 09316 of 8 October 2009, the IEC began work immediately, but in January 2010, encountered a serious crisis, marked by the withdrawal of several of its members, especially those from certain political parties and politico-military groups. Thanks to the efforts deployed by the mediator of the Republic, the IEC later resumed its work, but with an adjustment to its composition.

4. This first crisis resulted in an *impasse* in the activities of the IEC and considerable delay in the electoral process. Regardless of this delay, the Head of State, in accordance with the existing statutory and constitutional provisions, and by the Decree of 25 February 2010, announced the date of the 1st round of the presidential and legislative elections for 25 April 2010, thus meeting the time limit prescribed by the Constitution. The IEC then embarked on the preparations for the organization and holding of elections in order to comply with the provisions of that Decree.

5. However, the tasks to accomplish, notably the installation of some components of the IEC and related structures, acquisition of the required equipment and facilities, electoral training/education and resource mobilization, were so numerous and complex that the IEC found itself unable to meet the deadlines set by the Decree. It was in this context, and following the recommendations of the Elections Steering Committee, which met on 17 March 2010, that the IEC finally acknowledged that it would be technically impossible to comply with the schedule initially announced. Thus, a second Decree, dated 30 March 2010, setting a new date for the first round of elections for 16 May 2010, was issued in supercession of the 25 February 2010 Decree.

6. However, the new Decree and the dates that it set raised fresh controversies, especially with regard to the part of the democratic opposition, some political-military movements and other social or political entities. The international community also expressed concern regarding the possibility of holding the elections on the dates indicated, given the numerous activities that were still to be carried out by the IEC.

7. Faced with this situation, President François Bozize took the initiative to convene a meeting with national and international stakeholders on 29 April 2010. Asked to explain the timetable as set by the Decree, the IEC announced that it was unable to organize elections on 16 May 2010. This raised the question of the institutional vacuum which the country would face from 11 June 2010, when the mandate of the President of the Republic was to come to an end.

8. As the Constitution of the Central African Republic had no provisions for resolving this kind of situation, it was necessary to take adequate measures to ensure institutional continuity in the State. The President of the Republic, after consultation with the Constitutional Council, asked the President of the National Assembly to come up with proposals. However, for many Centrafrican political and social actors, the question of institutional vacuum could be addressed within the framework of a political compromise based on wide consultations. Still, on 10 May 2010, after several consultations with various social and professional groups in the country, the National Assembly passed a law amending Articles 24 and 50 of the Constitution. The new constitutional provisions allowed for the extension of the mandate of the President of the Republic and of Members of Parliament till the organization of presidential and legislative elections.

9. While a draft electoral timetable was being elaborated proposing October 2010 for the first round, and December 2010 for the second round, the Head of State, on 30 July 2010, decided to issue a third Decree announcing the elections for 23 January 2010. On 10 August 2010, after several *impasse* and controversies, the IEC adopted a participatory approach involving the political entities. An agreement on a revised timetable, signed and presented by the IEC, fixing the date for the first round of the elections for 23 January 2011 and a possible second round for 20 March 2011, was reached by the different political groups in the country. This Agreement provides in Article 4 that: "Any significant change in the revised electoral timetable and calendar can only be done at the request and based on report of the IEC in which all the entities represented in the IPD participate. Such an amendment shall be ratified by a Decree to be adopted by the Council of Ministers".

10. On 19 October 2010, during a meeting with the active forces of the nation in the presence of the international community, the Head of State proposed a return to the old constituency boundaries as at 2005, which differed from the ones determined by the State Council. Assuming that the new Decree of 28 October 2010 on the redrawing of constituency boundaries was based on fictitious data, eight opposition political parties, once again, approached the State Council for its annulment and, given the urgency, requested a stay of execution of the Decree in question. It should, however, be noted that the names of the

legislative election candidates had already been validated and published by the Constitutional Court, based on the constituency boundaries of 2005.

11. Moreover, during the same meeting, President Bozizé indicated that due to financial constraints, the ballot would be based on manual voters' cards and electoral registers rather than on computerized voters' cards. He also indicated that, to gain time, the duration for the registration of candidatures, originally scheduled to take place from 8 November to 8 December 2010, be shortened. On this basis, the Chairman of the IEC set a new timeframe from 28 October to 8 November 2009.

12. The Coalition of Forces for Change immediately challenged the new date set by the IEC. On 11 November 2010, the President of the Movement for the Liberation of Central African People (MLPC), Martin Ziguele, sent me a letter on this subject. To resolve the issue of registration of candidates, the Head of State held on 15 November a meeting with national and international political partners. He then decided to postpone the registration of candidatures by 24 hours. Thus, opposition candidates, Mr. Ziguele and Mr. Nakonbo were able to submit their candidatures, bringing to six the number of candidates running for the presidential election. On 29 November 2010, the Constitutional Court published the list of six presidential candidates for the 23 January 2011 presidential election. In the order of the submission of candidatures, these are: François Bozizé Yangouvonda, Ange Félix Patassé, Jean-Jacques Démafouth, Justin Innocent Wilité, Emile Gros Nakombo and Martin Ziguélé. The IEC also published a list of the 838 candidates for the legislative election, but the Administrative Court is still considering the petitions that were made.

13. The electoral census, scheduled to take place from 22 September to 21 October 2010, witnessed a difficult start-up. However, thanks to the mobilization by the UN Integrated Office in CAR (BINUCA) and UNDP, there was a notable improvement towards the end of the operation. I am pleased that the National Elections Observer Group (80 civil society associations) noted that, despite some gaps, the electoral census, cornerstone of the entire electoral process, was generally well conducted.

14. Concurrent with the electoral process, the Follow-up Committee on the recommendations of the Inclusive Political Dialogue, at its 7th Ordinary Session held in September 2010, recommended to the Government to accelerate the peace process with the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP) and popularize the Ministerial Edict No 007/04 of 26 April 2010, regarding the illegal roadblocks in CAR. Indeed, many illegal roadblocks have been mounted across the country, sometimes by politico/military movements, and at times by the security forces (police, paramilitary).

15. I welcome the ongoing review by the National Assembly of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and the approval given for the ratification of the Kampala Convention on the Protection and Assistance to Displaced Persons. It is my hope that these two important instruments will soon be ratified by CAR.

III. SECURITY SITUATION AND STATUS OF DDR

16. The security situation in CAR continues to cause concern. It is characterized by the existence of a large number of politico/military groups, and inadequate capacity of the Central African Armed Forces (*FACA*), particularly in light of the size of the Central African territory and the tasks assigned to *FACA*.

17. Even if the situation remains relatively calm in Bangui, CAR's geographical location in the heart of the Central Africa region, confronted by a number of security challenges, provides an environment conducive to armed groups, including those from neighboring countries. The difficulties faced by the CAR authorities in exercising authority over the country in its entirety, compounded by the extreme poverty of the people and the pervasive insecurity in the remote areas, especially in the north-east and south-east where the CPJP and Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operates, are all factors that add to the complexity of the situation.

18. The CPJP launched its first offensive in the locality of Ndélé (north-east) in July 2010 and has since expanded its activities to the south-east, in the prefectures of Haute-Kotto and Ouaka. The CPJP also attacked the town of Birao (north-east) on 24 November 2010, and several villages in the vicinity of Bakouma (south-east), the localities of Yalinga located 170 km from the mining town of Bria in the centre-east, and Ippy (100 km south-west of Bria). I strongly condemned the attacks, reiterating my appeal to the international community to provide the assistance required by the CAR to strengthen the capacity of *FACA* and the authority of the State.

19. The LRA also continues to pose a real threat to peace, security and stability in CAR. It has been operating mainly in the east of the country, where there is inadequate presence of *FACA*, with under-equipped units. The LRA ravages the area through kidnappings, looting, rape and murder, which caused several thousands of people to flee.

20. It was in this context, and in agreement with the CAR authorities, that the Ugandan authorities deployed in June 2009, a battalion to the area to hunt down the LRA in the locality of Obo, in the prefecture of Haut Mbomou (south-east). The Ugandan operations have helped in weakening the LRA. It is also worth noting that the Union of Democratic Forces for the Rally (*UFDR*), a politico-military group signatory to the peace Agreements, plays a role in the fight against the LRA. Its fighters were organized with local people in self-defense units whose actions have sometimes been effective in responding to attacks by the LRA. In September 2010, those units pushed out the LRA from Ouanda Djallé in the prefecture of Vakaga in the north-east of the country.

21. However, the final withdrawal of the UN Mission in CAR and Chad (MINURCAT) from Birao, which started on 15 October 2010, and expected to end on 31 December 2010, will inevitably create a gap in the security situation. The CAR Government is striving to fill this gap

through the deployment of additional troops to Birao, but it faces enormous logistics and material constraints.

22. Launched in February 2009, following the Libreville Agreement, the DDR programme has been faced with delays and is still at the stage of disarmament. The verification of the lists in the north-west took place from 9 August to 16 September 2010. Note should be taken of the goodwill and cooperation between the Government and the various politico/military groups, especially the People's Army for the Restoration of Democracy (*APRD*) and the Union of Republican Forces (*UFR*), during these operations. However, of the 6,067 *APRD* and *UFR* combatants registered, 4,710 artisanal weapons and, only 92 combat weapons were identified. This is a very low outcome, calling into question the validity and credibility of the disarmament phase.

23. The planning verification operation for the lists in the north-east is still ongoing. Several challenges must, indeed, be overcome, especially those related to security, logistics and other constraints, as well as to the cooperation and coordination to be established between the *FACA*, the Peace Consolidation Mission in the Central African Republic (*MICOPAX*) deployed by the Economic Community of Central African States (*CEEAC*) and *MINURCAT*. The DDR Steering Committee is working to conclude the disarmament and demobilization phases so as to launch, as soon as possible, the national re-integration programme, the last phase of the entire programme.

24. Despite all these actions, the DDR programme faces several difficulties that could jeopardize the continuity of the process. Among others, it is important to mention the lack of trust between the parties, the mixed results regarding the identification of combat weapons of the *APRD*, persistent insecurity in several parts of the country, with the presence of highway robbers and unidentified armed groups and the leadership problem within the politico/military movements represented in the DDR Steering Committee.

IV. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

25. The humanitarian situation in CAR remains a source of concern. It is mainly characterized by the presence on the Central African territory of many refugees from neighboring countries and a continuous movement of the populations as a consequence of the persistence of several hotbeds of tension and clashes between the regular security forces on the one hand, and CPJP and LRA, on the other. In addition, the humanitarian situation has been aggravated by the torrential rains and floods that occurred in several localities, and by the poor state of the road network that considerably hampers the relief operations of humanitarian organizations.

26. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently nearly 30,877 refugees on the Central African Republic territory. However, there were many voluntary departures in 2007, particularly to South Sudan and the DRC. New arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were also reported during 2010. It is estimated that nearly 5,000 of these refugees live in Bangui, with the others located in sites at Sam Ouandja for

the Sudanese, and Haut Nagorno Mbomou for the Congolese. Because of the difficult access conditions and pervasive insecurity, the UNHCR has embarked on an extensive transfer of Congolese refugees to the Batalimo site, and the Sudanese refugees to Padima Ouaka.

27. IDPs are estimated at nearly 192,029. The largest displacements have been recorded in Ouham-Pendé, Ouham, Nana-Gribizi and Haut Upper Mbomou prefectures. Recent population displacements have been largely triggered off by LRA repeated attacks and the fighting between the *CPJP* and *FACA*. The Commission has continued to monitor the human rights situation in CAR. A report of the United Nations Human Rights Council dated 10 May 2010, underscored the numerous abuses, including extra-judicial executions.

V. SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION

28. At its meeting of 8 January 2010, Council noted with satisfaction the efforts deployed by the CAR authorities in implementing reform and economic recovery programmes, and the encouraging results achieved in this regard. Council urged the Central African authorities to continue implementing these reform and economic recovery programmes, as well as the consolidation of the foundations of public finances, and the strengthening of the authority of the State and national public administration. Economic growth in the CAR has not been as vibrant as expected during the first half of 2010, although the latest figures seem to show signs of resumption of economic activities following the reforms undertaken by the CAR authorities, with the assistance of international financial institutions. The results of budget management were generally satisfactory and in line with the forecasts announced in 2009. This performance has enabled the CAR to reach the completion point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and to obtain the cancellation of US\$ 506 million in foreign debt. Structural reforms in budget management have facilitated the introduction of more rigorous measures, including a better mobilization of domestic revenue, control of public spending and clearance of arrears of salaries owed to State employees.

29. The timber sector, which occupies an important place in the Central African economy, but significantly adversely affected in 2008, is gradually recovering from the crisis. Indeed, exports as at the end of September 2010 exceeded the 2009 level. Like the timber sector, exports of diamonds have seen an upsurge in mid-2009. Gold production, which resumed in mid-2009, fell in 2010. Economic growth in the CAR is expected to reach 3.3% in 2010 and 4% in 2011.

30. Despite these gains which are to the credit of the Central African Government, the social situation remains precarious, characterized by extreme poverty affecting nearly 67 % of the population. The school enrollment rate remains the lowest in the sub-region, standing at 41%. At the same time, there is an increase in child labor, a rise in begging and an increasing number of street children. In the health sector, the situation is not rosy. Hospital facilities in the city of Bangui are outdated. Within the country, the situation is even more alarming, marked by acute shortage of medical and health structures. The infant mortality rate is estimated at 115 per 1,000 births, while the maternal mortality rate is around 1000 deaths per year. As for HIV

prevalence, it is the highest in Central Africa and the 9th in the world, affecting nearly 15% of the population.

31. On the other hand, the country has experienced a delay in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As such, only targets on access to clean water and the schooling of girls show encouraging signs, with a completion rate of around 35%. The country is ranked 179 out of 182 on the 2009, UNDP Human Development Index (HDI).

VI. SUPPORT FROM CAR'S PARTNERS

32. The bulk of external partners' contribution during the period under review consisted of financial and technical support towards the electoral process. Thus, regarding the projected budget for the elections as estimated in March 2010 at US\$ 21,588,725, France and UNDP contributed towards the installation and equipping of the IEC to the tune of US\$ 200 000 and US\$ 765,000, respectively. The US Government contributed US\$ 1,000,000 through an NGO, namely, the National Democratic Institute (*NDI*).

33. In April 2010, the United Nations Peace Building Fund released a "Basket Fund" contribution of US\$ 1, 500,000, of which US\$ 1, 105,000 was allocated for security and US\$ 395,000 for technical assistance. Out of the estimated budget revised to US\$ 19,315,000 as of June 2010, the European Union announced in July 2010, a contribution of 6.5 million euros, or about 4.3 billion CFA Francs. In October 2010, it decided to increase its contribution to 9.5 million euros under the 10th EDF. France announced an additional contribution of 150,000 euros. Financial assistance from other partners is still awaited.

34. Regarding the military and security aspect, MICOPAX continues to play a crucial role. It has pursued its mission of securing the Bangui-Mpoko airport, the city of Bangui and three other areas within the country where it is deployed: Paoua, Bozoum and Kanga-Bandoro. It has also contributed to the restructuring of *FACA*, helping it to patrol the west and north-central regions and through the gradual transfer of its entire mission to the defense and security forces of the Central African mission.

35. As for the French detachment at Boali, it provides operational training to the units of the *FACA*, as well as administrative, technical and logistical support. For its part, the United States of America deployed in the country, from 15 to 17 September 2010, experts for a reconnaissance mission.

VII. ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION

36. Pursuant to the decisions of Council on the opening of an AU Liaison Office in CAR, I appointed Mrs. Hawa Ahmed Youssouf, former Minister of International Cooperation of the Republic of Djibouti, as my Special Representative in the CAR. The AU Office has been operational since March 2010. This presence has undoubtedly strengthened AU contribution to the stabilization, post-conflict reconstruction and peace consolidation efforts in CAR. It also

demonstrates the determination of our organization to show its solidarity on ground with the people of Central African Republic.

37. It should be noted that the AU, through the Liaison Office, is a member of and participates regularly in the meetings of the Elections Steering Committee and DDR, headed by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, as well as in the meetings of the *CSRDP* in Bangui.

38. In accordance with the decisions of the 195th and 215th Meetings of Council held on 17 June 2009 and 8 January 2010, respectively, the Commission continues to support the CAR authorities, especially regarding the electoral and political process. Besides the financial support to the *CSRDP* for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the IPD, the Commission has contributed US\$ 100,000 for the elections paid to the "Basket Fund" managed by UNDP. This contribution follows the electoral pre-assessment mission fielded by the Commission in Bangui from 27 April to 3 May 2010. The Commission also deployed a logistics and electoral operations expert who joined the team of national and international experts deployed to the IEC by external partners.

39. For its part, the Sub-Committee of the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC) on Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons undertook, from 10 to 17 March 2010, a mission to CAR, under the leadership of Mrs. Epiphany Kabushemeye-Ntamwana, Ambassador of the Republic of Burundi to Ethiopia. Following that visit, several recommendations were made on the basis of which the Commission, among other things, granted an assistance amounting to US\$ 200,000 to demonstrate AU solidarity with the Central African Republic Government and to support social projects in favour of IDPs and refugees through UN agencies.

40. In addition, as part of the regular monitoring of the situation in CAR, I dispatched my Special Envoy for CAR, Mr. Sadok Fayala to Bangui from 20 to 22 June 2010, to encourage the CAR actors to focus on dialogue and consultation and to ensure respect for the institutions in the political game. I intend to, once again, dispatch Mr. Fayala to Bangui in the coming weeks.

41. The AU is working closely with ECCAS, especially through MICOPAX which, as highlighted above, plays a central role in the stabilization of CAR. On 18 November 2010, the Secretary-General of ECCAS, General Louis Sylvain-Goma, wrote to the Commission to solicit EU support for further contribution to MICOPAX under the Peace Facility, the 2011 budget which stands at 36,478,000 Euros. On 24 November 2010, the Commission addressed a letter to the EU to convey its support to the ECCAS request and to encourage the EU to respond positively. The EU contribution to MICOPAX budget is expected to increase to 19.5 million euros, that is, 53.46% of the total amount required.

42. CAR is concerned with the issue of the Mbororo nomadic pastoralists. Council will recall that this issue was first brought to its attention by the DRC in 2007. Pursuant to Council decision, the Commission fielded missions to the countries concerned, including CAR. Moreover, the Commission convened in Addis Ababa, on 20 September 2010, a meeting of all the

concerned countries and several UN agencies and the European Union. The meeting, in which CAR participated, adopted several recommendations which are currently being followed up by the Commission.

43. In pursuance of the measures contained in the Tripoli Plan of Action adopted by the Special Session on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa, held 31 August 2010, and the decision of the 15th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held in Kampala, Uganda, from 25 to 27 July 2010, the Commission organized in Bangui on 13 and 14 October 2010, a Ministerial advisory meeting on the activities of the LRA. The Commissioner for Peace and Security led the AU delegation. The meeting brought together Ministers and other senior officials representing the CAR, DRC, The Sudan, including the Government of South Sudan (GoSS), and Uganda. Relevant regional organizations, missions and UN agencies on the ground, AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur - UNAMID, EU, ICRC and bilateral partners, namely, the United States of America and France, participated in that important meeting.

44. Among other measures, the meeting opening ceremony of which was graced by the presence of President François Bozizé, agreed as follows: the creation of a Joint Operations Center, consideration of the establishment of a joint brigade, the deployment of joint patrols along the borders of the concerned countries, mobilization of adequate and coordinated assistance and support for the affected populations, the provision of speedy, adequate and flexible support by the international partners and AU Member States in a position to do so, to the ongoing military efforts in the countries of the region and the appointment of a Special AU Envoy to coordinate the overall efforts against the LRA, facilitate international community support and commitment and engage in other related peacekeeping missions. It was agreed to institutionalize the forum, which will meet at least once every four (4) months at ministerial level, preceded by consultations at expert's level. As a follow-up to this meeting, the Commission organized in Addis Ababa, on 5 December 2010, a consultation with military and security experts of the countries concerned, for preliminary discussions on the concept of operation of the JOC and the joint brigade. A technical assessment mission is expected to proceed to CAR and the other countries concerned in the coming weeks to finalize the planning process.

45. The Commissioner for Peace and Security took the opportunity of his presence in Bangui to hold talks with President Bozizé and other senior government officials and the representatives of various political parties. He encouraged his hosts to spare no effort to ensure the proper conduct of the electoral process and assured them of continued AU solidarity and support.

46. Finally, the several activities undertaken in the CAR on the Peace Day, on 21 September 2010, as part of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa, are noteworthy. The Commission, through the Liaison Office in Bangui and in partnership with the CAR Government, the UN system, and the African Embassies in CAR, among others, organized a big march with the Peace Torch, followed by tree planting by the presidential majority, the opposition and the international community, a panel discussion on peace in Africa, a football match between the

international community and the National Assembly Team composed of the majority and the opposition, and a cultural night.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS

47. CAR continues to face many political, security and socio-economic challenges. In this context, the proper conduct of the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections, the adoption of adequate measures for the restoration of State authority, the strengthening of security throughout the territory, and the continuation and strengthening of economic reforms, including improving governance, are of crucial importance.

48. The agreement that the Central African parties reached on the dates for the next elections is encouraging, as it is true that the conditions under which these elections will take place will determine the future stability of the CAR. I welcome the progress made in the electoral process. At the same time, I note with concern the insufficient resources at the disposal of CAR for the proper conduct of elections.

49. Other challenges relate to the completion of DDR, which requires that all parties concerned continue to demonstrate the necessary commitment and that adequate resources be made available expeditiously. I am concerned by the continued attacks by certain armed groups and gangs. I note in particular that the CAR has become the main victim of the criminal acts of the LRA, which exacerbates the dire humanitarian situation.

50. At the socio-economic level, the reforms undertaken have clearly helped to achieve satisfactory results. However, efforts should continue so as to consolidate these gains, including through the promotion of the private sector and the creation of conditions conducive for substantial foreign investment to allow for sustained economic recovery and strong growth, which alone can create employment, reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of the people in a sustainable manner.

51. I urge AU Member States to show solidarity with CAR, as it can not deal with the current pressing challenges on its own. It is appropriate at this juncture to pay tribute to the countries of the region and to ECCAS for their multifaceted support to CAR, including through MICOPAX. Significant effort on the part of the international community is imperative, especially in terms of strengthening the reform of *FACA*.

52. I encourage the external partners to continue to accompany the CAR and to lend all the support it needs. In this regard, I welcome the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of BONUCA for one year which, under the leadership of Ambassador Sahlework Zewde, plays a particularly important role in the efforts towards stabilization and peace consolidation in CAR. I welcome the excellent cooperation between BONUCA and the AU Liaison Office in CAR. I also express my appreciation to the EU for the critical support that it provides to

MICOPAX. Broadly, I thank all the AU partners that contribute to efforts aimed at consolidating peace in CAR.

53. For its part, the Commission will not relent in its efforts to support the Government and people of CAR and will intensify the efforts to mobilize the international community for this purpose.